

# Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington

## Literacy Screening Tool and Guide



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## The Screening Tool

This is NOT a test or assessment. Your client will NOT do reading and math activities. You will not do any marking. The screening tool will not reveal what “level” skills the client has.

This tool will help you

- Recognize a client’s need for further educational assessment
- Recognize a client’s need for academic assessment/PLAR
- Capture educational information through conversation and observation
- Analyze that information
- Refer your client to appropriate literacy or educational services

This tool is designed to be used during or after a one-to-one interview or meeting with your client. You can show the tool to the client or you can use it privately as a resource for yourself. The screening tool is divided into two parts. Part 1 captures information based on your observations. Part 2 captures information based on direct questions posed to the client. You can use Part 1, Part 2 or both parts together. The screening tool can be used to record information gathered from a single meeting or over several meetings. It can be used in conjunction with other tools or resources.



## Screening Tool Part 1a - Observation Only

### Recognizing Literacy or Educational Needs by Observation

Do you notice that your client	YES	NO
● Fills in forms inaccurately or incompletely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Rarely follows up on written or printed instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Shows poor confidence or skills when using automated telephones and voice mail systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Asks very few questions about printed information—or ignores the material and say they will “look at it later” or that they “didn’t bring their eye glasses”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Asks an excessive amount of questions about printed material that would be obvious to a reader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Appears to have had someone else fill in their forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Appears restless or distracted during meetings that involve writing and reading printed materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Consistently misses or avoids meetings that involve writing and reading printed materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Shows up very early, very late or not at all for appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Does not appear to write appointments in a calendar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Has a child who is doing poorly in school, struggling with literacy development or who has been diagnosed with a learning disability and the client is unwilling to discuss the child’s needs with the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Total Score</b>		
If you check “YES” <b>three or more (3+)</b> times, your client may be struggling with literacy issues or gaps in their literacy skills.		



## Screening Tool Part 1b - Level 3 Essential Skills

### What does “Level 3” mean?

Level 3 skills are considered the benchmark needed for employment in today’s labour market. Use this list of sample level 3 tasks to determine if your client has level ES level 3 skills. If the client tells you or you observe the client struggling in any of these areas, refer the client for an educational assessment. If the client reports not using these skills in prior employment or in their home life, refer the client for an educational assessment.

Essential Skills	Sample Tasks at Level 3
Reading Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to equipment manuals to find and read relevant information when solving machine or equipment problems.</li> <li>Read books or articles in newspapers, magazines and websites to gain background knowledge on a specific topic</li> </ul>
<b>Client struggles with ES level 3 reading text</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Document Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use flow charts and diagnostic tables in equipment manuals to troubleshoot equipment problems and to choose repair options</li> <li>Refer to graphs to compare data such as the amount of water processed in a day.</li> <li>Complete a multi-page application form (for a job, pension or health insurance)</li> <li>Interpret sewing patterns or deck plans to cut the correct shape/size of materials</li> <li>Read and understand assembly diagrams and follow instructions to assemble a new sun shelter or patio furniture</li> </ul>
<b>Client struggles with ES level 3 document use</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write a 500-word paragraph documenting a meeting, accident or other event.</li> <li>Write a cover letter to apply for a job. Address the requirements in the job and describe why you are a good candidate for the position.</li> <li>Write a letter to the newspaper editor or create a blog expressing your opinion about a specific issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Client struggles with ES level 3 writing</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calculate the total cost of a purchase, including discounts and taxes.</li> <li>Calculate number of rolls of wallpaper required using wall surface area and coverage rates</li> <li>Review and analyze quality control data or customer survey responses to identify patterns, possible improvements or to make adjustments</li> <li>Estimate the material and labour costs associated with making repairs to a vehicle</li> </ul>
<b>Client struggles with ES level 3 numeracy</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Digital Technology	<p>Note: ES Level 2 skills required for most jobs unless working in a technology field. All other applications are job-specific and need to be assessed individually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E-mail</li> <li>Texting</li> <li>Internet search or research</li> <li>Basic word processing to write a letter</li> <li>Social media</li> <li>Online banking</li> </ul>
<b>Client struggles with ES level 2 digital technology</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>If you checked the “yes” box for any of these areas, refer the client for an educational assessment.</b>	



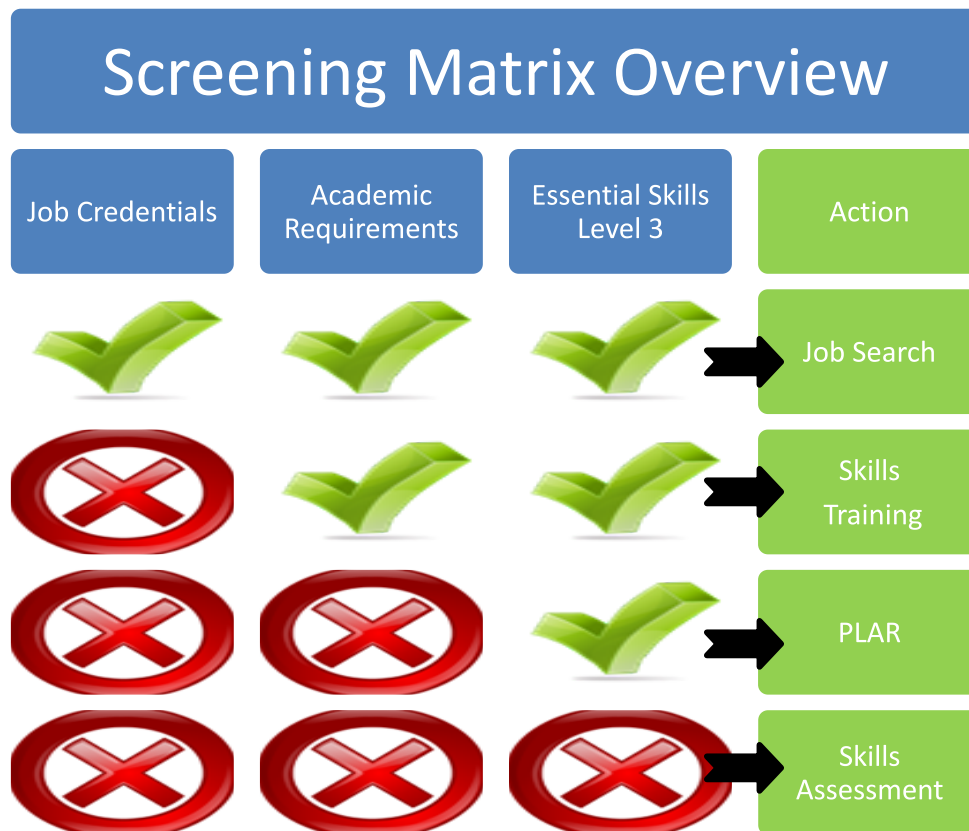
## Screening Tool Part 2—Direct Questions-- Guide

Once the client is comfortable discussing upgrading or “going back to school”, even if it is for only two hours per week, how do you know which program or what path offers the best chance of success for your client?

Part 2 of the screening tool will help you and your client explore the client’s current educational status and next steps. Some clients will be able to begin programming immediately. Others may need to be referred for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) or for an Educational Assessment. Depending on the client’s comfort level, you can use the educational checklist on page 7 directly with the client or you can use it as a private document to record information for your own reference. Some questions are of a sensitive nature. Asking clients if they failed grades may provoke a negative response. You may need to employ a more conversational tone to get answers to some of these questions and still maintain rapport with the client. The educational checklist can be used in conjunction with other tools and resources.

### How to use the Screening Matrix

To obtain employment, most clients need a combination of job credentials, academic requirements and level 3 Essential Skills. If one or more of these components are missing, further educational assessment or supports may be required. The Screening Matrix below is an easy way to visualize and communicate to your client any missing components and next steps.



## Screening Tool Part 2—Educational Checklist

Requirements		Next Steps
<b>Job Credentials</b>		
Does the client have the certification to start searching for a job in their chosen field?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> Client can begin job search immediately
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Client may need to begin specific employment skills training
	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Further certification verification required
<b>Academic Requirements--Includes University Degrees, College Diplomas and Certification, Trade Certifications and High School Diplomas and Credits</b>		
Does the client have the academic requirements to enter a Skills Training program?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> Client can begin skills training immediately
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Client may need to upgrade or obtain specific academic requirements
	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Client may need PLAR
<b>WARNING: Not all "Grade 12 Diplomas" are created equal. Not all educators accept all "Grade 12" or equivalents. Is the client's "Grade 12 Diploma" ...</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the "basic", "essential" or "workplace" level?</li> </ul>	YES or Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for PLAR or educational assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A GED (General Education Diploma)?</li> </ul>	YES or Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Client may need PLAR or to verify requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An ACE (Academic and Career Entrance) Equivalent?</li> </ul>	YES or Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Client may need PLAR or to verify requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From another province or country?</li> </ul>	YES or Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for PLAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From more than 6 years ago?</li> </ul>	YES or Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for PLAR
<b>Does the client have ANY of the following</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An IEP (Individualized Education Plan)</li> <li>Special Education</li> <li>Vocational, Basic or Life Skills Education</li> <li>Failed grades</li> <li>Testing for Learning disability</li> <li>Prolonged absence from school</li> <li>Extra help at school or tutors</li> <li>Difficulty in on-the-job training at previous jobs</li> </ul>	YES or Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for PLAR or for educational assessment
<b>Essential Skills Level 3—OALCF Level 3</b>		
Has the client been assessed for Essential Skills, OALCF, LBS Levels in Reading Text, Document Use, Writing, Numeracy and Digital Technology	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain results from an educational assessment and consult with assessor or Literacy Network regarding referral and next steps
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for educational assessment
	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for educational assessment
<b>Using your observations in Part 1 of the screening tool</b>		
Is the client comfortable performing level 3 tasks in reading, document use, writing and numeracy? Are they comfortable performing level 2 tasks in digital technology?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client to appropriate upgrading program or contact Project READ for advice
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for educational assessment
	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer client for educational assessment

