# Best Practices Guide for Synchronous/Blended Learning

Part of the *Best Practices in Synchronous Online Teaching: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Service Delivery Improvement Project*, prepared by

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# Introduction and Background

This Best Practice Guide was first developed for the second research phase of the *Best Practices in Synchronous Online Teaching: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Service Delivery Improvement Project* to help EAL instructors enhance their instructional practices in synchronous and blended learning in the context of the LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) Program and Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA). The Best Practice Guide is based on findings during the first research phase of the project, exploring existing technologies and other program adaptations to make synchronous and blended language training delivery more effective and consistent across the sector. The aim has been to address a lack of articulated approaches, resources, and professional development for EAL instructors to use in synchronous and blended learning for adult LINC learners. This version of the Best Practices Guide was revised based on findings and feedback from participants in the second research phase. It is complemented by professional development resources available on Tutela and Avenue.

Data collected during the first research phase of the project was generated through online surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with instructors and learners at the partner organizations in this study: Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), Red River College Polytechnic, YMCA of Greater Saint-John, NorQuest College, and Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISS of BC). Interviews and focus groups were conducted by researchers of these community partners, who also completed a detailed analysis of the generated data. Research consultants working with ISANS, the project lead, analyzed the findings from each community partner together with the findings of the surveys to inform the development of this Best Practices Guide. We would like to thank the learners, instructors, and researchers at the partner organizations for their collaborative spirit and inspiring work that has contributed to the project's ongoing success.

During the second research phase, a more focused, appropriate, method of synchronous and blended delivery of language instruction was used by select instructors at the community partners. By **implementing best practices into instruction and administrative processes**, findings highlighted the use of best practices resulting in improved learner outcomes and efficiencies related to client engagement and performance.

Pre and post surveys and student information (quantitative data on attendance and formative assessment results) provided the data for a cross-institutional analysis. With clients being more fully engaged and their learning met better in multi-modal ways, some increases in attendance and performance measures on formative assessments were recorded despite the much shorter second research phase than initially planned due to a delay in funding. Both increased attendance and performance work to support clients attaining their desired CLB levels faster and achieving improved LINC program delivery outcomes.

The project findings during both research phases of the project, supplemented by secondary research, have provided a holistic, robust, and inclusive representation of current best practices for synchronous and blended teaching within a LINC/PBLA context across the country. Instructors and learners have benefited from direct participation in the research process as their input directly shaped the development and the revisions of the Best Practices Guide. The recommendations for best practices in this guide support and are supported by the PBLA Guidelines from the Centre of Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB).

The PBLA framework offers guidelines for conducting formative and summative assessment, done by the classroom instructor in the classroom. The guidelines also offer insights into when assessments are considered valid. The research project Best Practices for Synchronous/Blended LINC has identified certain challenges with upholding these guidelines under all circumstances. Some guidelines for conducting assessments are hard to follow in an online environment, however, the findings of this research project also offer insights for contexts within which the guidelines cannot be followed closely. Therefore, the recommendations for best practices support the work of program administrators in providing an effective and efficient service for LINC in synchronous/blended teaching.

For more detailed information on the project and its findings connect at isans.ca.

# Best Practices Guide

This guide offers you a variety of tips and best practices for synchronous and blended teaching in the context of the LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) Program and Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA). These best practices address challenges that were first identified in a preliminary scan survey conducted in December 2022 that was completed by 144 instructors across Canada.

The best practices in this guide are based on findings from the first research phase and confirmed or revised during the second research phase of the *Best Practices in Synchronous Online Teaching: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Service Delivery Improvement Project*. The field research to identify best practices and their implementation to test their impact was conducted in partnership with five Service Provider Organizations (SPO).

Phase 1: Field Research:
- literature research (see Appendix C)
- an instructor survey, completed by 61 instructors
- instructor interviews and focus groups, conducted locally
- a learner survey, completed by 758 learners from CLB 1-8
- learner focus groups, conducted locally

Phase 2: Field Testing:
- almost 900 learners and 42 instructors participated
- cross-institutional data collection in a Performance Measurement Framework
- Community of Practice sessions for instructors, conducted locally
- pre- and post-surveys of participating instructors and learners

This guide is organized in sections according to the pillars of PBLA, the [assessment for learning strategies](assessment for learning strategies). Where possible we've differentiated the best practices for Stage I (CLB 1-4) and Stage II (CLB 5-8).

1. Clarify learning intents and criteria for success:
- how to provide support in a synchronous and blended environment

2. <u>Incorporate classroom activities that elicit evidence of learning:</u>

- suggestions for course set up and types of activities that are best suited for skill building.
- possible solutions to completing assessment tasks in a reliable way

3. <u>Provide feedback that moves learners forward:</u>

- ways to provide feedback in a synchronous and blended classroom

4. <u>Activate students to become instructional resources to one another:</u>

- guidance for using groupwork (break out rooms) and facilitating peer feedback

5. <u>Activate students to become owners of their learning:</u>

- suggestions and tools for learner reflection and goal setting

Some best practices require support for changes from your program administrator. These are outlined in Section 0. *Best practices for synchronous and blended teaching at an organizational level*.

As circumstances at many SPOs are different, it may not be possible to implement all the best practices in this guide. The findings of the research also shaped these recommendations in that they aim to address inequities when guidelines are followed without consideration of diverse contexts. It is our hope that the guide is consulted attentively by the instructors and the administration to carefully select best practices to implement. Some best practices may already be in place, while others will require more effort to implement. Instructors should consult with their administration about their organization's expectations.

We thank all the participants in this project, without whom the Best Practices Guide and this course to support the professional development of instructors would not have been possible.

## Support Resources

While the project findings were first articulated and further revised and finally confirmed in this second version of the Best Practices Guide, the project outcomes also include additional support resources for instructors and administrators to implement the best practices for teaching in synchronous and blended classrooms in a PBLA/LINC context. These new resources benefit LINC clients, instructors and SPOs by addressing the growing gap in resources dedicated to teaching LINC and evaluating learner progress with PBLA in synchronous and blended contexts. The project outcomes are shared with the sector via Tutela, newsletters and conferences. A professional development course was developed to support instructors on Avenue.

Implementation of these resources is up to each individual organization to execute, but the benefits include faster progression through the CLBs, a national coordinated approach in online PBLA/LINC language training, proven best practices in synchronous and blended PBLA/LINC delivery, and leveraging of existing technologies for synchronous and asynchronous learning. Especially with respect to PBLA and its roots in the physical classroom, applying synchronous and blended best practices is a focus of the project outcomes.

The Professional Development Course for LINC Instructors is hosted on Avenue and maintained by ISANS. It is also available to SPOs using their own Moodle-based learning environment via download on Tutela. The course was designed to showcase commonly used best practices for synchronous and blended delivery of PBLA/LINC that have shown to positively impact engagement and progress of LINC clients - it does not include every best practice included in this Best Practices Guide.

You can choose from the topics in the course that you would like to learn more about. Each topic can take up to two hours to complete. A local community of practice at your organization would provide opportunities for sharing ideas and experiences. Participating in the discussion forum in each topic is encouraged to share with others outside your organization.

The course is interactive and incorporates a diversity of activity types in the following sections:

- Introduction to the course
- Support from Administrators
- Structuring Your Online Course
- Being Present Online and Building a Classroom Community
- Flipped and Blended Learning
- Goal Setting, Learner Reflection, and Feedback Online
- Administering Valid Assessment Tasks Online
- Additional Resources
- Examples of Best Practices Stage I
- Examples of Best Practices Stage II

These resources developed as part of the Best Practices in Synchronous Online Teaching: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Service Delivery Improvement Project are available under a Creative Commons license on [tutela.ca](tutela.ca):

- The full Best Practices Guide in PDF as well as its individual sections in Word
- Individual H5P activities to download and add to an organizational LMS
- A back up file of this course to use for organizations using another Moodle platform

## Section 0. Best practices for synchronous and blended teaching at an organizational level

| | Note: several of these best practices are based on PBLA guidelines for funders | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0.1 | As an administrator I enable and support staff to implement best practices for online and blended teaching. As an instructor I receive support from my supervisor, and I am open to their suggestions. | | | |
| 0.2 | In stage I (CLB 1-4) the maximum number of learners in a class is 20. | | | |
| 0.3 | In stage II (CLB 5-8) the maximum number of learners in a class is 30. | | | |
| 0.4 | Classes do not cover a range of more than two CLB levels. | | | |
| 0.5 | Classes aim to have a ratio of 50 % synchronous time (in person or online) and no more than 50% of the time asynchronous online. Teaching hours include both synchronous class time and asynchronous teaching (being actively present). | | | |
| 0.6 | An online synchronous class is not longer than 1.5 hours. The balance of teaching time is used by the instructor to be actively involved with the learners asynchronously, responding to forum posts, emails or messages, marking work and providing feedback. | | | |
| 0.7 | Asynchronous time for learners can include independent online work and/or watching recorded lessons. | | | |
| 0.8 | Instructors have a min 1 hour prep time per 3 hours of teaching (synchronously and asynchronously). | | | |

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| 0.9 | Intake of new learners happens at the start of each month/semester (not continuously) to support the building of a learning community and improve outcomes. | | | |
| 0.10 | Learners receive adequate training on using the LMS and other relevant online tools (e.g. video conferencing) **before** joining a LINC class. | | | |
| 0.11 | Learners have access to a computer literacy instructor or digital navigator in addition to their LINC class. | | | |
| 0.12 | Instructors receive a minimum of 5 hours of PD time per month to hone their online teaching skills. | | | |
| 0.13 | Instructors participate in local community of practice meetings. | | | |
| 0.14 | Instructors are editors on their online course to adapt and use the course as needed to fit their learners' goals and needs. | | | |
| 0.15 | Instructors use premade, customizable courseware as much as possible.<br>(See Additional Resource A and B for a list of resources and tools.) | | | |
| 0.16 | A classroom assistant or volunteer supports the instructor during synchronous classes (in person or online). | | | |

## Section 1. Best practices to clarify learning intents and criteria for success.

| | How to provide support in a blended/online environment. | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | As an instructor I support learners to be successful in their online or blended class. For example, I share my screen to show them how to do a task, where to find things, send messages, or create short videos to explain things. | | | |
| 1.2 | There is a classroom volunteer during synchronous classes. For example, to help learners with technology or to participate in language learning activities. | | | |
| 1.3 | Learners can access help files (such as step-by-step screenshots or how-to videos) at any time they need help. | | | |
| 1.4 | Add a module outline that states Real World Task goals, expectations and due dates. Learners are aware of what they are supposed to do, when, how and why. For example: if a task practices grammar or vocab, if it is a  L/ S/R/W task. | | | |
| 1.5 | At the start of a (recorded) class, give a schedule of the day, explain to learners what they will be working on/learning. | | | |
| 1.6 | At the end of a class, share your screen and demonstrate to learners where to find online activities that are assigned for homework study. Demonstrate how to do them. Record and post this part of your class online so learners can review. | | | |
| 1.7 | Include instructions with every online activity in wording that learners understand, even if they have completed similar activities before. | | | |

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| 1.8 | Use a flipped approach: offer asynchronous online skill building (such as learning new vocabulary) and use the skills in further practice during synchronous classes (video or in person). | | | |
| 1.9 | Schedule 'office hours' outside of synchronous class time during which you engage with learners asynchronously (respond to messages, forum posts, provide feedback) and are available to offer support.Remind learners of your office hours. | | | |
| 1.10 | **Stage I**: Organize your online course in weekly topics.<br>Number the activities. Use a label to indicate homework.<br>Only show what learners currently need access to. Use hidden but available activities, linked on a page or in a book to keep the course organized. | | | |
| 1.11 | **Stage II**: Organize your online course in monthly topics<br>Number the activities. Use a label to indicate homework.<br>Keep access to past topics available for extra practice. | | | |
| 1.12 | Use a gradebook, check list, and/or completion tracking system that both you and the learners can check to see if they have successfully completed an activity.<br>This supports self-monitoring, keeps students accountable, and increases the rate of homework completion. | | | |
| 1.13 | Share the (self-assessment) rubric for a task with learners before they begin a skill using or assessment task. Let them know if there is a limit on attempts, a limited time the task is available or a deadline for submission. | | | |

## Section 2A. Best practices to incorporate classroom activities that elicit evidence of learning.

| | Suggestions for course set up and types of activities that are best suited for skill building. Additional Resource A and B: list of modules and online tools | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Offer activities that appeal to different learning strategies, incorporate audio-visual materials that learners can engage with. | | | |
| 2.2 | Test if activities can be completed on tablets or smart phones. Ask learners what kind of device they are using. Ask them to bring it to class if possible. | | | |
| 2.3 | Provide printed copies/downloadable PDF files for learners when they cannot complete online activities, or their internet connection is unreliable. | | | |
| 2.4 | Include skill building activities that can be attempted multiple times, such as H5P or quizzes that can be attempted more than once. Or, allow learners to record (and listen to) their answer until they are happy with it before submitting. | | | |
| 2.5 | **Stage I:** Allow students to do activities on paper during class time and have them do it on the LMS for homework. | | | |
| 2.6 | Teach learners to use a forum. Include a new forum each week with a task. For example: have learners respond to one or more discussion questions (in writing, with a recording, by posting an image or emoji, etc). If using a forum is not an option, consider using a shared Google Doc or Padlet where learners post and respond to or like messages during asynchronous class time. | | | |
| 2.7 | **Stage I:** Introduce one activity or question type at a time until it becomes routine before adding a new one. For example: first | | | |

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| | multiple choice questions, then drag and drop, fill in the blanks…. **Stage II:** Introduce uploading and downloading files. | | | |
| 2.8 | Begin each synchronous class with a follow up on material that was to be completed asynchronously to make students accountable for finishing work. Ask for example: 'How was the homework? What did you learn?' This helps to connect the online work to the class. | | | |
| 2.9 | Collaboratively agree on class rules to improve engagement. For example: everyone is expected to participate, turn camera on, be in quiet space, help each other learn | | | |
| 2.10 | **Stage I:** embed activities/PDF files on your course page so learners do not have to navigate between tabs and to minimize logging into other websites. **Stage II:** ensure that links open in a new tab and do not replace the course page. | | | |
| 2.11 | Use a completion tracking system and set completion requirements for each activity; avoid 'learners check manually'. | | | |
| 2.12 | In a Quiz use the Essay (5 line text box) instead of Short Answer; you can provide a template for the answer; you don't have to add possible correct answers, you do have to mark each answer. | | | |
| 2.13 | **Stage II:** inform guest speakers to add discussion questions to their talk, or to limit their webinar to 30 minutes if no activities are planned. Practice relevant vocabulary before the session, have learners prepare questions for the guest speaker. | | | |
| 2.14 | **Stage I:** Provide a link to an online dictionary that you recommend to your learners instead of using Google Translate. **Stage II**: Encourage learners to use an English only dictionary or thesaurus. | | | |

## Section 2B. Best practices to incorporate classroom activities that elicit evidence of learning.

| | Possible solutions to completing assessment tasks in a reliable way. | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.15 | Teach learners the difference between appropriate and inappropriate help (during assessments). Have regular conversations about trust and respect, focusing on learning, not getting a grade. | | | |
| 2.16 | Before each assessment, remind and ask learners to agree that they are required to complete assessments on their own to be valid (integrity quiz) | | | |
| 2.17 | Tell learners to also turn on their cameras and/or mics during a reading or writing assessment. (Explore reasons why students may not be able to comply.) Teach learners to blur their background or use a background image to ensure privacy. | | | |
| 2.18 | Release skill using and assessment activities conditionally: set a time limit, set availability on a specific date & time, require that certain activities (integrety quiz) are done first, etc. | | | |
| 2.19 | Use the same format in assessment tasks as skill using tasks, ensuring that the content is similar and that learners know how to do the online task. | | | |
| 2.20 | In an online quiz, within a question, set the answers to shuffle (avoid the answer 'all of the above'). | | | |
| 2.21 | In a quiz for a reading task, have the text (PDF) in a pop up or in a separate tab so it is easier to switch between the text and the questions. (See also 2.3) | | | |

| 2.22 | Stage I: provide the text on paper while the quiz is done online during a face to face class. | | | |
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| 2.23 | Stage I: ask learners to complete their work on paper and send you a picture (if the LMS is a barrier for learners at CLB 1-2 use WhatsApp). | | | |
| 2.24 | Ensure that attempts on quizzes/assignments are automatically submitted at the end of the time, even if learners forget to click 'submit'. | | | |
| 2.25 | For writing assessment tasks, when using an Assignment/Drop box activity  choose 'Online text' as the submission type, so learners have to type their work directly into the text box. Use an Essay type question in Quiz. Avoid the option to upload files. | | | |
| 2.26 | For speaking assessment tasks, when using an Assignment/Drop box activity choose 'Online Poodle' and select an appropriate length for the maximum recording time. | | | |
| 2.27 | Schedule individual/small group appointments for speaking (and listening) assessments; assign independent work to be completed when not taking an assessment. Use break out rooms or mute other participants. | | | |
| 2.28 | Label or tag skill using and assessment tasks for collection to an online PBLA portfolio. When a Quiz is tagged after the task has been completed, run a full regrade. Decide if both the SU and AT for the same RWT can be collected as an artefact. | | | |

## Section 3. Best practices to provide feedback that moves learners forward.

| | Ways to provide feedback in an online/blended classroom. | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | For synchronous online classes or recorded video lessons, use a professional set up, possibly in a classroom, so you can use the physical location and mimic a face-to-face class. Be more than a face on a screen. Avoid using a background as you will not be able to show materials through your camera. | | | |
| 3.2 | Limit synchronous online classes to 1.5 hours (with a break from the screen). Use the remaining instructional time to provide feedback and to be present online. | | | |
| 3.3 | During a video class, call on each learner at least once or twice to include all learners, so everyone has an opportunity to practice a language skill and receive feedback, and to ensure all learners are present and attentive. Always provide clear instructions and give a 'heads up'. | | | |
| 3.4 | Respond to learners' asynchronous questions by email, chat or discussion forum within 48 hours. If individual replies are not possible, address issues in a collective response or talk about it during the following synchronous class. | | | |
| 3.5 | Use self-correcting skill building activities such as Quizes and H5P so learners receive immediate feedback. If you are able to edit activities, when setting up the task, include specific feedback on incorrect responses. Even automatic feedback can be more than just 'That's right!' or 'Sorry, that is incorrect'. | | | |

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| 3.6 | Explain to your class what feedback is, and what the purpose of it is (to move the learner forward) | | | |
| 3.7 | Let learners know that their work was received and return assessments in a timely manner (within a week). | | | |
| 3.8 | Use online rubrics linked to an assignment/activity. Discuss the rubric with your learners before they do a task. Add personalized notes when marking the task. | | | |
| 3.9 | Provide your feedback in the online task so that it is collected to the learner's ePortfolio. | | | |
| 3.10 | Use audio/video to embed personalized, specific feedback on assessments, such as with Poodle recordings. If it is not possible to do this for all learners, do it for a few different learners every time. | | | |
| 3.11 | Provide opportunities for learners to ask questions about the feedback you gave, clarify feedback if necessary (e.g., after class, during office hours). Ask learners what they have learned from the feedback to make sure they understand it. | | | |

# Section 4. Best practices to activate students to become instructional resources to one another.

| | Guidance for using groupwork (break out rooms) and facilitating peer feedback. | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | Build a classroom community by having learners introduce themselves at the beginning of the semester/month on a forum. This can be done in writing, with a recording, posting a picture. | | | |
| 4.2 | Begin each synchronous class with an icebreaker or a warmup activity that allows for social interaction and community building to create an atmosphere where it is safe to ask questions. | | | |
| 4.3 | Invite learners to share tips and resources on a class forum; these can be about learning English or the local community. | | | |
| 4.4 | Encourage learners to join a class community group outside of your LMS/online course. Have learners manage their own chat group, e.g. on WhatsApp, of which the instructor is not a part. | | | |
| 4.5 | Encourage learners to ask each other for assistance on using the platform, how to complete practice tasks etc., but also teach learners what inappropriate help looks like. (see 2.13) | | | |
| 4.6 | Include think-pair-share and/or jig saw activities that are started as homework and finished in class. For example: in a flipped approach assign a 'think' section for homework, and share in class. | | | |
| 4.7 | Create forum tasks where each learner must post their own work and reply to one or more classmates to provide peer feedback. Provide a simplified rubric in the forum task learners can use for giving eachother feedback. Learners receive a completion | | | |

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| | checkmark when they have met the posting requirements. (Alternatively use e.g. Padlet.) | | | |
| 4.8 | Explain to learners that a discussion forum is a communication forum more than a place to have a discussion. The word *discussion* might be interpreted as having a disagreement. | | | |
| 4.9 | Include a class glossary on your course home page. **Stage I** learners can add an image instead of a definition. **Stage II** learners can add an example sentence as a comment on the word. Restart the glossary each term to keep it current. | | | |
| 4.10 | Add a Comments Block to an activity page for two way communication and invite learners to leave a note there. Check the block and remove comments that are no longer relevant. | | | |
| 4.11 | Use break out rooms every class. Offer at least two practice opportunities for **5** (Stage I) - **10** (Stage II) minutes each. Keep groups small (2-5 learners) with roles and a clear task. Have groups report back in class. You do not have to visit every room. | | | |
| 4.12 | Change group members only occasionally (e.g. every other class). Match more experienced learners with new ones in breakout rooms so they can help each other. If needed ask a learner who shares the same first language to explain a task. | | | |
| 4.13 | Offer one break out room session as a break, for socializing. | | | |
| 4.14 | **Stage II:** Set up Groups on your course. For learners who have more advanced computer literacy skills, use shared folders, workshop, database or wiki activities (Moodle/Avenue) where learners can provide feedback on each other's work. | | | |

## Section 5. Best practices to activate students to become owners of their learning.

| | Suggestions and tools for goal setting and learner reflection. | I already do / will implement this | I need more training/ support | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | At the start of a new theme or module use a choice, poll, or questionnaire as a needs assessment tool. Share the results back to the class and clarify RWT goals of the module. (See section 1.) | | | |
| 5.2 | Lead by example: at the end of the module, reflect on the needs assessment done at the beginning. Ask learners if you achieved what you set out to do. | | | |
| 5.3 | Help learners to set realistic goals. Setting more realistic goals allows more learners to achieve them. | | | |
| 5.4 | Teach and encourage learners to use emoji reactions during synchronous video classes, similar to learner reflection charts. (See also 0.10) | | | |
| 5.5 | A few days before assessments, use (a)synchronous polls to ask learners if they feel ready for the assessment. | | | |
| 5.6 | Regularly use a questionnaire, feedback fruit, pear deck or data base activity for learners to reflect on their learning. For example: use some time on Friday for weekly reflection and to reinforce what they have learned. (For part time classes consider doing this bi-weekly.) Have a class conversation about how learners used their knowledge in real life. | | | |
| 5.7 | Once per module/theme have learners review their e-portfolio/ binder to see how many assessments were successful, what they still need to focus on and to see their own learning process. | | | |

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| 5.8 | **Stage I:** Create checklists where learners can add checkmarks themselves when they've completed a task (or steps in a task). | | | |
| 5.9 | Show learners what you -as a teacher- can see on the learner progress page or gradebook (without revealing confidential information), to let learners know you also check if they have completed work and achieved their goals. | | | |
| 5.10 | Include activities that were done in-class on your course, to be repeated asynchronously to reinforce learning and encourage independent study. | | | |
| 5.11 | Add short teacher created videos to a page on your course, for learners to review class content or to review homework instructions. **Stage I** max 5 minutes, **Stage II** max 10 minutes. | | | |
| 5.12 | **Stage II:** On your course, create a separate topic, page or folder for *Additional Practice*, where learners can access extra resources at their own pace. | | | |
| 5.13 | Consider leaving the most recent previous module available for learners to review, but only the most recent one. | | | |
| 5.14 | Consider offering virtual 'rewards' for completing tasks, such as a funny picture in a label that is released after an activity is completed, or the password required to access the next activity; consider using badges to 'gamify' your course. | | | |

## Additional Resource A. Courseware and PBLA modules for online and blended LINC program delivery

- Orientation to Avenue for LINC 3-5 Students, developed by Vancouver Community College https://avenue.ca/classroom/course/view.php?id=3868
- eSkills online units, developed by RCC Polytech, available on Avenue https://avenue.ca/classroom/course/view.php?id=3739
- Blended PBLA modules for CLB 1-6, developed by CCLB, available on Avenue, module packages also available on Tutela https://tutela.ca/Collection?itemId=35998
- Blended units for CLB 1-5+, developed by TCDSB, available on Avenue, module packages also available on Tutela
- Blended PBLA modules for CLB 6-8, developed by NLS, online activties and module packages available on Avenue
- MANSO Childcare Assistant Curriculum (blended courseware available on Avenue) https://mansomanitoba.ca/resources/childcare-assistant-eal-curriculum-building-clb-3-4-5-language-skills/
- Real World Tasks https://realworldtasks.ca/  A searchable database with a range of assessment tasks to support PBLA. The Task Bank also includes 22 complete modules. Developed by instructors from the Ottawa Carleton District School Board using PBLA protocols,  aligned to the CLBs  over a range of themes and levels from Foundations Literacy to CLB 7.
- LINC 1-4 Classroom Activities e-Resources (scroll down on page) https://settlementatwork.org/resources/linc-1-4-classroom-activities
- LINC 5-7 Classroom Activities (Vol. 1 and 2) e-Resources https://settlementatwork.org/lincdocs/linc5-7/
- Canadian Citizenship Test Preparation Course (CLB 4+, not a PBLA course), available on Avenue https://avenue.ca/classroom/course/view.php?id=3488
- In the Workplace & In the Community: Downloadable, interactive, multimedia eTextbooks for CLB 5-6, developed by Bow Valley College and Norquest College https://globalaccess.bowvalleycollege.ca/learners/oers.php
- Best of the Reader: Favorite Stories from the West Coast Reader. Ebooks with stories at three levels (CLB 2-6) including worksheets and answer keys https://www.bestofthereader.ca/
- Bow Valley College Literacy Readers https://globalaccess.bowvalleycollege.ca/learners/readers.php
- Norquest College - OWLs Online Workplace Integration Language Resources (for the office and for industry) https://www.norquest.ca/about-us/centres-and-institutes/colbourne-institute-for-inclusive-leadership/completed-projects/online-workplace-integration-language-resources.aspx

## Additional Resource B. Online Tools and useful websites

**Below is a list of tools and websites mentioned by instructors and learners during the field research.**

- Agenda Web: https://agendaweb.org/
- Breaking News English: https://breakingnewsenglish.com/
- Duolingo: Learners need an account, free  https://www.duolingo.com/
- ELC Study Zone: https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone
- Ellii: instructors can set up classes and assign activities https://ellii.com
- ELLO: http://www.elllo.org/
- ISS of BC Janis' ESL:  links to activities for various levels. The topics are varied and cover all skills, vocabulary and grammar. https://janis-esl.issbc.org/
- Kahoot: https://kahoot.com/
- Learning Chocolate: vocabulary practice https://www.learningchocolate.com/
- Learning English with CBC News: https://www.cbc.ca/learning-english
- Lingua House: ESL worksheets and lesson plans for English Teachers (level A0-C2) https://www.linguahouse.com/
- Live Worksheets: requires log in, allows for embedding, but worksheets are teacher made, so there is no consistent approach, they may not align with CLBs or be appropriate for literacy learners https://www.liveworksheets.com/worksheets/en
- Oxford https://elt.oup.com/student/englishforlife/?cc=global&selLanguage=en
- Padlet: requires teachers to set up an account. A free account lets you have active three padlets at one time. Padlets can be archived and re-activated. https://padlet.com/
- Quizlet: requires teachers to set up an account. https://quizlet.com/
- TEDed: https://ed.ted.com/
- Townsend Press: requires teachers to set up an account https://www.townsendpress.net/
- Wordwall: has free basic account and paid accounts, you can look for 'public' activities and embed activities on course pages https://wordwall.net/

# Additional Resource C. Checklist for Evaluating Online Tools and Sites

When you are planning to use a tool/site that is new to you or your learners, consider using a checklist to decide if the tool is a good fit. The following list of evaluation criteria was taken from the Sloan Consortium "[Web 2.0 Selection Criteria: Save Time Choosing an Appropriate Tool](#)" website.

**Criteria 1: Access**
Is the tool accessible by Windows and Mac users?
Is the tool / product of tool viewable in a variety of web browsers?
Does the tool provide options that support ADA compliance?
Is the tool free?
Will the tool be around for a while?

**Criteria 2: Usability**
Do you have to create an account to use the tool?
Is the tool easy to use?
Does the tool have a robust and easy to use Help section?
Does anything have to be downloaded and installed on the computer to use the tool?

**Criteria 3: Privacy & Intellectual Property**
Does the tool allow you to restrict access of your work/your students' work?
Does the tool protect your personal data (e.g. email address given when account created)?
Does the tool allow you to determine the copyright status of the content you've created?
Can you save a copy of the product to your desktop for archival purposes?

**Criteria 4: Workload & Time Management**
Does the tool make it easy to track student work (for grading purposes)?
Does the tool support private and public commenting (for individual and group feedback)?
Is it possible to embed the tool into the LCMS you're using?

**Criteria 5: Fun Factor**
Does the tool allow you to be creative during the learning process?
Does the tool allow you to demonstrate creativity in the learning product?
Does the tool provide opportunities for different types of interaction (visual, verbal, written)?
Does the tool increase the perception of connectedness?
Does the tool encourage collaboration?

**Source:** Evaluating web 2.0 tools for education. [https://libguides.tyndale.ca/c.php?g=315373&p=2107790](https://libguides.tyndale.ca/c.php?g=315373&p=2107790)

# Additional Resource D. Literature, articles and publications

Many resources about online and blended teaching and learning were reviewed. Below is a selection of publications consulted during this project.

- 8 Strategies to Improve Participation in Your Virtual Classroom - E. Minero, Edutopia, 2020. https://www.edutopia.org/article/8-strategies-improve-participation-your-virtual-classroom/
- Canadian language benchmarks: ESL for adults - Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2012. https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/language-benchmarks.pdf
- Creative and Innovative Online Teaching Strategies: Facilitation for Active Participation - L. Sharoff. Journal of Educators Online, 16(2), 2019. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1223934
- Designing a Community of Inquiry in Online Courses - H. Fiock. The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 21(1), 135–153, 2020. https://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/3985
- Digital Navigator Model - National Digital Inclusion Alliance, 2023. https://www.digitalinclusion.org/digital-navigator-model/
- Enhancing the online class: Effective use of synchronous interactive online instruction - E. Acosta-Tello. Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 17, Nov 2015. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1102879
- Faculty Perceptions of Online Teaching Effectiveness and Indicators of Quality - C. Frazer, D. H. Sullivan, D. Weatherspoon, and L. Hussey. Nursing Research and Practice, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1155/2017/9374189
- Focus Groups. The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods - J. Smithson. SAGE Publications, 2008. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446212165
- Interviewing in qualitative research: The one-to-one interview - F. Ryan, M. Coughlan, M., and P. Cronin. International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation, 16(6), 309–314, 2009. https://doi.org/10.12968/ijtr.2009.16.6.42433
- ISTE Standards - International Society for Technology in Education, 2023. https://www.iste.org/iste-standards
- PBLA Practice Guidelines - Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2019. https://pblapg.language.ca/toc/
- Pedagogy & Practice for Online English Language Teacher Education. Chapter 1: Teaching Presence in Online Teaching - F. Pawan. TESOl Press, 2016. https://www.everand.com/book/489540601/Pedagogy-Practice-for-Online-English-Language-Teacher-Education

- TESOL Technology Standards - D. Healey, E. Hanson-Smith, P. Hubbard, S. Ioannou-Georgiou, G. Kessler, and P. Ware. TESOL Press, 2011. https://bookstore.tesol.org/tesol-technology-standards-products-9781942799627.php
- TESOL Technology Standards Framework. Chapter 8: Online Teaching and Learning with the Technology Standards - D. Healey, V. Hegelheimer, P. Hubbard, S. Iannou-Georgiou, P. Ware, and G. Kessler. TESOL Press, 2009. https://www.everand.com/book/498378141/TESOL-Technology-Standards
- The 10 Fundamentals of Teaching Online for Faculty and Instructors - T. Bates, 2016. https://www.tonybates.ca/2016/10/12/initiating-instructors-to-online-learning-10-fundamentals/
- The Blended & Online 'New Normal' Report 2021-22 - M. Sturm and R. McBride, New Language Solutions, 2022. http://learnit2teach.ca/
- The Effects of Blended Learning in LINC: A LearnIT2teach Demonstration Project - J. Cummings, M. Sturm, and A. Avram. New Language Solutions, 2019. https://learnit2teach.ca/

## Additional Resource E. Support files for teachers

| Best Practice | Support files: Many of these linked files are specific to the Avenue Moodle LMS, others link to general help files for Moodle, D2L, Teams, Zoom etc. |
|---|---|
| 1.3 | Introducing the courseware help block to learners |
| | Learner Courseware help block files and videos: https://avenue.ca/static/help_block/index.html |
| 1.4 | Add a course outline document |
| 1.10 | Add labels to organize your course |
| | General information about Moodle Label |
| | Show what learners need access to |
| 1.12 | Use completion tracking |
| | Use a checklist: |
| | Setting up a Manual Checklist |
| | Setting up Automatic Checklist Items |
| | Use the grade book |
| | Customize the Teacher's Gradebook |
| 2.6 | Manage Forum discussions |
| | Add a Forum |
| 2.10 | Embed files/links or open in a new window |
| | Video, PDF, URL |
| | General information about Moodle File resource |
| 2.11 | Set completion requirements |
| 2.12 | Use the Essay question |
| | Create forms/templates for the answer |

| | |
|---|---|
| 2.18 | [Release activities conditionally/with restrictions](#) |
| | [Set up time/restrictions on Quiz attempts](#) |
| | Add [availability and due dates](#) to D2L Brightspace Content |
| | Add [release conditions to content](#) on D2L Brightspace |
| 2.20 | [Add a quiz, shuffle the answers](#) |
| | General information about [Moodle Quiz](#) |
| 2.25 | Use 'Online Text' in an [Assignment](#)/Drop Box activity |
| | General information about [Moodle Assignment](#) |
| 2.27 | [Schedule individual/small group appointments](#) |
| 2.28 | Tag tasks for collection to an [online PBLA portfolio](#) |
| 3.5 | Use self-correcting activities that include specific feedback |
| | [Quiz,](#)  [H5P](#) |
| | General information about [Moodle H5P](#) |
| | [Create a Quiz with Microsoft Forms](#) |
| | [Create and configure a Quiz in D2L Brightspace](#) |
| 3.8 | [On quizzes](#) |
| | [On Assignments with a rubric](#) |
| | [Evaluate assignments on D2L Brightspace](#) |
| 3.8 | Provide personalized action-oriented feedback |
| 4.1 | Use [forums](#) |
| | General information about [Moodle Forums](#) |
| | [Create and manage Discussions on D2L Brightspace](#) |
| 4.9 | Start a class [Glossary](#) |
| | General information about [Moodle Glossary](#) |

| 4.10 | Add a Comments Block |
|------|---------------------|
| 4.11 | Use break out rooms<br>In Big Blue Button<br>In Zoom<br>In Teams |
| 4.14 | Set up Groups on your course<br>General information about Moodle Groups |
| 5.1 | Set up a Choice/Poll as a needs assessment<br>Or use a Questionnaire<br>General information about Moodle Choice<br>Add a Poll to your Teams Channel |
| 5.4 | Teach learners to use emoji reactions/set status<br>In Big Blue Button<br>In Zoom<br>In Teams |
| 5.6 | Use learner reflection tools<br>Questionnaire or Database<br>General informatio on Moodle Database<br>Feedback Fruits |
| 5.7 | View the online PBLA portfolio<br>Video for learners in the Avenue Help Block |
| 5.12 | Create a Topic for extra practice |
| 5.14 | Use Badges to gamify your course |