isans | Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

Sight Loss Integration Teacher Toolkit

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ISANS Mission: Helping immigrants build a future in Nova Scotia

ISANS Vision: A community where all can belong and grow.

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Introduction

According to the Canadian Medical Association Journal, sight loss has shown to be more common in new immigrants than in the Canadian-born population[1]. Immigrants and refugees who live with sight loss and other forms of disabilities are some of the most vulnerable individuals in the world as they experience various forms of discrimination including racism, prejudice, in addition to the challenges that come with adapting to a new environment. Some individuals may not have exposure to the skills, tools, and resources available to support them in their personal and professional lives such as assistive technology, mobile apps, and/or skills for self advocacy. As a result, these challenges may impact students' ability to learn and thrive in the classroom.

Classroom-Specific Barriers

Newcomers with sight loss face a very different set of barriers when compared with their sighted peers.

- Finding the classroom
- Navigating within the classroom and/or other parts of the facility
- Reading print materials
- Seeing visuals
- Equally participating in group activities
- Making friends
- Completing homework assignments
- Advocating for themselves

Purpose

The purpose of this toolkit is to address some of the above issues and to empower teachers to support learners with partial or complete sight loss in the classroom. We have implemented a number of guides and practical tips to integrate into their lesson plans for both face-to-face and virtual classes. Our hope is that this toolkit will reduce stress, build confidence, and set teachers and learners up for success to create a rich experience for everyone.

1. Appendix to Pottie K, Greenaway C, Feightner J, et al. Evidence-based clinical guidelines for immigrants and refugees. CMAJ 2011. DOI 10.1503/cmaj.090313. https://www.cmaj.ca/content/suppl/2010/06/07/cmaj.090313.DC1/imm-vision-17-at.pdf

Definitions

Alt-Text: Alternative-text (Alt-text) is a short description of an image, usually in small font immediately underneath the image. Example: woman drinking coffee in front of a window. Alt-text is read aloud by screen readers for those with sight loss.

Blindness: The term "blindness" covers a broad spectrum of visual disability, from when your sight is impaired enough to interfere with daily activities like reading, cooking or driving, up to total blindness. Each person's experience of blindness is unique. Blindness has many causes, and each affects eyesight differently.

CNIB: Canadian National Institute for the Blind has been advocating and training members of society with sight loss since 1918. They offer free training in all aspects of life from getting around, independent living, and training on new technology.

Deafblindness: Deafblindness is a combined loss of hearing and sight that results in significant challenges accessing information. Some people are born with Deafblindness, while others acquire it later in life.

JAWS: Job Access With Speech (JAWS) is the world's most popular screen reader, developed for computer users whose sight loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. JAWS provides speech and Braille output for the most popular computer applications on a PC.

Legally Blind: Legally Blind refers to people that have less than 20/200 vision in the better eye or a limited field of vision that is 20 degrees or less at its widest point. People who are legally blind may have some useful vision.

Low vision*: Low vision is used to describe a loss of visual acuity while retaining some sight. It applies to individuals with sight loss who are unable to read a newspaper at a normal distance of viewing, even with the aid of glasses or contact lenses. People with low vision often need adaptations in lighting and/or enlarged print to read something. There are two specific types of low vision:

- Myopic- Unable to see distant objects clearly, commonly referred to as "near-sighted."
- Hyperopic- Unable to see close objects clearly, commonly referred to as "far-sighted."

* The term "vision" in its various forms (low vision, vision impairment, vision loss) is being phased out of use in Canada and Europe in favour of the more precise term "sight." However, you will still see "vision" used on/from America websites and materials.

Partially sighted: Partially Sighted is usually used in educational contexts to describe a sight impairment that requires special education services. The partially sighted student meets the challenge of disability in much the same way as a totally blind student. Accommodations include the use of readers, audio files, and raised-line drawings. The partially sighted student may be able to use large print books and a Closed-Circuit TV (CCTV) or other magnifying device. Some partially sighted students can take notes in class by printing very large with a felt tip pen or marker; others will create audio files for later use.

PenFriend: The PenFriend is a simple and easy-to-use labelling pen that enables you to record your own voice on a self-adhesive label for a wide range of items in and around the home, at school and at work.

Screen magnifier: A screen magnifier is a type of assistive technology that magnifies the contents of a screen, increases color contrast, and performs other visual modifications to the screen making it easier to see for people who have partial sight loss.

Screen reader: A screen reader is an assistive technology software, primarily used by people with sight loss. It converts text, buttons, images and other screen elements into speech. It can also convert text into braille with the use of an external braille display.

Sighted guide: A technique to safely and respectfully guide someone with sight loss.

Android - TalkBack: TalkBack is the Google screen reader included on Android devices and provides spoken feedback to enable the user to access the device without looking at the screen.

VoiceOver: VoiceOver is the built-in screen reader on Apple devices which enables people with partial and complete sight loss to use the products through screen magnification, or through hand gestures and sound.

Eye Conditions

Age-related macular degeneration: A medical condition which may result in blurred or no sight in the center of the visual field. Early on there are often no symptoms. Over time, however, some people experience a gradual worsening of sight that may affect one or both eyes.

Amblyopia: A type of poor sight that usually happens in just one eye but less commonly in both eyes. It develops when there's a breakdown in how the brain and the eye work together, and the brain can't recognize the input from one eye. Over time, the brain relies more and more on the other, stronger eye — while sight in the weaker eye gets worse. It's called "lazy eye" because the stronger eye works better. People with amblyopia are not lazy; they can't control the way their eyes work.

Astigmatism: A common vision problem often wrongly dubbed "stigmatism," where an over-curved cornea or lens causes a blurry image. Many with astigmatism see a glare or halo around lights, especially at night. Astigmatism can be corrected with eyeglasses, contacts, or refractive surgery.

Cataracts: A cloudy area in the lens of the eye that leads to a decrease in sight. Cataracts often develop slowly and can affect one or both eyes. Symptoms may include faded colours, blurry or double vision, halos around light, trouble with bright lights, and difficulty seeing at night.

Colour blindness: Also known as color vision deficiency, means you see colors differently than most people. Most of the time, color vision deficiency makes it hard to tell the difference between certain colors. Usually, color vision deficiency runs in families. There's no cure, but special glasses and contact lenses can help people see differences between colors. Most people who have color vision deficiency don't have problems with everyday activities.

Dry Eye: This happens when your eyes don't make enough tears to stay wet, or when your tears don't work correctly. This can make your eyes feel uncomfortable, and in some cases, it can also cause sight problems. Dry eye is common and affects millions of individuals every year.

Diabetic retinopathy: A medical condition in which damage occurs to the retina due to diabetes mellitus. It is a leading cause of blindness in developed countries. Diabetic retinopathy affects up to 80 percent of those who have had both type 1 and type 2 diabetes for 20 years or more.

Floaters: Floaters are small dark shapes that float across your vision. They can look like spots, threads, squiggly lines, or even little cobwebs. Most people have floaters that come and go, and they often don't need treatment. But sometimes floaters can be a sign of a more serious eye condition.

Glaucoma: A group of eye diseases that lead to damage of the optic nerve, which is important for transmitting visual information from the eye to the brain.

Retinal detachment: An eye problem that happens when your retina (a light-sensitive layer of tissue in the back of your eye) is pulled away from its normal position at the back of your eye.

Retinitis pigmentosa: A genetic disorder of the eyes that causes loss of sight.

Stargardt disease: A rare genetic eye disease that happens when fatty material builds up on the macula — the small part of the retina needed for sharp, central vision. Sight loss usually starts in childhood, but some people with Stargardt disease don't start to lose their sight until they're adults. There's no treatment for Stargardt disease, but sight rehabilitation can help people make the most of their remaining sight.

Myths and Facts about Sight loss

Myth	Fact
Sight loss means you can't see anything at all.	Many people who live with sight loss have some remaining sight.
People who have complete sight loss see only blackness.	Sight loss impacts each individual differently. Some see grey while others have some light perception.
When you lose your sight, your other senses become sharper.	Sight loss does not amplify your other senses. You just learn to use them differently.
People who live with sight loss can't live independently.	People with sight loss can do most things through adaptation or being creative.
All people with sight loss use a white cane or guide dog.	Some people who live with sight loss don't use a white cane or guide dog because they do not need them or have developed other strategies for navigating.
Living with sight loss means your job options are limited.	People who live with sight loss work and have successful careers in many fields.
People who live with sight loss can't use most technology.	Technology is a way of life for people living with sight loss.

Adapted from CNIB

https://www.cnib.ca/en/sight-loss-info/blindness/blindness-myths-and-facts?region=bc#:~:text=Myth%3A%20Blindness%20means%20you%20can,of%20blindness%20affect%20people%20differently.

Recommendations for Administrators

The following outlines how to prepare for and support learners with sight loss as they begin their journey with ISANS. Please contact the accessibility support staff for anything further that may not be covered in this document.

- When planning for incorporating learners with sight loss, we recommend gathering as much information as possible. Please see the Student Survey in the Resources section for ideas on what questions should be asked before students are invited to programming.
- Before first class, call the learner to ask their preference for email or audio messages for important information.
- For the first time visiting the office, send the learner the directions and description of how to walk to the office based on their preference for receiving important information. Please see below for examples on how these descriptions can be written. Put something on the door handle to indicate the correct location like a rubber band, or string.
- During an initial orientation, have someone meet the learner at the office, walk with them to the classroom, and show them important areas (washroom, student lounges). Send any key information in large print or pre-recorded message based on learner preference.
- During any physical orientation, discuss emergency protocols with the learner. Ask their preference during an emergency- if they would like to be escorted out with their class or if they would like to wait in a refuge area for emergency personnel to collect them. If they wish to be escorted out with their class, this will need to be practiced with their instructor.
- Offer a phone number that the learner can call or text if they are lost in the building.
- Low tech solution for learners with partial sight: place a high contrast sign (e.g. yellow paper with bold black print) with classroom number on the wall next to the student's classroom and at main entrances of ISANS offices.
- Low tech solution for learners who are blind: place silicone bumps strip on door frame or rubber band on doorknob on main office and classroom door to indicate the correct door.
- Provide individualized orientation for learners with sight loss for online programs. Who offers this orientation will vary by program.
    - May need to partner with Neil Squire Society and/or CNIB Foundation to coordinate tech training for navigating a keyboard/computer or mobile device with assistive technology such as a screen magnifier (ZoomText), or a screen reader (NVDA or JAWS), for ease of navigating Avenue and accessing H5Ps. Screen readers have a hard time sorting through the H5P slides, especially if the slide is interactive. An alternative would be to have a sighted assistant (e.g. family member) learn the program alongside to help with trouble shooting from home.
    - For Avenue on mobile, Voiceover does not access the drop-down menu to access classrooms. They may need help from someone to navigate to the class. It should be noted that Voiceover can be talking over/at the same time as slide is reading content, which can be a distraction.

Walking Instructions from Main Entrance to ISANS Offices

Mumford

From the main door, take 5-6 steps out and turn to your right and walk straight till you find the elevator. Press the elevator panel button on the left. Push the top button to go up. When you enter the elevator, the panel is on your right. It has six levels of buttons. You will push the very top button that has a number 2 to the left of the button. When you get to the second floor, walk 4-5 steps out of the elevator and turn right. Walk down the corridor until you approach, or hit a wall with your cane, turn right on to the carpeted hallway and walk straight till you get to the doors at the lobby at ISANS.

Desmond

ISANS Desmond is in the bottom floor of a mall. From the parking lot, enter from the back door entrance, there are three sets of doors. Go to the one on the far right. There are two sets of doors to go through. To your far left is a ramp, straight ahead is a staircase going down to the bowling alley and on either side of the down staircase is an arc of three stairs going up. To get to ISANS, take 3 steps out away from the doors, turn right and take 3 steps. This is important. If you go straight, you will come to the stairs that go down to the bowling alley. After you take 3 steps to the right, turn left and walk straight until you come to the three stairs going up. Go up the stairs. At the top on the left should be a rail. Follow the rail to the end. At the end of the rail, turn left and walk 3 steps, then turn right and walk straight down a long hallway. Come to the end of the hallway and turn right. Go down a short hallway that slopes down. Come to the end of the hallway and turn left. Walk down that hallway and ISANS is the only door on the left at the end. At the door, there is a rectangular button to the right of the handle. Push it and the door will open automatically into ISANS lobby. Open the door and walk 8 steps slightly to the left. The front desk will be in front of you on the left side of the lobby.

Joseph Howe

From parking lot, walk straight to main door up three steps. Wave open door sensor on left. Door opens towards you. Go 5 steps through entry way wave open second set of doors into the lobby. Door opens towards you. Walk about 10 steps slightly to right which will put you in front of two elevators with the button panel in the middle. There is only one button at the bottom as we are on the ground floor. Go into the elevator. There are button panels on both sides. Find the button in the middle that has a star and "G" next to it. "G" is for ground floor. That is where you are now. Above the "G" are two columns of buttons. Push the button above *G on the left that has the number 2 next to it. Go up to the second floor. Go out of the elevator and turn right. Go approximately nine steps to the end of the hallway. The door for ISANS is on the left. Immediately to the left is the front desk and it's an open office area with no chairs. Walk about 5 steps forward and turn right to go into the admin office. Someone will call your teacher. There are 6 cubicles with program administrators who speak different languages.

Practical Tips for Teachers

General Classroom Tips:

- Have a preliminary meeting within the first week to discuss the learner's preferences and needs, (see "Guiding Questions" below). Do another check-in after a few weeks to see how things are going.
- For students with complete sight loss, at the beginning of a new term (i.e., the first two weeks), ask other students to say their name/introduce themselves (e.g. Hi Anu, it's Jessica speaking…) when talking to the student, especially when working in groups. This will help them learn their classmates' voices and be able to identify them.
- Be sure to say each student's name when asking questions rather than just looking at them. Likewise, saying, "What about you?" will not clarify to a student with sight loss if you are speaking to them or someone else.
- Avoid using terms like "this" and "that" (eg. "What is this?" "What is that word?" Usually accompanied by pointing to something on the board/screen). Say the word or describe the image you are referring to.
- As much as possible, give handouts/activities one day in advance, either the physical paper with increased font size (for students with low sight,) or Word doc emailed (for students with either low or no sight). Ask the learner what their preference is.
- Describe/say whatever you write on the board.
- Describe any PPT slide photos or images. Say what the image is or describe what is happening in it.
- Allow for more time to do reading and writing activities.
- For teaching clients with low sight online, explore the "Ease of Access" settings on your computer.
- Increase your mouse pointer size and possibly change colour from black to a higher contrast colour. Ask the student what the best size and colour is for them to see.
- Experiment with the text cursor colour indicators.
- Send voice messages with important information (like any changes, outings, class cancelations, etc. Do not rely solely on text or email for highly important messages.
- Do not feel like you need to abandon your "normal" activities. You may need to either adapt them slightly or create a small alternative for the student just for that one activity.

Material Adaptations:

For Low/Partial Sight

- Increase font size to a minimum 20-22 or send in digital format.
- Allow for more time to finish an activity or task.
- Don't use serif or "busy" fonts. Use clean fonts like Arial, Helvetica, or Century Gothic.
- Modify reading and writing assessments as you would a worksheet- bigger font or a digital copy, more time to finish, etc.
- For flash cards- make word larger font and in bold
- Use a physical magnifier or magnifying app to increase text size on realia. This can be done for skill building activities on the student's phone and on the instructor's phone for assessments.
- At the lower levels, if teaching writing/letter formation, you could use special raised letter-formation paper, tracing boards, raised line paper, etc. See your accessibility support department for these items or see the purchase recommendations in the resources section at the end of this guide.

- For classroom signs, notices, word lists (if using a cork board or pocket chart)- use high contrast colour paper, e.g. yellow paper with bold black lettering. This is easier for a student to see than black on white. Common colour combinations are black on yellow, white on black, black on bright blue/green. Ask the student what colours they prefer/are easier to see.
- For writing activities, if they are able, allow students to use a device to type or use a voice to text feature in lieu of handwriting.
- Based on the student's individual tech access/abilities, students can use the accessibility features on their smart device to access online content, like reading activities, articles, etc. If they do not have digital skills or access, the teacher will need to email the article/activity as an attachment to the student in large font. Teacher may need to copy and paste the article into a Word document in order to increase font size.

For No Sight

- At lower levels, you may need to modify writing activities, tasks, and/or assessments into speaking tasks and modify reading tasks into listening tasks. This means they will not get a CLB score for reading or writing. At higher levels, if the student is able, allow them to use voice to text and/or text to speech apps to accomplish reading and writing activities.
- When introducing new vocabulary, use realia where possible. For something like parts of the body, before the class, establish if the learner is ok with you directing their own hand to a part of the body (e.g. Guide their hand to touch their nose. Some may be ok with this, others may not want to be singled out. It will depend on the individual learner.) For less tangible concepts, you may need to use a translation app to give the learner the word in a primary language in order to establish the concept first. Follow up with a voice message or other audio means (e.g. Flash Card creating app) with the list of words for the learner to review at home, preferably in the same order as introduced in class.
- Students can use an app like Be My Eyes to take a picture of any text on realia or desired worksheets for the app to read the text to them. (once in the app, select Be My AI to access this feature)
- Use the PenFriend device with accompanying templates (obtain from your accessibility department or print from this document) to introduce new vocabulary, do dialogues, reading passages, comprehension questions for various activities, etc.

If students use a screen reader:

- Use Alt Text for any images on slides or digital content. Alt Text automatically populates when inserting online pictures into Word or Power Point but may not be sufficient for an English language learner. All Alt Texts are editable. Please change as needed. This is especially important for asynchronous activities where the teacher is not available to give a description of the slide.
- If alt text is not auto-populated, the instructor will need to write the alt text descriptions:
    - Use short phrases
    - Keep to 125 characters or fewer
    - Ex: Man in blue shirt and jeans standing next to black car

Adapting Assessments

Regarding reading and writing tasks, assessments and progression, there is no explicit direction from IRCC or CCLB on how to assess learners with sight loss. That said, there seems to be a common-sense practice that those already working with these learners follow. Generally, learners are only assessed on Listening and Speaking and progressed based on the achievement of those benchmarks. Reading and Writing are marked NA. For example, if they receive 2/2/

NA/NA, they are moved up to a CLB 3 class. If they have 1/2/NA/NA, they would stay in level 2.

Students still participate in all assessments, however reading and writing assessments get adapted into listening and speaking *practice* assessments and are not counted towards the L/S 8/8 needed for progression. The reason for this is that if every adapted R/W assessment was counted towards a L/S total, the student would climb through the levels very quickly, without gaining the appropriate knowledge.

It should also be noted that many regular listening assessments rely on the visual to confirm listening comprehension. For example, a learner may circle the image of what they hear. This can work for learners with low sight, but for a learner with complete sight loss, the assessment will need to be administered in a one-on-one context with any multiple-choice type options read or described aloud to them.

Guiding Questions

1. Do you know what your eye condition is?
2. What can and can't you see?
3. Can you write with a pen or pencil?
4. Do you use a computer?
5. Do you have a mobile phone or tablet? If yes, which one (iPhone or Android)?
6. Do you have earbuds for your phone or tablet?
7. Do you use the accessibility features on your device? If yes, which one(s)?
8. Ask student about preference for seating- close to the teacher or near the exit/door?
9. Show student examples of font sizes (a range from 16-26) and ask what/if they can read it. You are determining if you use adaptations for low vision or no vision. Ask if they would like an enlarged copy the day of or if they would like the document emailed to them the day before the activity.
10. Ask the student if they would like to be matched with another student for in-class support.

Low Tech Devices

PenFriend

The PenFriend is a simple audio label maker that enables individuals to create audio labels in their own voice on encoded adhesive labels that come with the tool. Please see the video and templates on ways to incorporate the PenFriend into your lesson plans and in the classroom.

Puffy paint

Puffy paint can be used to create tactile lines, letters, or numbers in replacement of visuals for those with total sight loss. Choosing high contrast colours along with black, or white background will be most effective for low sight learners. Check with learner to determine their preferred choice for colour contrast.

Tactile or raised stickers

Tactile stickers can be an effective tool to help teach letters and numbers. By feeling the individual stickers, learners can become familiar with the formation of each letter or number, which may support writing.

Tracing boards

Wooden and plastic stencil boards can help with students who want to learn how to write.

Alphabet magnets/foam letters

Foam letters or alphabet magnets and a tin cookie sheet can be used for learning letter shapes and spelling.

Raised lined paper and high contrast thick lined paper

Raised lined and thick lined paper are good options to help low sight learners to see where their letter and word formation confines are.

Bold black pens and felt tips

Bold black pens and felt tips can be an effective tool for writing and reading due to the higher and thicker contrast on the page compared to a ballpoint pen or regular typeface.

High contrast silicone raised bumps

High contrast raised silicone bump dots have a variety of uses. They come in a number of shapes and sizes and can be used in a variety of ways such as putting a bump dot strategically on the learner's desk to help them find it independently.

Clip-on desk lamp

For those with low vision, the overhead lights in a classroom might not be bright enough. A clip-on desk lamp may assist in making worksheets and other materials easier to see.

Portable hand-held magnifiers

Portable hand-held magnifiers can help learners with some sight to access print materials and a variety of items. The magnification ranges from low to high power. Prior to purchasing any low sight devices, it is recommended that the client meet with a vision specialist through Sight Loss Canada.

*Please see the Resources: Purchase Recommendations section for links for many of the above.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities.

From: https://www.atia.org/home/at-resources/what-is-at/

For this toolkit, we will only be focussing on AT solutions for people with partial and complete sight loss. While there are several options to consider, we will highlight a few of the key ones for beginner and intermediate learners.

Screen magnification for computers

A screen magnification system enlarges text and graphics on a computer screen. It is loaded into the computer's memory and functions similarly to a magnifying glass moving over a page, following the cursor, and magnifying the area around it. Using a mouse or keyboard commands, the user positions the cursor on the section of the screen to be magnified or has the cursor move automatically across and down a magnified page at a preset speed. The magnified area may also be emphasized with color and shading, so that users who lose their place on screen may easily locate a magnified area.

From: https://www.afb.org/node/16207/screen-magnification-systems

ZoomText

ZoomText Magnifier/Reader is a fully integrated magnification and reading program tailored for low-vision users available for purchase. Magnifier/Reader enlarges and enhances everything on your computer screen, echoes your typing and essential program activity, and automatically reads documents, web pages, and email.

From: https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/zoomtext/

Magnifier by Microsoft

Magnifier makes part or all of your screen bigger so you can see words and images better.

From: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/use-magnifier-to-make-things-on-the-screen-easier-to-see-414948ba-8b1c-d3bd-8615-0e5e32204198

Screen readers

A screen reader is a software program that allows blind and low vision individuals to read the content on a computer screen with a voice synthesizer or braille display. The screen reader is the interface between the user and the computer operating system and its applications. The screen reader converts text into speech or braille. Users are notified of text, images, buttons, and other elements on the screen. The user simply uses a different combination of key stroke commands to instruct the screen reader to read a line of text, a string of text, announce the location of the cursor, read dialog boxes and perform other tasks.

From: https://www.freedomscientific.com/screen-reader/

JAWS® Solutions

JAWS, Job Access With Speech, is the world's most popular screen reader, developed for computer users whose sight loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. JAWS provides speech and Braille output for the most popular computer applications on your PC. You will be able to navigate the Internet, write a document, read an email and create presentations from your office, remote desktop, or from home.

From: https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/jaws/

NVDA

NVDA is a free open-source screen reading software that works with Windows. It works on a USB stick and can work on any Windows-based computer.

From: https://www.nvaccess.org/

Mobile Applications

Mobile devices are integral for most of us and we use them in a variety of ways. They enable us to connect with friends and family, access information, learn new things, connect to community, and so much more.

By integrating assistive technology into mainstream devices, people living with partial and complete sight loss can use devices like smart phones and tablets just like their sighted counterparts. In this section, you will learn how people with sight loss can use built-in smartphone apps and learn about useful 3rd party mobile apps that can be utilized in the classroom and beyond.

Built-In Applications

Demonstration on how to use the magnifier app on the iPhone:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvlR3Nz8jN0&ab_channel=AppleSupport

Demonstration on how to use Voiceover on the iPhone:

https://youtu.be/qDm7GiKra28?si=Oyg50VDq6o88dlDq

Demonstration on how to use screen magnification on an Android phone

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aAB4PRurVQ&ab_channel=CarrieonAccessibility

Demonstration on how to use Talkback on an Android phone

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1yRVwhEv5I&ab_channel=AndroidDevelopers

Mobile Applications

Be My Eyes—A free app to help people with sight loss resolve issues through video support with a sighted volunteer on the other side.

https://www.bemyeyes.com/

Be My AI—An extension of the Be My Eyes app. Allows user to identify text and images by taking a picture. Be My AI will give you a detailed description of the picture. You can obtain more details by asking further questions through the app.

https://www.bemyeyes.com/

Google Maps—A web service that provides detailed information about geographical regions and sites worldwide. It offers a route planner and directions for drivers, bikers, walkers and users of public transportation. Maps now offers more detailed voice guidance than before, with verbal cues to make navigating with limited vision much easier. This feature helps people with sight loss know they are on the right route and to know when they are approaching a turn – it also lets them know if they are approaching an intersection, and alerts them if they leave the route.

https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/Google-Maps

Voice Dream Reader—Free, text-to-speech mobile app that allows the blind or those with sight loss to read anything that contains text, such as websites or local files on their device.

https://www.voicedream.com/

Voice Dream Scanner—Scans inaccessible PDF documents or text images and converts the text to an accessible document that can be read by a screen reader. Currently iOS only.

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/vdscan/id1446737725

Brighter and Bigger—A reading app for individuals struggling to read fine print. Application helps read small letters by enlarging them and making them brighter.

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/brighter-and-bigger/id452483657

Magnifying Glass with Light—An app for iPad that magnifies and also brightens text.

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/magnifying-glass-with-light/id406048120

Spotlight Text—Adapts e-book to a higher magnification and provides audio output.

http://spotlighttext.com/

Envision AI—A free smartphone app that articulates everyday visual information into speech.

https://www.letsenvision.com/app

WeWalk—An accessible mobility application developed by blind people for those with sight loss of any level. Get step-by-step navigation to where you want to go and discover the locations around you in an accessible manner.

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=tr.org.yga.wewalk.android&hl=en_CA&gl=US&pli=1

Google Translate—Translate between up to 133 languages.

https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/google-translate/id414706506

Quick Cards-Create personalized flashcards. Annual subscription required.

https://www.accessibyte.com/quick-cards-online-page/#main

Adapted Literacy Lesson Plan

Theme: Health

Level: Foundation (ISANS LA/LB)

Class Type: In person

Class length: 150 min (with 15 min break)

Brief Description:

Each class follows a consistent routine:

1) How are you? + Zones of Regulation (emotional regulation program)
2) Calendar
3) Rotating Routine Activity
    a) Money Mondays
    b) Time Tuesdays
    c) Weather Wednesdays
    d) Flyer Thursdays
    e) Fun Fridays
4) Theme – Health. Over the next two months, learners will learn about body parts, as well as either doctor-specific personal information or health problems.
5) Directionality, Writing, ABCs, or Personal Information.
6) Station time

Lesson Plan:

1. **Introduction** - How are you + feelings. (20 mins)

   Activity: differentiated instruction- Low learners do colouring page. Higher learners and learners with sight loss practice reading teacher created "book" in pairs.

- **Low sight adaptation:** same worksheet but increase font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptations:** Use Penfriend version of book or partner reads to the blind learner and they repeat after.

2. **Calendar** (20 mins)
   Activity 1: Check today's date on the calendar. X no school days. Cross off the date on a calendar they don't come to school. Circle the day they do.

- **Low sight adaptation:** same worksheet but increase font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** PenFriend version of calendar for review in class. For at home, include a non-adapted calendar for learner to take home for a family to see/know important dates and send a What's App or have student use phone built-in voice memos app with dates they don't have class.

Activity 2: Double-sided calendar worksheet. They choose their preferred level of difficulty. Both sides use the same sentences describing the dates for the week. ("Today is Monday, October 30, 2023. Today is Tuesday, October 31, 2023." Etc.) The lower difficulty side is a tracing activity. The higher-level difficulty side is a copying activity. For learners who are further along and comfortable with their letter formation, offer a workbook for learners to write in on their own.

- **Low sight adaptation:** same worksheet but increase font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** using the PenFriend tool, turn activity into oral activity, where student listens and repeats the sentences.

Activity 2 alternative: On smartboard, unscramble days of the week: https://wordwall.net/resource/51644811

- **Low sight adaptation:** teacher can increase size of font on smart board or provide a sheet in large print with the same content that is shown on the smart board. Learner can also follow along as teacher is verbalizing.
- **No sight adaptation:** learner follows along with teacher as they verbalize. Note: Important for teacher to engage learner to ensure that they actually are comprehending and understanding, not to single out, but to include.

Practice at home (Send to learners via text/What'sApp*:* Let's Make a Calendar starfall.com)

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed. Teacher will need to confirm that learner can enlarge website enough to successfully navigate.
- **No sight adaptation:** send home tactile calendar, similar to the PenFriend version with raised lines, words, and numbers. One possibility is to go over the lines of a blank calendar template with hot glue and use puffy stickers for numbers and other words. Coordinate with accessibility department for supplies or help with creation of materials.

3. **Numeracy Routine** (15 mins)
   Time – Review information on the sign-up sheet for Midterm Check-Ins. Review AM vs. PM. Have learners sign up for a slot.

- **Low sight adaptation:** same worksheet but increase font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** ask learner orally what time works well for them and have teacher write their name on the sign-up sheet

4. **Theme** (20 mins)
   Health Needs Assessment- see end of lesson plan. Go through each part of the assessment orally and physically showing each part of the body to pair with each image on the page.

- **Low sight adaptation:** same worksheet but increase font size (20-22 pt) and put on Smart Board for enlarged version.
- **No sight adaptations:**
  - Page 1- may need to use biliteracy, interpretation software like google translate to take picture of text to communicate concepts that are not tangible (health problems, health forms/info) or use same language student to translate words/concepts.

- Page 2- Explain that we will talk about 12 body parts but choose 4. Use other student from same language group to ensure comprehension. Use teacher hand to guide students hand to own different body parts to help choose. Follow through with touching all 12 parts.

5. 2 min filler activity before break, *if needed*: use slide 38 on Copy of Daily Powerpoint to vote on a way to practice ABCs.
Point left = letter name and sound song;

Point up = fast alphabet song, upper and lower case;

Point right = speaking ABCs;

Point down = slow alphabet song, lower case;

Point to the middle = Wordwall sequencing ABCs.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** make sure you explain each choice orally

– BREAK –

6. Read or Write (30 mins)
Activity 1: Whatever ABC song/game the learners had voted on before the break.

- No adaptation needed.

Activity 2: Pair work: showing and reading letters. Speedreading contest.

- **Low & No sight adaptation:** use foam letter shapes or sandpaper letters and make the sighted partner close their eyes and feel the shape the same way as the learner with sight loss.

Activity 3: Review personal information with this Power Point first: Copy of Personal Information. Play flyswatter game with personal information (5-6 items)

- **Low sight adaptation:** same words but increase font size (30 pt) and contrast of printed papers (yellow paper with bold black text) or write the words bigger on the white board
- **No sight adaptation:** reduce the number of words on the board to 3 or 4. Give the flyswatter to the learner with sight loss and guide their swatter to where the words are on the board. Make sure they are confident in their placement. Play the game as per normal calling out the words.

7. Stations (30 mins)
Learners choose from the following, solo or in groups:

a) Learning Chocolate (ISANS Alphabet Learning Chocolate, or appropriate smartboard activity)

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** work with a sighted partner. Partner can navigate the website, and they can both go through the activities orally.

b) Clear pocket writing (review specific letters; copy randomized upper and lower case (or change case); copy or complete and personal information form; write ABC without a model.

- **Low sight adaptation:** provide sheet in large print/font
- **No sight adaptation:** place both upper- and lower-case letters on magnet board and ask learner to identify them. For personal identifying form, learner can verbalize info instead of writing. For writing letters without a model, teacher can ask learner to identify 3 letters which they have to find among the letter magnets.

c) Letter flashcards or wooden pieces: speak in random order and sort into good, almost, so-so; arrange sequentially in a grid; match big to small and vice versa.

- **Low sight adaptation:** enlarge any flashcards as necessary
- **No sight adaptation:** work with a partner to feel tactile flashcards or shaped pieces and speak into order

d) Puzzles: three Canada puzzles; alphabet floor puzzle; matching letters with pictures (self-correcting), spelling words with letters.

- **Low sight adaptation:** enlarge any worksheets as necessary
- **No sight adaptation:** use plastic magnet alphabet on cookie sheet to work on recognition or create words

e) Colouring sheets and pencils, if stressed.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** will not be able to participate, direct to alternate station

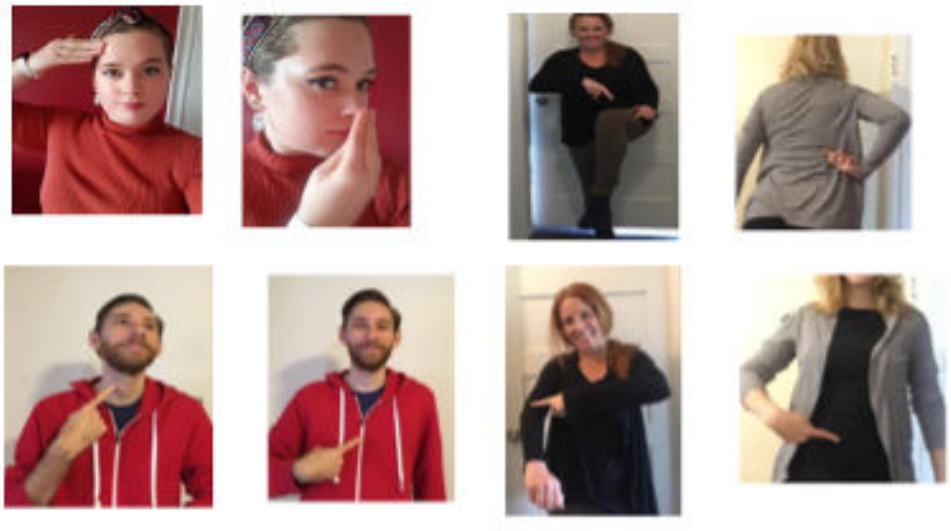
f) Reading books (LA level, LB, and simple available).

- **Low sight adaptation:** use large print/font copies of physical books. Alternatively, use a classroom laptop to enlarge text on the screen. Use Bow Valley and The Literacy Centre for Expertise online readers with audio text. May be able to sign up to CELA Library to access large print and audio books.
- **No sight adaptation:** work with a partner and access online audio books. Use text to speech and/or photo-of-text to speech apps to have books spoken aloud.

g) Use their phones for English resources (shared or otherwise)

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** If already able, then no adaptation needed. If not, they may need training in how to use built-in screen-reader programs (Voiceover on iPhone and Talkback on Android).

Name: _____



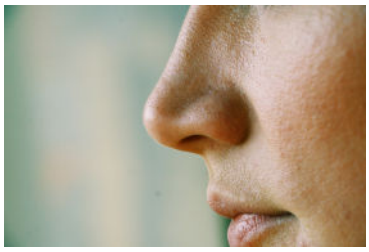
Body

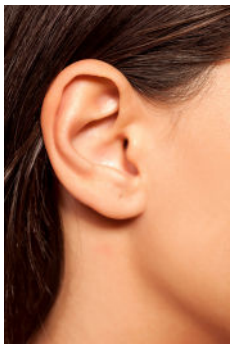
Choose 1

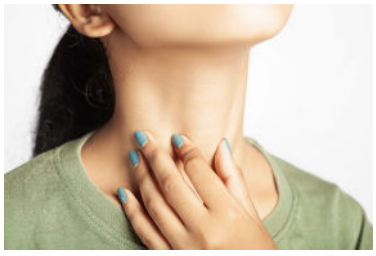
Problems

Health Info

Choose 4







Adapted CLB 2 Lesson Plan

Theme: Health

Level: CLB 2

Class Type: AM class is in-person. PM class in online.

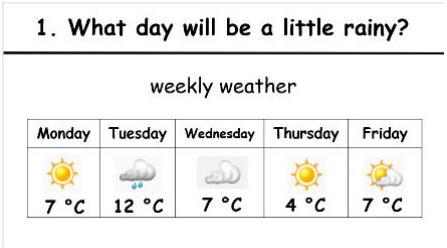
Class length: 150 min (with 15 min break)

Lesson Plan:

1. Routine (30-40 min)
Activity 1: Jobs chart. Each day learners review the job chart and find their task for the day. Tasks include things like reading the sight word list, teacher helper, read warm-up questions to the class, write the date on the board, talk about what you did yesterday, etc. Many jobs have accompanying PPT slides. See examples below.

- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure slides or handouts are in enlarged font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** chose or adapt tasks that learner can do orally

Weather: 4 PPT slides asking different questions about the weather for the week. E.g. What day will be…? How many days are…?



- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** Say something like "Here is the weather report for this week." Discuss each day's weather and temperature before asking the question on each slide.

Verbs: 3 PPT slides with theme related sentences to practice verbs.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** Describe the photo first. "Here is a photo of two children in bed. There is medicine next to the bed. They are sick." Then ask the question on each slide orally. Read each option of the multiple choice and let

the learner choose the correct answer. Depending on how familiar the learner is the with the task, teacher may need to repeat multiple times.

Activity 2: Calendar. Learners pull out their own copies of the calendar while looking at PPT slide of the same. Check off days they were in attendance and 'x' on days absent. Review any holidays or other school events coming up.

- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure slides or handouts are in enlarged font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** Student may have PenFriend or teacher-created tactile calendar as reference.

Activity 3: Homework. Give back previous in-class assignment, tell learners to fix indicated mistakes at home.

- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure any comments are written large. Use contrasting/bright colour pen for any underlining or circling. Do not use black/blue ink.
- **No sight adaptation:** Will depend on previous activity and how learner accessed the activity. Teacher will need to decide how or what they want the learner to do. It may be a "new" activity completely or practicing the same activity again.

2. Give back writing assessments (10 min)

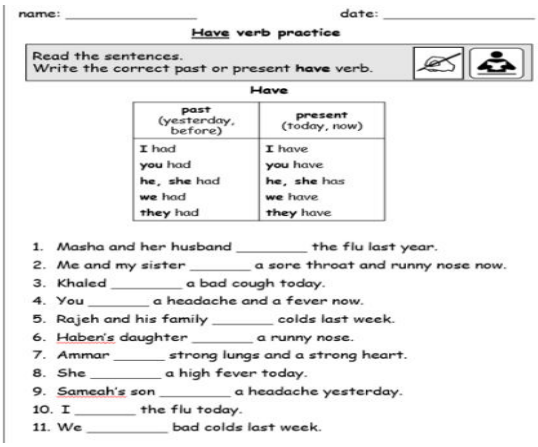
Activity: Explain some learners didn't pass. It's OK. English writing is hard! There will be other chances. If you want to ask questions or talk to me about your test, please do it at break time or after class. Have learners record result of assessment in their binder writing assessment tracker.

- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure slides or handouts are in enlarged font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** Will depend on how the learner accessed the assessment.

3. Have verb (45 min)
Activity 1: PPT slides- two slides on 'have' in present tense and past tense, followed by sets of slides with sentence stems. Go around the class asking different students to fill in the correct form of the 'have' verb.

- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure slides or handouts are in enlarged font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** Describe the photo first. "Here is a photo of a man. He is holding his head in pain." Then read the direction from the slide orally, "Finish the sentence. Choose had, have, or has." Read the sentence stem and let the learner supply the correct answer.

Activity 2: Have verb worksheet. AM class gets a paper handout to then work in groups of 3. PM class does in own notebook in break out groups. Review as a class after the break. See sample.



name: _____ date: _____

Have verb practice

Read the sentences.
Write the correct past or present **have** verb.

Have

past (yesterday, before)	present (today, now)
I had	I have
you had	you have
he, she had	he, she has
we had	we have
they had	they have

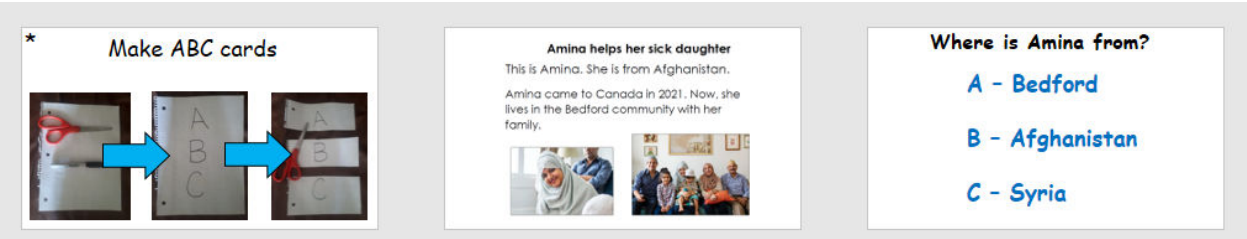
1. Masha and her husband _____ the flu last year.
2. Me and my sister _____ a sore throat and runny nose now.
3. Khaled _____ a bad cough today.
4. You _____ a headache and a fever now.
5. Rajeh and his family _____ colds last week.
6. Haben's daughter _____ a runny nose.
7. Ammar _____ strong lungs and a strong heart.
8. She _____ a high fever today.
9. Sameah's son _____ a headache yesterday.
10. I _____ the flu today.
11. We _____ bad colds last week.

- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure slides or handouts are in enlarged font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** Put learner in a supportive group. Sighted partners can read the questions aloud and write their answers, while learner with sight loss can participate orally.

– BREAK –

Activity 2 Continued: Finish reviewing worksheet answers as a class.

4. Health story (30 min)
Activity: Learners take turns reading story slides one-by-one in a group setting. Answer questions by holding up previously made ABC cards.



- **Low sight adaptation:** ensure slides or handouts are in enlarged font size (20-22 pt)
- **No sight adaptation:** learner can use tactile ABC tiles/cards to participate as a listener.

5. Sight word spelling (20 min, or whatever time remaining)
Activity 1- Sight word dictation (10 words)

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** Option 1: If the learner is able, they could type answers on device of choice and then participate orally with the review. Option 2: learner skips the writing part, but still participates with the oral review.

Activity 2- Sight word race game. 2 by 2 learners race to write words on white board. Whomever spells fastest and correctly wins the round.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** A supportive partner can lead the learner to the front and they can do the "race" orally- who can spell it out fastest and correctly.

Adapted CLB 6 Lesson Plan

Theme: Health

Level: CLB 6

Class Type: AM class is in-person. PM class in online.

Class length: 150 min (with 10 min break)

Lesson Goals:

- To give learners the chance to communicate about general health, using known and new vocabulary in the 3 categories of symptoms, diseases, and treatments.
- To give learners practice in using the past perfect (and simple past) (Speaking and writing)
- To give learners practice with the adverbs of emphasis: yet*, ever, still, never, already*. (Speaking and writing)

Lesson Plan:

1. Warm up (15 min)

Activity: Questions on Smartboard/PPT slide. Students discuss in small groups or breakout rooms. Q1. How was your weekend? Q2. What is one difference between the health care in Canada and the health care in your home country? Q3. Have you received health care from a doctor or nurse in Halifax? Talk about your experience.

- **No adaptation needed, as long as questions are read out orally in the group**

2. Review agenda for the day (2 mins)

a) Feedback on Thank You Emails
b) Health vocabulary
c) Review of Present Perfect
d) Adverbs of Emphasis
e) Ellii exercises
f) Health Survey

- **No adaptation needed, as students can follow along orally**

3. Feedback on Emails (30 min)

Give feedback on certain language points emerging from the Thank You emails written last week.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed.
- **No sight adaptation:** anything on slides or white board needs to be described or read orally. Original activity may need to have been adapted to a voice message or note written with voice to text app/ function. Output will depend on the abilities of the learner.

4. Health Vocab Brainstorm (15 mins)

Review, elicit, introduce Health Vocabulary. Brainstorm/write words on white board in AM and on PPT slide in PM.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** students can follow along orally during class. After class, send a voice message with list

of words produced.

5. Categorizing Vocab (30 mins)

Activity 1: In pairs, students will categorize words from board/PPT as *symptoms*, *diseases*, or *treatments/cures* on their own paper.

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptations:** work with sighted partner and will participate orally. If able, students could make audio recording of assignment for later review.

Activity 2: As a class, look at the words and discuss. Let's underline the symptoms, circle the diseases, star the treatment. (Online we'll highlight in 3 different colors.)

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed, as students can follow along orally

– BREAK –

6. Review Present Perfect Tense (20 min)

Ask if learners did the homework on Present Perfect on Elli. Review present perfect tense with adverbs of emphasis: *yet, still, already, ever, never*. Read through slides 4-16 of PPT. Slides 4-6 read and discuss how and when to use it. Slide7 read list of adverbs of emphasis. Answer any questions that arise.

Activity 1: Slides 8-12 in small groups, someone read the scenario on the slide, discuss/decide the correct adverb. Teacher ask different groups to volunteer their answers.

Example slide:

Scenario #1

My daughter is sneezing constantly due to her allergies. I say, "Take your nose spray!"

She replies in frustration, "I've _____ taken it!"

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed as long as each slide is read aloud

7.Student Survey Creation (15 mins)

Activity 1: Give out blank survey template with model question. Students have 15 min to think up and write 10 survey questions using health vocab and present perfect tense with adverbs (see handout below). For this part, questions do not have to be written in complete sentences, as long as they have a complete idea to ask orally.

- **Low sight adaptation:** enlarge worksheet to 20-22pt font or let student write questions on personal computer
- **No sight adaptation:** alter activity to digital activity according to the capability of the learner. Alternatively, partner the learner with a faster learner who is already completed the activity to discuss the possible questions and write down their responses for them.

8.Survey Interviews (15 mins)

Activity 1: AM students circulate the room asking each other questions and taking notes. PM students go into breakout rooms in groups of three. They can form their notes into complete sentences for homework

- **Low sight adaptation:** no adaptation needed
- **No sight adaptation:** Alter the activity to be oral rather than written. Pair learner with a sighted partner to help navigate and circulate the room or ask students to come to learner's desk.

Class Health Survey

Create your own health survey. Write your questions below, then ask your classmates your questions, and write their answers in the chart. Try to use **ever, never, already, still, yet,** the **present perfect,** and the **simple past** as often as possible in your questions and answers.

Question	Answer
1. Have you been to a walk-in clinic yet?	_____ has already been to a walk-in clinic in Halifax.
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

CCLB CLB 1-2 Multi-Level Module Notes

General Considerations and Recommendations

Regarding reading and writing tasks/assessments and progression, there is no explicit direction from IRCC or CCLB on how to assess learners with sight loss. That said, there seems to be a common-sense practice that those already working with these learners follow. Generally, learners are only assessed on L/S and progressed based on the achievement of those benchmarks. R/W are marked NA. For example, if they receive 2/2/NA/NA, they are moved up to a CLB 3 class. If they have 1/2/NA/NA, they would stay in level 2.

Reading and writing assessments get adapted into listening and speaking practice assessments, but are not counted towards the L/S 8/8 needed for progression. The reason for this is that if every adapted R/W assessment was counted towards a L/S total, the student would climb through the levels very quickly, without gaining the appropriate knowledge.

How to Read the Module Notes

This adaptation is based on the multi-level housing module found on the PBLA Practical Guidelines website. Each section title is listed with the corresponding page numbers and then adaptation suggestions for that section. Please find the downloadable module plan here: https://pblapg.language.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CLB1_2_Finding-a-Place-to-Live_Formatted_April-28.pdf

Section: Additional Teacher Resources

Page: 6

- **Low sight adaptation:** Ensure the learner has a digital copy they can view online and enlarge as needed. Alternatively, enlarge photocopies and/or ensure any printed materials are in a large font (20-22pt) or offer a magnifying tool for the learner to use on their binder.
- **No sight adaptation:** For activities where learner is asked to copy information from the My Canada, or any other text, ask learners with complete sight loss to type into a computer or on their mobile device, if they have computer skills. If not, turn into a speaking activity and ask learner to articulate what they have learned.

Section: Introducing the Module to the Class

Pages: 7-9

Warm up questions

- **Low sight adaptation:** If posted around the room, make sure any printed materials are in a large font (20-22pt) and possibly on high contrast coloured paper (e.g. yellow paper and black font).
- **No sight adaptation:** Partner learner with sighted learner to have the questions read to them in order to participate.

Using the language companion- see recommendations in Section: Additional Teacher Resources

Section: Goal Setting

Pages: 10-11

- **Low sight adaptation:** Make sure any printed materials are in a large font (20-22pt)

- **No sight adaptation:** Review any goals orally. Have either the teacher send a voice message with the list of goals or have the learner record a voice memo with the same. If the learner uses a screen reader, email worksheet to them before hand. If they do not, turn into a listening and speaking task where the teacher sends a voice message with the questions and the learner sends a message back with their answer(s).

Section: Vocabulary: A Teacher's Resource

Pages: 12-18

When introducing cards at the outset, teacher should describe what is happening in each image. For more slightly obscure concepts/terms (e.g. bachelor apartment), learner may need to access translation (either through an app or a peer) to confirm comprehension. Create PenFriend sets of cards by putting a penfriend sticker on a numbered, but otherwise blank laminated card (so that they can be reused in other modules) to then paper clip to labeled/picture module vocab cards for use in class during activities further on in the module. The sticker recording should have the word as a whole for pronunciation, as well as the spelling. For example, a recording might sound like this, "Apartment. A-p-a-r-t-m-e-n-t. Apartment."

Games

- **Low sight adaptation:** Enlarge images/text as needed
- **No sight adaptation:** Perhaps pair with a more advanced sighted learner who is close to progressing. Have the sighted learner describe the photos to the learner with sight loss. They will guess/remember the term.

Card Matching and Sorting Activities

- **Low sight adaptation:** Enlarge images/text as needed
- **No sight adaptation:** Option 1- learner can do all the suggested activities with the PenFriend sets. Option 2- Put the learner in a group of 3. They can do the activities orally and the sighted learners can put the photos and words into the piles.

Section: Learning reflection- End of Module

Page: 19

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure that check list is in large print.
- **No sight adaptation**: Teacher can verbally ask learner, they can type their responses on a computer or mobile device, or create a voice note on their mobile device.

Section: Listening

Pages: 20-29

Developing Vocabulary, page 21

- See recommended adaptations in Section: Vocabulary: A Teacher's Resource

Listening to Descriptions of Homes, pages 22-24

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1, 4-6 as they are oral activities Parts 3 & 4
    - **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
    - **No sight adaptation**: Use PenFriend tool to create audio worksheet for the learner to match descriptions with appropriate letter. Could work with partner to have sighted mark/match appropriate

letter to PenFriend recording.

Choosing the Best Home, page 25-26

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-2, as they are oral activities Parts 3 & 4
    - **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
    - **No sight adaptation**: Use PenFriend audio worksheet from previous section for learner to review as needed in addition to class discussion. In their small group, participate orally in discussion of choices of families and homes. Should not be required to physically match paper strips.

Listening to Conversations About a New Home, pages 27-29

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1,3, 5-6, as they are oral activities

Parts 2 & 4

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
- **No sight adaptation**: Send the audio clip to the learner. Create PenFriend audio version of worksheet for learner to listen to questions. If learner is able, allow them to type answers on computer or mobile device. If not, allow them to listen to the conversations and audio worksheet again while peers are writing. Allow VI learner to do the activity orally after class with instructor.

Section: Speaking

Pages: 30-42

Asking Yes/No Questions about Housing, pages 31-33

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-3 as they are oral activities

Part 4

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
- **No sight adaptation**: Put learner in a group of 3. The learner with sight loss will be the "extra" renter role and will repeat questions after the sighted renter formulates the question based on the worksheet. The landlord will answer, as per the regular activity directions.

Asking Information Questions, pages 34-36

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-3 as they are oral activities

Part 4

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
- **No sight adaptation**: Put learner in a group of 3. The learner with sight loss will be the "extra" renter role and will repeat questions after the sighted renter formulates the question based on the worksheet. The landlord will answer, as per the regular activity directions.

Practising a Conversation with a Landlord, pages 37-38

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.

- **No sight adaptation**: Create PenFriend audio version of worksheet for learner to listen to dialogues. Learner can practice intonation independently. Or if paired with a group of 3, the sighted partners can read the dialogue and the learner can echo any question with correct intonation.

Calling about a Rental Unit, pages 39-42

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-2 as they are oral activities

Part 3

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
- **No sight adaptation**: Create PenFriend versions of the cards. The learner can listen to each part and participate in the conversation practice with a supportive partner.

Part 4/Skill-Using

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
- **No sight adaptations**: Teacher or volunteer can sit with learner and partner to go through the activity and teacher can write the answers on the worksheet for the learner.

Section: Reading

Pages: 43-54

Understanding Abbreviations in Housing Ads, pages 44-47

- No adaptations needed for Set Up part 1 as it is an oral activity

Part 2

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print or do on smart board
- **No sight adaptation**: Read all parts of sample housing ad aloud. Read abbreviations as written or spell it out, even if odd sounding.

Parts 3-4

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print or do on smart board
- **No sight adaptation**: If possible, teacher or volunteer can sit with learner and partner to go through the activity orally.

Part 5

- Learner with sight loss participate as listeners and take time to ask or answer questions

Reading a Housing Description, pages 48-50

Part 1

- No adaptations needed for Set Up part 1 as it is an oral activity

Part 2

- **Low sight adaptation**: Use enlarged picture cards from previous activities
- **No sight adaptation**: See if learner can describe home with correct vocabulary from memory. If not, have sighted learners in the group use their picture cards to ask the learner with sight loss questions about their home.

Part 3

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation**: Turn into an oral spelling activity for learner and partner. The partner reads the story and describes the picture. The sighted learner can speak out the spelling of the word they are writing and the learner with sight loss can then spell along aloud.

Part 4-5

- **Low sight adaptation**: Use enlarged picture cards from previous activities
- **No sight adaptation**: Read the story with the sighted partner. Learner uses Penfriend pictures cards to do activity.

Reading a Housing Ad, pages 51-54

Part 1

- No adaptations needed for Set Up part 1 as it is an oral activity

Part 2/Skill-Using

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print.
- **No sight adaptation**: Create PenFriend audio version of worksheet for learner to listen to ads/descriptions. If possible, teacher or volunteer can sit with learner to go through the questions orally and write down any answers.

Section: Writing

Pages: 55-63

Labelling Parts of a Home, pages 56-58

Parts 1-2

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-2 as they are oral activities

Part 3

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Part A turn into spelling activity. Part B- put sentences in order based on audio. "It/has/one bedroom."

Part 4

- No adaptations needed as it is an oral activity

Part 5

- **Low sight adaptation**: No adaptation needed or allow learner to type on device of choice
- **No sight adaptation:** Option 1: if learner is able, allow to type on device of choice. Option 2: let learner record a message describing their home to send to the teacher.

Describing a Classmate's Home, pages 59-60

Parts 1-2

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-2 as they are oral activities

Part 3-5

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Create Penfriend version of Part A so the learner can listen and repeat the questions to their partner. The rest of the activities, they can participate in orally.

Writing a Description of a Home, pages 61-63

Parts 1-2

- No adaptations needed for Set Up parts 1-2 as they are oral activities

Part 3

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Either make a PenFriend version of the ad and the sentence stems or have a classroom volunteer read it to the learner. Learner depending on availability and access to tech, can type answers on device of choice or volunteer can scribe their answers for them.

Part 4

- Student cannot participate in this activity.

Section: Assessment Tasks

Pages: 64-73

Preparation for Assessment Tasks, page 65-66

- Each of the assessment tasks will need to be conducted individually and not in a group setting.
- See note "General considerations and recommendations" regarding how to account for R/W assessments.

Listening Task, page 67-68

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Learner listens to conversation(s). Teacher reads the questions and multiple-choice

options aloud and learner responds orally. Teacher records answers for scoring.

Speaking Task, page 69-70

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Option 1: create PenFriend versions of the prompt card and learner participates as per the requirements. Option 2: teacher reads prompt card (as many times as learner needs) and learner participates as per the requirements.

Reading Task, page 71

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Option 1: create PenFriend versions of the ad. Teacher reads the questions and multiple-choice options aloud and learner responds orally. Teacher records answers for scoring. Option 2: teacher reads ad (as many times as learner needs). Teacher reads the questions and multiple-choice options aloud and learner responds orally. Teacher records answers for scoring.

Writing Task, page 72-73

- **Low sight adaptation**: Ensure the handout is in large print
- **No sight adaptation:** Option 1: Teacher reads the questions aloud and learner responds orally. Teacher records answers for scoring. Option 2: Teacher reads questions aloud and learner responds orally and spells out key words.

FAQs

Q: What is the appropriate way to help a person with sight loss navigate a physical space?

A: First ask if they would like you to guide them. If they say yes, offer your arm and allow them to hold it above your elbow. (See video to learn the right way to offer sighted guide)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Yk-jryD2Rk&ab_channel=VisionLossRehabilitationCanada

Q: What do I do with a writing assessment/activity? How do I adapt it?

A: For lower levels, you will need to change it into a speaking activity. For higher levels, provide adaptive or alternative writing options like typing on a computer or text to speech functions.

Q: I had a learner with sight loss show up and there is no pink flag on their file. What do I do?

A: Make the learner feel comfortable and include them in your lesson as much as possible. Please email/contact the Accessibility Coordinator after class and they will help you get some accommodations in place.

Q: What do I do if a learner's screen reader or technology stops working in the middle of an activity?

A: Identify if the issue can be resolved quickly. If yes, resolve it. If not, refer them to the local CNIB. 902-453-1480.

Q: How do I create an audio label with the PenFriend?

A:

1. Turn the power on.
2. Press and hold down the record button, and with the pen in an upright position, touch any recordable label. You will hear a beep, and then you can start speaking.
3. Remember to keep holding the record button down while you speak. When you have finished, release the record button and your recording is automatically saved.
4. To play it back at any time, just touch the label you recorded onto with the point of the PenFriend, again with the device in an upright position.

Q: What is the most appropriate way to refer to a person with sight loss?

A: It depends on the context. If you are speaking to a colleague about the student, it's ok to say, blind student, or student with sight loss.

Q: Is it ok to use visual language when speaking to a person with sight loss? Example: "Did you see the movie last night?""You should watch this video."

A: Absolutely! People with sight loss use visual language all the time. In fact, if you didn't, it would feel very awkward.

Q: What is the best way to help a person with sight loss if they look lost?

A: First ask if they need any help. If they say yes, identify where they are trying to get to. If possible, offer to walk them to their destination. If you are giving directions, ensure that they understand when using visuals like signs, colours, etc.

Q: Should I announce myself before speaking to a person with sight loss?

A: It is helpful for a person with sight loss to hear the name of the person who is speaking with them, especially at the beginning of your relationship. More often than not, they will remember your voice and may not need you to announce yourself every time.

Resources

Purchase Recommendations

Sites like https://cnibsmartlife.ca/, https://www.maxiaids.com/, https://www.therapro.com/, https://independentliving.com/ and others can give you many ideas about what is available for supporting learners with sight loss. Many of the general products are also available on Amazon, at local stationary stores, or you may have ideas on how to make them for little to no cost. It should be noted that many sites are in the United States. Please consider shipping and import fees when making any purchases.

Reading Support

PenFriend3- use to create interactive worksheets, flashcards, etc. See PenFriend templates below.

- https://cnibsmartlife.ca/products/penfriend3-talking-labeller?_pos=8&_sid=b167e986d&_ss=r

Puffy Paint- use to create tactile lines, letters, or numbers on worksheets. Link below is for black paint, but other colours available depending on level of vision and preference of learner.

- https://cnibsmartlife.ca/products/tactile-liquid-marker-black

Raised alphabet stickers- use for adding tactile aspect to worksheets. Can be purchased at most dollar stores, craft, or other stationary stores. Links here as examples only.

- https://a.co/d/2AdRooy
- https://a.co/d/4oxajEZ

Clip-on Desk Lamp- for those with low vision, the overhead lights in a classroom might not be bright enough. A clip-on desk lamp may assist in making worksheets and other materials easier to see.

- https://a.co/d/fwsRJqD

Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) Screen Reader- free screen reader for desktop computers. Training on use available at CNIB.

- https://www.nvaccess.org/about-nvda/

JAWS Screen Reader-computer screen reader. Purchase annual subscription. Training on use available at CNIB.

- https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/jaws/

ZoomText- computer magnifier and screen reader combined. Purchase annual subscription. Training on use available at CNIB.

- https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/zoomtext/

Magnifier- free computer screen magnifier part of the accessibility features built-in to the Microsoft office suite.

- https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/use-magnifier-to-make-things-on-the-screen-easier-to-see-414948ba-8b1c-d3bd-8615-0e5e32204198

Writing Support

Low vision, wide lined paper

- https://a.co/d/dVaFZtK

Writing guide- plastic overlay with 13 cutouts that correspond to regular lined paper to help with learning where line confines are.

- https://cnibsmartlife.ca/products/letter-writing-guide
- https://www.maxiaids.com/product/letter-writing-guide-superior-black-plastic (American*)

Raised alphabet letters- raised outlines of letters displayed on writing paper. The tactile raised outline helps to give structure to the correct formation of the letter. Begin by tracing the letter, then coloring it and then drawing within the lines. Available in block print, cursive, and numbers.

- https://www.therapro.com/Raised-Alphabet-Letters.html (American*)

Magnet letters with board

- https://a.co/d/1oAXYRw

Tracing Boards- available in wood and plastic. Tracing boards help with the initial steps of learning letter formation before moving to writing on paper.

- https://a.co/d/e3IA7Mo
- https://a.co/d/8NJIj6F
- https://a.co/d/7QrNDLU
- https://a.co/d/d5nvhpI

Large Print Keyboard- high contrast keyboard for learners with low vision

- https://a.co/d/2RyiJLj

Other

Silicone sticky bumps- for varied use. Can be used to indicate learner's desk, particular books or classroom materials, etc.

- https://www.amazon.ca/Silicone-Sticky-Bump-Visually-impaired/dp/B08NWG24Z9?th=1

Talking clock- for help when learning about time, temperatures, etc.

- https://cnibsmartlife.ca/products/voice-control-led-talking-alarm-clock
- https://independentliving.com/vision/clocks-timers/talking-clocks/

Links to helpful accessibility resources and guides

CNIB Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines

https://cnib.ca/sites/default/files/2018-07/CNIB%20Clear%20Print%20Guide.pdf

Factsheet on Screen Magnification

https://abilitynet.org.uk/sites/abilitynet.org.uk/files/Making-your-screen-easier-to-see-Easy-Read.pdf?utm_source=Website0&utm_medium=ScreenEasierToSeeEasyReadPDF&utm_campaign=EasyRead

Assistive technology- Lists, explanations, and purchase links for dozens of assistive tech products currently on the market.

https://www.afb.org/blindness-and-low-vision/using-technology/assistive-technology-products

Google Accessibility Support-The Google Disability Support team is available to support users with sight loss using Google products. Support includes accessibility features, functionalities, and assistive technology in Google products.

Email: disability-support-external@google.com

Microsoft Accessibility-The Microsoft Accessibility Support team is available to support users with sight loss using Microsoft devices.

Phone: 800- 936-5900

Apple Accessibility-The Apple Accessibility Support team is available to support users with sight loss using iOS devices.

Phone: 877-204-3930

Be My Eyes App Help Centre

https://support.bemyeyes.com/hc/en-us

Guide for assisting individuals during an emergency

https://diversityandaccess.stanford.edu/disability-access/emergency-evacuation-planning/guide-assisting-individuals-disabilities-emergency

Pen Friend Templates

Please watch this how-to video on using the PenFriend Templates: https://youtu.be/_Jt_ng8RJys

The templates below are to be printed on cardstock*, encodable stickers attached, and then laminated for re-use each theme. The stickers can then be re-recorded with new vocabulary as needed. Placement of encodable stickers is indicated with a **#** symbol.

For the vocabulary cards, activity questions, and calendar, we recommend that after laminating, the teacher put a tactile or 3D number sticker on the outside to correspond with the number underneath. These are easily found at local dollar stores or anywhere stationery is sold. See these samples for reference <https://a.co/d/2AdRooy; https://a.co/d/4oxajEZ> . We also recommend that the card templates stay with the teacher for class use only and not sent home with the student.

*Option for student with low sight is to print on high contrast paper (e.g. bright yellow) with bold black ink.

You will find the following templates:

- 2 half-page cards for new vocabulary
- Set of flashcards (after laminating, consider hole-punching to put on a large keyring)
- 2 half-page card for text/book section
- Page for activity questions, up to 10
- Page for 2 student dialogue, up to 4 exchanges
- Blank calendar template (teacher will need to change the outside number stickers every month)
- Half-page pin pad for banking, shopping or phone (sticker will need to go on top of numbers)

Theme Vocabulary

1. #
2. #
3. #
4. #
5. #
6. #
7. #
8. #
9. #
10. #

Theme Vocabulary

1. #
2. #
3. #
4. #
5. #
6. #
7. #
8. #
9. #
10. #

1. #	**6.** #
2. #	**7.** #
3. #	**8.** #
4. #	**9.** #
5. #	**10.** #

Text selection

Text selection

Activity Questions

Question 1 #

Question 2 #

Question 3 #

Question 4 #

Question 5 #

Question 6 #

Question 7 #

Question 8 #

Question 9 #

Question 10 #

Dialogue Activity

Student A #

Student B #

Student A #

Student B #

Student A #

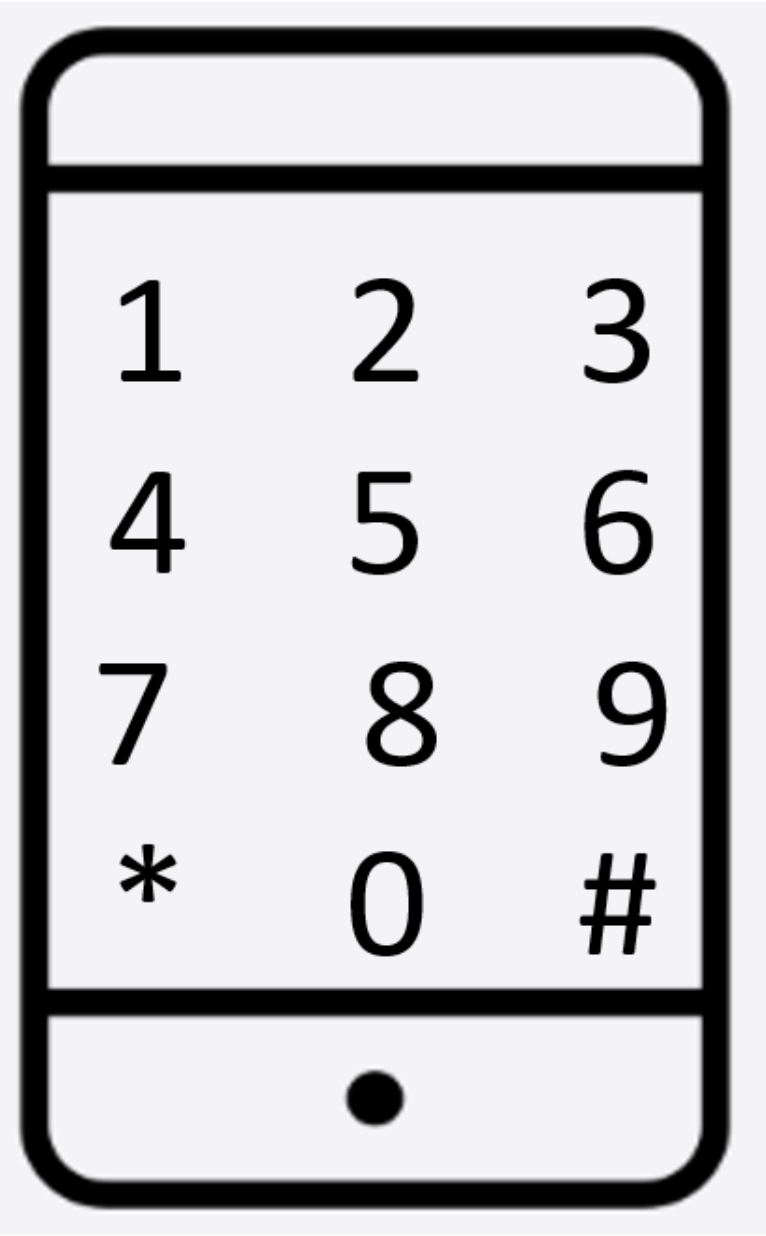
Student B #

Student A #

Student B #

MONTH

S #	M #	T #	W #	Th #	F #	S #
#	#	#	#	#	#	#
#	#	#	#	#	#	#
#	#	#	#	#	#	#
#	#	#	#	#	#	#
#	#	#	#	#	#	#


1 2 3
4 5 6
7 8 9
* 0 #

Student Survey for Administrators

We want to know more about our clients with sight loss. Please complete the following questions as best you can to help us understand your vision challenges and how best to support you in English language classes.

1. How old are you?

- 19-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

2. How well can you see?

- Good- but I need glasses to make things clear
- OK- I need a magnifier
- Poor- Things are blurry. I can see outlines, but I cannot see most things clearly
- Completely blind

3. What is the diagnosis of your eye condition?

4. Have you had any consultations or help from CNIB, or other vision specialists in Canada?

   Yes No

5. How comfortable are you with your sight loss?

- Very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Not comfortable at all

6. Please indicate which of the following describes you best.

- I can see and recognize letters and words on documents with small print
- I can read regular documents if the print is large
- I use the computer to read documents
- I use a mobile device to read documents
- I am unable to read documents independently/ I need someone to read them to me

7. How much difficulty do you have reading street signs, or names of stores?

- No difficulty
- Some difficulty
- Extremely difficult
- Unable to read at all

8. Are you able to recognize facial expressions?

   Yes No

9. Do you use any visual aids, e.g., glasses, handheld magnifier, video magnifier, monocular, etc.

10. Do you use any assistive technologies on a phone or a computer? Please check all that apply.

- ZoomText
- JAWS
- NVDA
- Voiceover
- Kurzweil
- OpenBook

11. Do you have your own assistive technologies? If so, which ones do you have?

12. Do you use a mobile phone?

    Yes No

13. If you do have a phone, do you have your own mobile phone, or do you use a family member's?

14. Which mobile phone do you use?

- iPhone
- Android
- Google
- Other

15. If you use a phone, do you use the accessibility features, e.g., speech, screen magnification?

    Yes No

    If yes, which ones: _____

16. How comfortable are you navigating indoors in public spaces like a school or store?

- Very comfortable
- I require some assistance at first
- I require assistance at all times

17. Do you use any mobility aids? Please check all that apply.

- White cane
- Seeing eye dog
- Support cane
- Crutches
- Wheelchair

18. What mode of transportation do you use most of the time?

- Public bus
- Access-a-Bus
- Family member

19. How do you navigate public buildings?

- Use of a white cane
- Seeing eye dog
- Family member
- No assistance needed

20. Have you had any past experience with language learning or education in other countries?

Yes No

If you answered yes, how many years were you in school/classes? _____

21. What would you like to use English for? Please check all that apply.

- Basic conversation
- College/university
- Work
- Function confidently in the community

22. Where do you currently practice English?

- At home with family and friends
- At school
- At work
- In the community

23. Would you be interested in going to languages classes at ISANS, group classes online in your home or 1-on-1 classes online in your home?

- Classes at ISANS
- Classes online at home
- 1-on-1 classes at home

24. Do you have any other disabilities or health challenges that impact your ability to learn? Example: hearing loss/use hearing aids

25. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us that would help you succeed?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. We look forward to supporting you as you embark on this new journey.