

Metro-Vancouver ESL Ministry Network

Opportunities to serve multi-lingual newcomers in your area

Volunteers at various churches in Metro Vancouver serve their Canadian newcomer neighbors by facilitating English classes. Materials come from a variety of sources. Programs are created to suit the needs of the learners and the church's capacity. Some programs offer optional or required scripture studies. Volunteers need not be trained teachers to lead engaging discussions and promote a sense of belonging and love to these "strangers" among us.

How can your faith community serve new Canadians effectively?

Contents

- 2 Introduction of Simplified English Bibles & Spiritual Motivation
- 3 Network mission statement and a bit of history
- 4 - 9 Model: Program Planning Elements
 - Questions to guide your leadership team (not all have to be answered)
- 9 Answers to the Scriptural Motivation task
- 10 - 12 Christian ESL materials/resource list with e-links

Key contacts

Metro Vancouver ESL Ministry Network c/o janicegtpenner@gmail.com

Periodic news emails and announcements of events.

Some faith-based materials available at www.AACE-English.com

We will offer workshops, re-establish a board, get a website, etc. in Fall 2025

As the lead facilitator, Janice can meet with you in person or on zoom, connect you with churches in your city and share materials, etc.

Do you want to join our leadership team?

Cooperative ESL Ministries (CESLM)

<https://eslcooperative.ca/>

Allan Pole al@eslcooperative.ca

Numerous resources available!

Training sessions & Webinars

Excellent contact for any church in Alberta and beyond

Southern Ontario Cooperative of ESL Ministries (SOCEM)

<https://eslministries.org/>

Jennifer eslministries@gmail.com

Monthly prayer meeting

Quarterly Newsletter

Webinar series from Jan to May

Annual Fall training conference - October

Numerous resources on website

Why should we offer a program? Some Scriptural Motivation

Note: Simpler versions of the Bible should be used for English Language Learners.

- For example, the writers of the *Easy English Bible* only used 1200 common English words, so even beginners can understand it. <https://www.easvenglish.bible/bible/easy/>
- The verses below are from the *Contemporary English Version (CEV)* which can be found at <https://www.biblegateway.com/>. This site has numerous versions you can explore.

Match the Scripture verse with the "Bible address"

_____ For now there are faith, hope, and love. But of these three, the greatest is love.	Acts 4:20
_____ Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples.	Matthew 5:13
_____ I do everything I can to win everyone I possibly can.	Matthew 25:35
_____ No one can have faith without hearing the message about Christ.	Matthew 28:19 a
_____ Then Jesus asked, "Which one of these three people was a real neighbor to the man who was beaten up by robbers?"	Luke 10:36
_____ We cannot keep quiet about what we have seen and heard.	Luke 14: 12 - 14 Romans 10:17
_____ Welcome people into your home and don't grumble about it.	1 Corinthians 9:22a
_____ When I am with people whose faith is weak, I live as they do to win them.	1 Corinthians 9:22b
_____ When I was a stranger, you welcomed me.	1 Corinthians 13:13
_____ When you give a feast invite (people who) cannot pay you back.	1 Peter 4:9.
_____ You are the salt for everyone on the earth.	

[answers are on page 9]

Metro-Vancouver ESL Ministry Network Mission Statement

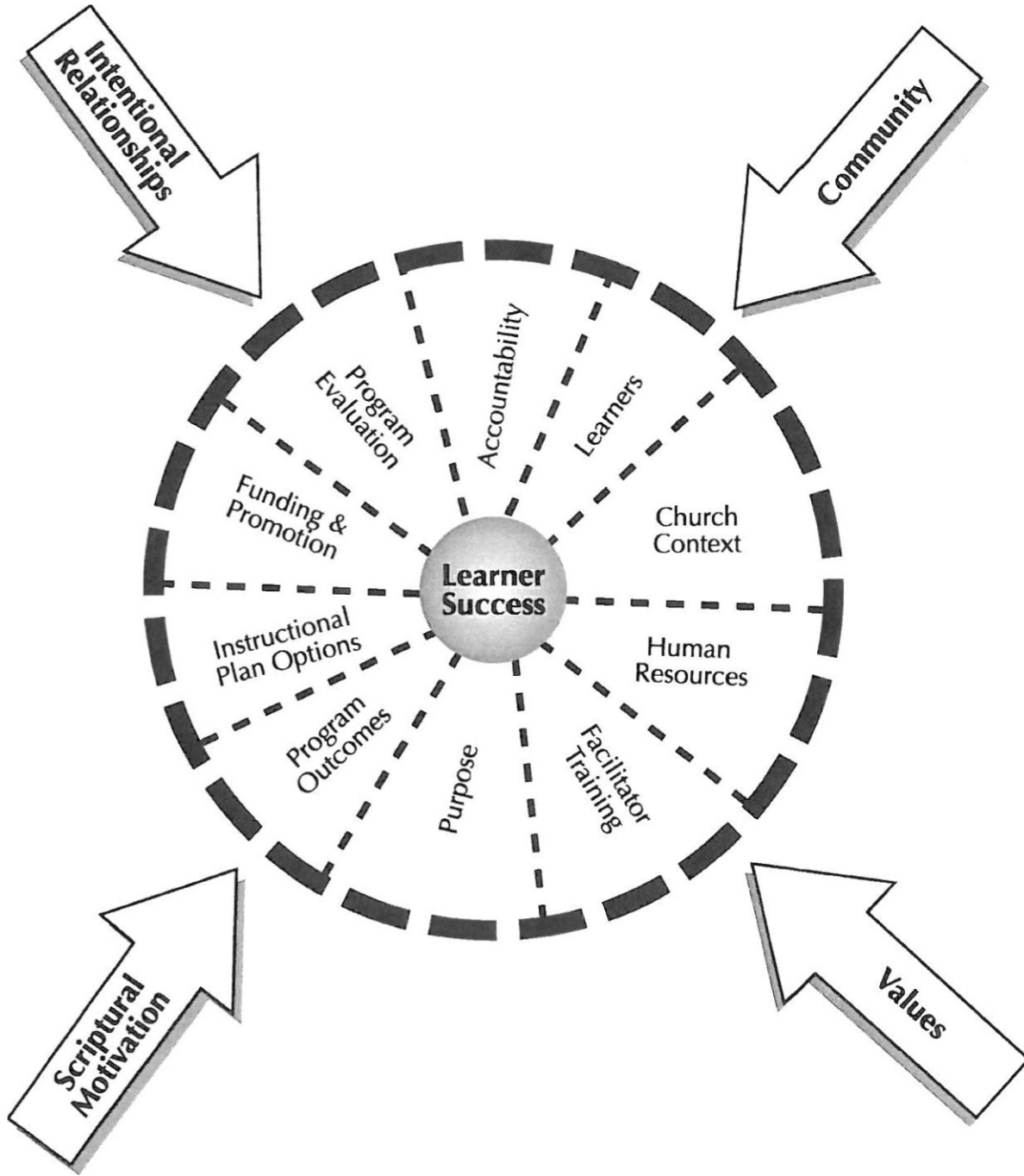
Serving!

- Sincere support for Canada’s immigrant newcomers
- Equipping volunteer teachers to be more effective
- Respecting the diversity of our learners & their needs
- Venturing into the unknown with a passion for the impossible
- Initiating cooperative training events
- Nurturing innovation, creativity, integrity and professionalism
- Giving to the community because God has given us much to share

A bit of history and our network activities

Prior to 2004	Kim (Warren) Ma held occasional meetings with ESL program directors. By Spring 2004, there were 25 church ESL programs on her list.
Aug 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The 1st meeting of a revised network was held with reps from 10 churches. Greetings were extended from Madeline Johnson (founder, CESLM-Calgary network) and Tom (leader, SOCEM -Southern Ontario network) ▪ Lead facilitator: Janice GT Penner
2007 - 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership Team - reps from Tenth Avenue, ISMC, Ward Memorial Baptist, Grace Vancouver, Coquitlam Presbyterian and Broadway ▪ We established the http://eslministries.com website with pages on resources, local services, a lending library list, FAQs and materials. ▪ After SOCEM took on the domain, some materials were placed on Janice’s All About Communicating in English website
2006 - 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National network discussions began - Calgary, Toronto & Vancouver ▪ 12 reps from BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario met in Calgary ▪ Over 18 months we advised the Canadian Bible Society team in publishing the <i>Newcomer Bible</i>
2006 - 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 21 very practical ½ day workshops hosted by various churches on various topics (pronunciation, Bible lessons, using music, and so on.)
2008 2011 2013 2014 2016 2017 2019 2023	<p>Full day event hosted by Trinity Western University at TWU</p> <p>Full day event hosted by Trinity Western University at TWU</p> <p>Full day event hosted by Carey Institute at Broadmoor Baptist</p> <p>Full day event hosted by Carey Institute at Trinity Baptist</p> <p>Full day event hosted by Carey Institute at Carey Institute</p> <p>Full day event hosted by Carey Institute at Carey Institute</p> <p>Full day event hosted by Our Network at Cariboo Hill Salvation Army</p> <p>Full day Hybrid event hosted by Our Network at Douglas College</p>
2022 +	<p>CESLM (Calgary)and SOCEM (Southern Ontario) began co-hosting a monthly zoom prayer meeting with ESL ministry leaders across the country.</p> <p>When we, SOCEM or CESLM host webinars, everyone is invited. Sometimes there is a nominal registration fee.</p>

Faith - Based English Language Learning Program Planning Elements



Source : Janice GT Penner (c) 2025
Metro Vancouver ESL Ministry Network
janicegtpenner@gmail.com

What kind of program does God want you to lead?

- There is no "best program." The list includes successful program ideas
- These questions are meant to focus your leadership team.
- Some questions may not apply, or they may generate even more questions for you!

Some questions to guide your planning

Purpose: What can you offer? These are just a few options:

- Bible Study only
- Citizenship preparation
- Completing visa applications [foreign farm workers]
- Conversation skills
- Equipping of non-English speaking Christians [ex: Coquitlam Christian Center, Janice & members of the English congregation led *ALPHA for ESOL* with Korean & Persian congregation members who shared the building with CCC.]
- Evangelism
- Family ministry (Parenting 3rd culture kids, Reading to your children -ask Janice)
- • Income Tax workshops (or other free services)
- Job finding workshops / clubs
- Music (weekly choir practices for special seasons)
- One-to-one Senior & international Student matches (can meet on Sunday morning!)
- Reviewing the sermon materials after the service
- Workplace focus (specific field, safety training for construction, etc.).

Learners

- Who lives in your neighborhood?
- Are there enough people that need and have time for English services?
- Who do you want to serve?
 - A particular language group?
 - Believers or seekers who are familiar with your church?
- Believers in an ethnic language church to help them express their beliefs in English.
- This may influence if you seek LI language/translations for PR or during sessions.]
- Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW -nannies, caregivers, etc)? or Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP)?
- How old are the majority of your target group? Retired? Working adults? Homework club? [This will effect scheduling (time of day) and number of hours per week.]
- What are their needs?

- How can you find out the needs of your learners?
- Does it appear that people in your neighborhood want to learn English?
- Is it okay with everyone if the learners are there more for "social interaction" and not really working hard to learn English? [social club for seniors; a lot of L 1 may be used]

Church Context

A) Church's Mission & Engagement

- How does this program fit into the DNA of your church? Is it part of missions? Outreach? Can a new division be created?
- Where will funding come from to cover expenses?
- How can the wider congregation be involved? [prayer team, food team, "adopt a family," Lunar New Year's party guests, cultural variety show guests, etc.]

B) Other ESL support programs?

- What other faith-based programs exist in your area?
- How long have they operated? How is it going?
- Can your church cooperate with a nearby/ existing program somehow?
- Are there enough learners in the area to maintain another viable program?
- Are there government funded English programs (LINC) or private schools nearby? Will your program be seen as a competitor to any of the above?

C) Facilities

- How much space do you have for individual breakout/classrooms?
- When is space available during the week?
- Is there enough adult furniture for these rooms?
- If necessary, who will move the furniture before/ after classes?
- If this is added to the custodial duties, how much extra will this cost per month?
- Is there a large space nearby for larger groups sessions if this is desired?
- Is there comfortable space for beverage and food consumption?

Human Resources [Facilitator & Facilitator training]

- Who is available to capably coordinate or lead the program?
- [preferably someone with an education or TESOL background] o What special skills / knowledge can people in your church share with learners? o Are you able to pay a coordinator/director? How much?
- Who is able to facilitate (teach)?
- [It's best to consider ourselves as facilitators instead of teachers. The term is less daunting for volunteers, professionals won't get as upset, and might help leaders talk less. The common concept that a teacher's role is to "impart knowledge" is hard to break]
- How will volunteer facilitators be recruited?
- Are all the facilitators required to be believers if the program does not have a Christian/Biblical content focus?
- Are there enough facilitators to sustain the program longer than 1 or 2 "terms"?

[a common issue: Do most of the seniors go south during the winter?]

- What are the benefits for the volunteer facilitators?
- What support will your program offer to prevent "burn out"?
- How will you screen the willing facilitators?
- Are they good communicators with people who don't speak English perfectly?
[Facilitators will need to be able to speak in basic English skills instead of using baby talk/ incomplete sentences, speaking louder, or slowing down. It is not impossible. They can learn to express ideas in simple English with frequently used words.]
- Will you be using curriculum that requires special skills? [internet search skills, rewriting published materials, word-processing skills]
- Do you want the facilitators to take something similar to the "Plan to Protect" training or undergo a criminal record check?

[The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada has a protection plan for churches.]

www.winningkidsinc.ca

Program Outcomes

- How can you measure the success of your program?
- Does your church leadership and membership expect the learners to attend services?
Will accommodations be made if they do come to services? [translation, etc.]
- Will pastoral staff insist that the learners and their families attend religious events?
[A sad example is a pastor who required the learners (predominately enthusiastic female Muslims) to attend an Easter event with their families. The Muslim husbands were so upset because of whatever was said, so they forbade their wives to attend any future conversation classes.]

Instructional Plan Options

A) Learner placement

- How will you decide the level of the learners? Self report? Mini one-to-one interview?
Observation of 4 people discussing a picture? Online evaluation test
- How will learners "progress" to another level?

B) Instructional Materials

- Will you be using mainstream ESL textbooks?
- Will you adapt existing Bible Study materials?
- Where can you find out about Christian English language learning materials?
- Will you choose material from the internet?
- How will topics be chosen for the sessions?
- Will all levels be discussing the same topic but in different ways?
- Will all levels use similar texts? (See *Westcoast Reader*)
- Which version of the Bible should be used? Can you get free ones? [Canadian Bible Society]

C) Time Considerations / Scheduling

- How long will your terms be?
- How long will the sessions/ classes be? 45 min? 60 min? 90 min?
- Will there be a beverage and snack break?
- Will all classes have a break at the same time? Where?
- Who will purchase, distribute, oversee the food items?
- How will you know about dietary restrictions for individuals or specific ethnic/religious groups?

D) Group format: Large group and break out groups

- Will everyone meet as a large group and then break out into smaller groups (levels)? What will happen in large group? Singing? Object lessons? Devotional? Bible verse discussion? Bible verse memorization challenges?
- Will the large group session be before or after small groups?
- If the large group session includes Christian content, will it be optional?

Funding and Promotion

A) Funding

- What are the fixed and variable costs?
- Where will funding come from to cover expenses?
- Will your program be competing with other ministries in the church for funds?

Note: As a non-profit institution, churches cannot legally charge learners for the ESL program. They may charge for textbooks or supplies (photocopies) or coffee break items. [The BC government has disciplined one church that I know of because the church charged individuals for classes while claiming it was a "church program."]

- Which part of the church budget will cover the expenses?
- If necessary, who pays for paper and photocopying?
- Will the program be charged for utilities? (heating/electricity)
- Will resource books be purchased for the facilitators for reference? [Helpful items include a few grammar texts; language learner dictionaries]
- Will a class set of picture dictionaries be made available for students?
- Can an informal lending library be set up with graded readers or book donations?
- Will a "class reservation fee" be charged with most of the money returned if learners have excellent or consistent attendance?

B) Promotion

Note: If there is Biblical or Christian life content, it is imperative that this is noted on the promotion materials. It's about integrity, and this is the first criticism from my peers in the professional English teaching profession. I have often heard, "Those free lessons in church basements are a 'bait and switch scam!'"

- How will non-native English speakers in your area be alerted of this opportunity?
- What types of media will you use? English only? L2 as well?

- How much time will there be between the announcement(s), registration and start of classes?
- How many learners do you want in your first term?

[If things go well, word of mouth is all that is needed to continue further.]

Accountability/ Evaluation

- Who is the program team accountable to? Pastor? Board? A committee?
- Will the program team meet regularly for planning and prayer sessions?
- What happens if a volunteer misses several sessions in a row?
- Will a program review be completed? What format? How often? By whom? Will the learners be included in a program review?

These questions may appear overwhelming.

Remember, you needn't have answers for all of them!

They are meant to help people consider the many features of program planning.

ANSWERS Why? Some Scriptural Motivation (page 2)

1 Corinthians 13:13 For now there are faith, hope, and love. But of these three, the greatest is love

Matthew 28:19 a Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples.

1 Corinthians 9:22b No I do everything I can to win everyone I possibly can.

Romans 10:17 No one can have faith without hearing the message about Christ.

Luke 10:36 Then Jesus asked, "Which one of these three people was a real neighbor to the man who was beaten up by robbers?"

Acts 4:20 We cannot keep quiet about what we have seen and heard.

1 Peter 4:9 Welcome people into your home and don't grumble about it.

1 Corinthians 9:22a When I am with people whose faith is weak, I live as they do to win them.

Matt 25:35 When I was a stranger, you welcomed me.

Luke 14: 12 -14 When you give a feast invite (people who) cannot pay you back.

Matt 5:13 You are the salt for everyone on the earth.

Thank you! Cam On XieXie Domo Arigato Kamsahamnida

Merci Spaciba Rahmet Danke Grazie Gracias Salamat

The next pages list resources that are currently available (as of 8th Feb 2025)

Faith-based Resources for ESL programs (Feb 2025)

- I will put these pages on my website **by Feb 15th**, so live links can be used.
- www.AACE-English.com → Resources → Faith-Based ESL Materials

Program Planning	
ESL Ministry Manual: Practical Guide for Churches (2020) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by Dr. Marion Chang • 127 pages 	https://eslministries.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ESL-Ministry-Manual-Formatted-Edited.pdf
A Quick-Start Guide to ESL Ministry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by Cort & Karen Miller, Olathe, Kansas. Adapted by SOCEM • 10 pages 	https://eslministries.org/start-an-esl-program/
How to Start an ESL Ministry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shannon Mann, founder & CEO • She is part of our National prayer network 	https://tesolministry.org/How-to-Start-an-ESL-Ministry.pdf
Reaching the World at our Door Step <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission to North America • 7 pages • Have other resources/articles 	https://resources.pcamna.org/resource/esl-ministries_startinganeshschool/
Teaching English in Church: A practical guide to teaching English ...Christian mission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Bradridge & Louisa Walsh • 2019 • \$12.00 USD & Shipping 	https://www.amazon.ca/Teaching-English-Church-practical-immigrants/dp/1798739631 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBN-13 978-179873963 • 144 pages

A must-read resource for every program

ELT Basics: A Beginner's Guide to English Language Teaching

By [Jan Edwards Dormer](#) see also **TESOL Tools** below

- a straightforward, practical, and foundational understanding of English language teaching
- covers a broad range of important topics, such as what it means to “know” a language, how people learn new languages, and what teachers can do to teach English effectively.
- lists, visuals, and other resources to maximize understanding, even with limited time.
- e-book \$28.99 USD, paperback \$37.95, there is a companion website as well

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/elt-basics-jan-edwards-dormer/1143071444>

Christian ESL Materials	
Alpha for ESOL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lot of support materials 	https://support.alphacanada.org/en/articles/3140836-what-is-alpha-for-esol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free downloads, Ask Janice for ideas
Basic Bible Studies ... New & Growing Christians (2003) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Shaver 	https://www.indigo.ca/en-ca/basic-bible-studies-in-everyday-english-for-new-and-growing-christians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$8 CDN

Bible and English <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All levels Teaching material -books 	https://www.bibleandenglish.com/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDFs for reasonable fee
Bible Study Tools - Readers Version <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bible in large font "Cheat Sheets" guides 	https://www.biblestudytools.com/nirv/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to other Bible versions
CESLM (Calgary network) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-profit & Charitable status 	https://eslcooperative.ca/resources/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to numerous free resources Informative Newsletter
Easy English Bible (UK) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses only 2800 high frequency words Books of Bible 	https://www.easyenglish.bible/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories from Bible - all free Other books & Stories in Easy English
The Hope Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mars-Hill (former- Youth for Christ) Watch full length movie or in chapters ESL Curriculum Guide -32 p 	https://www.mars-hill.org/the-hope https://www.thehopeproject.com/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75+ translations Extensive Study plans - 65 lessons - all free downloads 167 pages
I AM ESL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura Swart, Calgary Online curriculum for churches and volunteers 	swartfamily@shaw.ca 403-542-6545
Jesus Film Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cru[®] Ministry 2000 + languages 	https://www.jesusfilm.org/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streaming Library - all free DVD, youtube channel, app
Joy Two Bible Based Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gail Tiessen (BC) & Elfrieda Lepp-Kaethler (Manitoba) Integrated skills Topic Focused books 	https://joytwopublications.com/ https://joytwopublications.com/catalogue/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development materials 19 page catalogue
Learning and Teaching English through the Bible: A Pictorial Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MariAnne Dibbley Uses 1000 frequent words 	https://www.christianbook.com/learning-teaching-english-through-pictorial-approach/marianne-dibbley/9780988068605/pd/068605 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 256 pages, \$35 USD + S&H
Learning English Through the Bible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louise Ebner (1997) Grammar lessons 163 pages 	https://www.christianbook.com/learning-english-with-the-bible-textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$14.00 USD + S&H Answer key for the same price
Life of Christ ESL Bible Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Wesley Eby (2021) 	https://navresources.ca/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10.99 CDN + tax + S&H
Literacy & Evangelism International	https://store.literacyevangelism.org/

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading & Audio downloads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-book materials prices from \$3.00 to \$7.00 USD
Love New Canadians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rick & Patty Love (Calgary) 33 books -Levels used across Canada 	https://www.lovenewcanadians.ca/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> electronic access discounts for multiple copies, etc.
On the Road: A Journey through the Bible for migrants (2008) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by French Bible Society English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, & Turkish \$3.95 CDN & S+H Supplemental Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up questions, vocabulary tasks & additional discussion Q 	https://biblescanada.com/products/on-the-road-journey-through-bible-for-migrants SKU: 701001081 ISBN: 9782853009522 Supplemental Materials The language is quite difficult (uses low frequency words), so Janice GT Penner created a 43-page <i>Supplemental Facilitator's Guide</i> (with answers) & 64-page <i>Student Booklet</i> Free download www.AACE-English.com Resources-→Faith-based materials
Read the Bible in ESL classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross Cultural Services Australia NSW Beginner to High Intermediate 	https://www.anglicare.org.au/community/cross-cultural-services/esl-resources/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 page catalogue -wide variety of Biblical materials All free to download
SOCEM (Southern Ontario) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bible lessons Virtues Curric / lessons Conversation Guides 	https://eslministries.org/resources/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic focused lessons Games & Grammar, etc. LINK newsletter
TESOL Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by Dr. Jan Dormer Free resources for lessons Some books for sale 	https://tesoltools.com/consulting-and-services/churches/#resources https://tesoltools.com/assessment/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Level assessment materials

Canada/ BC Specific - other provinces likely have similar materials.

BC Welcome Guides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> free of charge from Welcome BC in 13 languages up to 50 copies in each language can be delivered to your site 	https://www.welcomebc.ca/start-your-life-in-bc/newcomers-guides/welcomebc-resource-order-form Students can have copies in their L1 and English to support them in navigating their way in BC
Westcoast Reader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> monthly since 1982 online & paper copy, BG Gov funded stories with 3 levels, Q & A Beginner to Intermediate 	https://thewestcoastreader.com/ wcr@decoda.ca or (604) 681-4199 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask about free /reduced subscription
To learn to distinguish Language Learner Levels, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check out the CAN DO statements with the CLB Benchmarks, so Ss can self-assess Free online assessment - CLB OSA (2nd link) 	https://www.language.ca/resources/expertise/ https://www.clb-osa.ca/home Used in LINC programs and lots of info & lesson ideas