

Serving Newcomers with Disabilities HANDOUTS

AODA = Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

AODA benefits all Ontarians by:

- ✓ developing, implementing and enforcing **accessibility standards** to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and
- ✓ providing for the **involvement** of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

Deadline for compliance: 2012

From [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#)

Customer Service Standard

Accessibility Barriers

The Customer Service Standard mandates that service providers must find ways to break down barriers that prevent customers with disabilities from accessing the services they need.

Barriers may be due to:

- Physical Obstacles
- Technology
- Information and Communication
- An organization's practices or procedures
- Attitudes of staff

From [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#)

Accessible Communications

Depending on the situation and the person's needs, here are some ways to make communications more accessible:

- ✓ Using assistive devices or services
- ✓ Changing the usual method of communication
- ✓ Making the original communication more accessible

Alternate Forms of Print Documents:

- ✓ Large print
- ✓ Audio format
- ✓ Braille
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Easy-read, simplified summaries of materials

AODA and the Language Training Sector

When deciding on a language program, you may need to consider client accommodations such as:

- Personal assistive devices and technology:
 - preferential seating
 - large print
 - FM systems
 - audio-recorders
 - wheelchairs
- Service animals
- Support persons

What Are Assistive Devices?

- A tool, product or type of equipment that helps a disabled person carry out his/her daily life activities
- May help him/her do things such as move around, see, communicate or eat
- Assistive devices help disabled people to live more independently

ADP (Assistive Devices Program) in Ontario

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps pay for customized equipment like wheelchairs and hearing aids if the person has a long-term physical disability • Also helps cover the cost of specialized supplies, like those used with diabetes • E-mail application to: assistivedevicesprogram@one-mail.on.ca 	How to Qualify
	✓ Be a resident of Ontario
	✓ Have a valid OHIP card
	✓ Have a disability requiring equipment or supplies for six months or longer
	✗ Are covered by WSIB
✗ Receive support from Veterans Affairs Canada	

Speech-Generating Device (SGD): Overview

Also known as **voice output communication aids**

Electronic Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ACC) Aids

- ✓ Systems used to supplement or replace speech or writing for individuals with severe speech impediments
- ✓ Enables them to verbally communicate
- ✓ Important for people with limited means of interacting verbally
- ✓ Allow individuals to become active participants in communication interactions
- ✓ Particularly helpful for patients suffering from ALS

Tips for Communicating with Learners Who Use Speech-Generating Devices

- ✓ Stand/sit in front of the person
- ✗ Do not look over his/her shoulder or ask how he/she uses the device. You don't need to know.
- ✓ Wait for the person to construct his/her full message

Synthesized speech might be hard to understand for those who have never heard it before:

- ✓ Tell the person if you don't understand. He/she will either repeat it or indicate that you can come around and read the screen on the device.

How Does Generated Speech Sound?

Link to demo. video shown during webinar (What is synthesized speech?):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvDH1Vg63SA>

Assistive Technology for Writing: Overview

- Handwriting tools
- Keyboards and touchscreens
- Dictation (Speech-to-text)
- Word prediction
- Spellcheck and grammar check
- Text-to-speech (TTS)
- Graphic organizers
- Dictionaries and thesauri

Handwriting Tools...

...can help people who have trouble with motor skills. Examples:	
Pencil grip	makes it easier to hold a pencil properly
Writing slant board	raises the writing surface to give more leverage for handwriting
Lined or graph paper	can help with writing in straight lines

Keyboards and Touchscreens

...can also help people who struggle with handwriting
☞ Both let you input letters and words through typing or touching the screen, rather than by using a pen or pencil

Dictation (Speech-to-text)

Speech-to-text allows you to write by using your voice. You can use your phone to do this (video demo. below).
Link to demo. video shown during webinar: https://youtu.be/Chq3a0fTCpQ 2-minute tutorial (demo. starts at :39 seconds)

Specialized Magnifiers

Three types:

- Rectangular
- Illuminated
- Desktop

ZoomText – Overview

Produced by Ai Squared

- ✓ Fully integrated magnification and reading program tailored for low-vision users
- ✓ Primarily for low-vision users
- ✓ 36x magnification, but text becomes more pixelated and less clear
- ✓ Free download of TextMagnifier/Reader Software at <https://support.freedomscientific.com/Downloads/ZoomText>

Link to demo. video shown during webinar (Web Accessibility 101: ZoomText Demo): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEN79RRvKqE>

Braille Writer

Special “manual typewriter” for composing documents in Braille language

Link to demo. video shown during webinar (*How Blind People Write Braille*): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj51UuxwjaE>

Link to Tommy’s Edison’s YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@TommyEdisonXP>

Link to video on *How to Type in Braille on an iPhone*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVUI5Sd_4PE&list=PLLTQ1G0Iq8b2TKYlep4KsZBoSI3sY_qTU&index=4

Related Resources

Low-cost, DIY Braille printer:

Braigo – A DIY Braille Printer with LEGO®:

<https://makezine.com/projects/braigo-a-diy-braille-printer-with-lego/>

Accessible Fonts:

What Are Accessible Fonts?:

<https://www.accessibility.com/blog/what-are-accessible-fonts>

Display and share text in a large font directly from your browser:

https://large-type.com/#*hello*

Toolkit to support learners with partial or complete sight loss in the classroom:

Integrated Sight Loss Teacher Toolkit

<https://isans.ca/resources/integrated-sight-loss-teacher-toolkit/>

Tips for teaching English to visually-impaired learners:

Teaching English to Visually Impaired Learners (from EnglishClub):

<https://www.englishclub.com/learning-difficulties/visual-impairment.php>





Making Text Materials Accessible

Ensure that text information is in accessible and understandable formats, e.g.:

- ✓ Braille
- ✓ Plain language
- ✓ Enlarged font
- ✓ Electronic formats

...or learners may require the assistance of someone who can help in reading and understanding documents

Adapting Text Materials – Example and Activity

<p style="text-align: center;">Sadia Can't Pay Her Bills</p> <p>Sadia is 23 years old. She moved to Calgary from Somalia two years ago. Sadia goes to school in the daytime from Monday to Friday. She works at night six times a week. She works in a restaurant downtown.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sadia is usually happy, but today she is worried.</p> <p>Sadia is usually happy, but today she is worried. Sadia is in trouble. She can't pay some of her bills. Sadia has a cell phone. She signed a contract, or agreement, with a cell phone company. Her contract is for two years. Sadia must pay money to the company every month. She usually pays around seventy dollars a month. She has fifteen months left on her contract, but Sadia didn't pay her bill for the last three months. She owes them \$210. Now the cell phone company has cut off her cell phone service.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sadia signed a two year contract with a cell phone company.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">© Bow Valley College All images © Thinkstock</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sadia Can't Pay Her Bills</p> <p>Sadia is 23 years old. Sadia is from Somalia. Sadia moved to Calgary two years ago. Sadia goes to school Monday to Friday. She works at night six times a week. She works in a restaurant downtown.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sadia is worried.</p> <p>Sadia is usually happy, but today she is worried. Sadia is in trouble. She can't pay the bills. Sadia has a cell phone. She signed a contract, or agreement, with a cell phone company.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sadia signed a contract.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">© Bow Valley College Images © Thinkstock</p>
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Adaptations:

- ✓ Language
- ✓ Font size
- ✓ White space
- ✓ Layout

Details of Adaptations here:

Link to demo. video shown during webinar (CCLB Literacy Tools' video: *Teaching ESL Literacy in a Multi-Level Classroom* > "Adapting Materials"):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4HOQytgp18>

OpenDyslexic Font to Assist Dyslexic Learners

Link to OpenDyslexic font: <https://opendyslexic.org/>

Free to use: the newest version of OpenDyslexic now uses the SIL-OFL license (for personal use, business use, education, commercial, books, e-book readers, applications, websites etc.)
Designed to mitigate some common reading errors caused by dyslexia
Includes regular, bold , <i>italic</i> , bold-italic and monospaced font styles
Also includes two typefaces: OpenDyslexic, and OpenDyslexic-Alta. Currently optional choice on many websites and formats (Wikipedia, Instapaper, Kobo eReader, and Amazon Kindle Paperwhite)
Google Chrome extension also available

How OpenDyslexic Font Works and Looks

Unique letter shapes which can help prevent confusion through flipping and swapping
Consistently weighted bottoms can also help reinforce the line of text
A heavier bottom is used to show which way is supposed to be down
Wider letter spacing and a unique italic style

Sample:



Dyslexie Font (Paid)

Link to Dyslexie font: <https://www.dyslexiefont.com/>

Makes reading easier and faster, and prevents reading mistakes
Available in:
Typeface for your Windows / Apple computer (Easy to download (.ttf or True Type Font file)
Chrome Extension to read online (lets you read any website in Dyslexie Font)
Online Dyslexia Workspace for your Chromebook
Can be used on many devices (except iPhone and iPad) and programs (e.g. MS Office)

Sample:

letters together. In the Dyslexie font, every letter is uniquely shaped, eliminating the common reading errors of dyslexia. The innovative font increases the ease of reading for people with dyslexia, meanwhile offering non-dyslectics some reading benefits as well.

Strategies from [*Dyslexia in the ESL Classroom – 5 Ways to Beat It!*](#)

Activity 1 (Recognizing Consonant Blends)

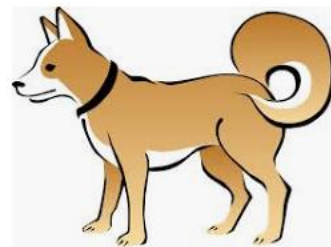
The chart below contains the blends SC, SL, SN, SP, SW, ST, FL, FR, BL, GL, DR, FR, PL, CL, TR, and TW

SN	FL	SW	BL	GL	DR	FR	SP	PL	TR	ST
SC	SP	TW	CR	SN	CL	TW	GL	GR	SL	SW
GR	SL	ST	SK	GR	PL	TR	SP	SC	BL	FR
GL	CL	FR	PL	SP	FL	SK	SL	TW	SN	DR
ST	DR	CR	ST	SC	GR	BL	SW	SN	SW	CR
CR	SN	TR	PL	DR	ST	GL	SN	FR	CL	FL
BL	CR	SC	SP	SK	FL	TR	GL	SK	SL	ST
CR	TR	CL	SW	TW	BL	PL	FR	SP	DR	SW
TW	SN	SK	FL	CL	SC	ST	SL	GR	SC	BL
TR	SL	GR	FR	SP	DR	FL	TR	PL	CL	TW

Activity 2 (Recognizing Bs, Ps & Ds)

Small flashcards with pictures representing words starting with the troublesome lowercase letters, e.g. pan, park, dog, dime, bell, bat...

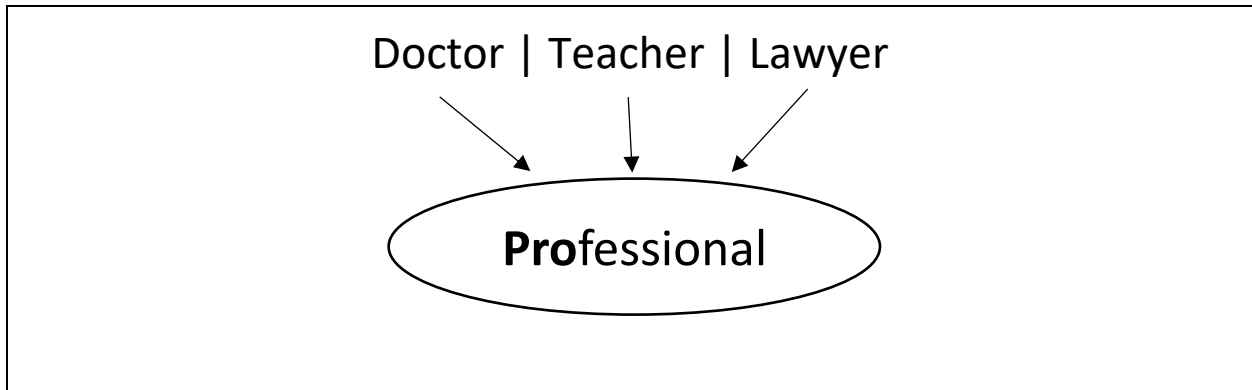
1. Students **say** words corresponding with pictures.
2. Students **say AND write** words corresponding with pictures.
*show cards in same order as for Step 1



Activity 3 (Word Classification – Prefixes)

<u>Pro</u>	<u>Con</u>
Professional	Confess
Program	Concentrate
Prohibit	Conceal
Pronounce	Contain

Pro-gram
Pro-hi-bit
Con-fess
Con-cen-trate



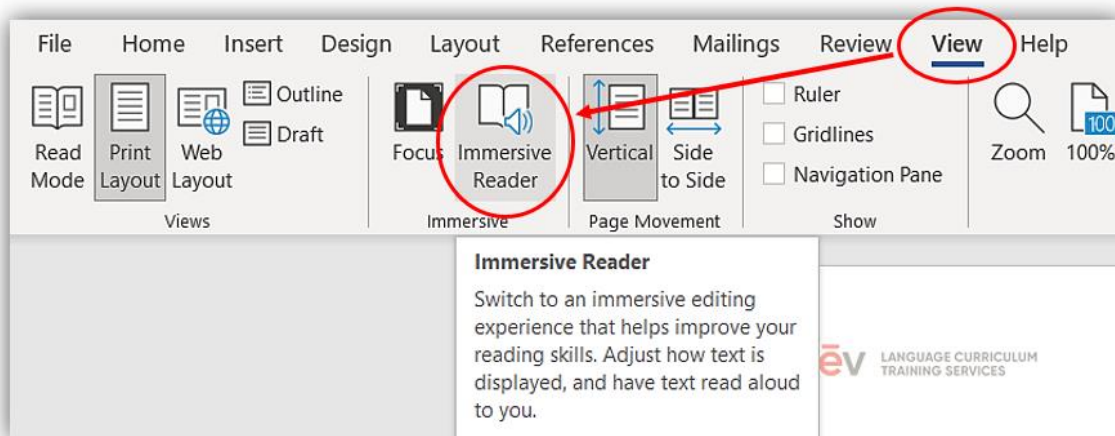
MS Immersive Reader

“Immersive Reader provides options for a comfortable and easy to process experience by allowing you to listen to the text read aloud or adjust how text appears by modifying spacing, color and more.”

Can be used in:

- Word (access through View tab)
- OneNote
- Outlook
- Edge
- Teams
- Flipgrid

How to access Immersive Reader in Word:



Video shown during webinar: *How to use the Immersive Reader - making reading more accessible*

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVIXk3BsLVE> (4:14)

User guide: *Use Immersive Reader in Word* (includes tabs for Windows, macOS, Web, Office for iOS)

“Support reading and writing by using Immersive Reader to customize how word documents appear while you read and edit. Immersive Reader provides options for a comfortable and easy to process experience by allowing you to listen to the text read aloud or adjust how text appears by modifying spacing, color and more.”

Link: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/office/use-immersive-reader-in-word-a857949f-c91e-4c97-977c-a4efcaf9b3c1>

Plain Language: Overview

According to the International Plain Language Federation:

“Communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended readers can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information.”

Examples of Plain Language

Communication style focused on ensuring audience understands message.

Practice of avoiding unnecessary words, jargon, technical terms and long, ambiguous sentences. (N.B.: not baby talk)

Examples below – Bold marks the offenders most likely to weaken your work.

✘ Don't say	✔ Say
ascertain	find out, learn
as prescribed by	in, under
assist, assistance	aid, help

Exhaustive list available here:

<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/words/use-simple-words-phrases/>

Purpose and Techniques

Purpose: convey information that the audience needs to know in a way that they can easily understand. It should not be confused with an oversimplified, condescending style. Rather, save your audience time and effort by using the following:

- ✓ Choose **words** that the **audience knows**
- ✓ Use **short** and **clear** sentence and paragraph structures
- ✓ Organize and present material **clearly** and **logically**
- ✓ **Design** and **structure** the document according to the **audience's needs**

Plain Language Specifics

When using plain language, you:

- ✓ Present information clearly and concisely
- ✓ Increase the chances that users will find, read and understand what you are saying
- ✓ Make your information more **accessible to people with disabilities**
- ✓ Save resources when people are editing or translating your text

Effective ESL Readers – Teacher Tips

Plain language can model what makes people effective readers. Use these tips to help students understand the reading portion of a lesson more clearly.

1. Always tell students **what they will learn** in the reading (i.e. the **purpose**) before they read.
2. Provide some **background information** about the reading topic before students read. This helps all levels of learners get more out of the reading.
3. Use **headings** helps students piece the information together more easily. If the chosen reading doesn't have headings, make a photocopy ahead and write the headings in yourself.
4. **Summarize** the key points after the reading. This will help students put it all together in their minds.

Tips for Grammar

Did you know that English has **over 600,000 words**? On average, that's four times more than other languages!

You can tell this to your students when they are feeling discouraged, to remind them that they're not alone in thinking English is hard.

16–18 is the maximum number of words that your brain can hold onto when forming a sentence.

So, for teachers, it's important to speak and write in sentences that don't exceed this number. We should encourage our students to do the same.

Tweet It, Plainly!

Use X (formerly Twitter) to help get learners comfortable with plain language — the limited 140-character window forces people say things simply.

Turn tweeting into a fun classroom exercise that will naturally involve plain language.

Ellii (formerly ESL Library) has a How to Tweet lesson in its paid section:
<https://ellii.com/lessons/writing-in-english/2053-how-to-tweet>

Make Your Print Clear and Accessible

<p>Make your print as clear and readable as possible, using these strategies from CNIB's Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines:</p>		
Strategy	Example(s)	
High-contrast colours for text and background	<p>Good examples are black or dark blue on a white or yellow background, or white/yellow text on a black/dark blue background.</p>	
Black and white for type colour	<p>Printed material is most readable in black and white. If using coloured text, restrict it to things like titles, headlines or highlighted material.</p>	
Standard font families and styles (Arial, Verdana)	<p>✓ Arial</p> <p>✓ Verdana</p>	<p>✗ <i>Edwardian Script</i></p> <p>✗ Old English Text</p>
Medium heavy font (for body text)	<p>✓ Medium (Regular)</p> <p>✗ Bold</p> <p>✗ <i>Bold Italic</i></p>	
Avoid light type with thin strokes	<p>✗ Bahnschrift Light SemiCondensed</p> <p>✗ Calibri Light</p> <p>✗ Eras Light ITC</p>	
Use bold or heavy font for word or passage emphasis	<p>✓ The focus is on supporting our clients as best as we can</p> <p>✗ <i>Italics</i> or UPPER CASE LETTERS not recommended</p>	
Monospaced fonts (Lucida Console, Courier)	<p>Lucida Console</p> <p>Courier</p>	
Minimum 12- to 18-point font size	12-point size	18-point size

Leading: 25 to 30% of font size	Leading is the space between lines of text and should be at least 25 to 30 per cent of the point size:	This is what 25% leading looks like. ✘ This text needs leading very badly – it's too hard to read!
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Further tips on how (and why) to write using clear language (from ABC Life Literacy Canada): <https://abclifeliteracy.ca/blog-posts/how-and-why-to-write-using-clear-language/>

Accommodations and Strategies for Disabled Learners

All settlement outcomes, including increasing knowledge of life in Canada and increasing participation in community and social networks, need to be considered when measuring learner progress.

Teachers can:

- ☞ Consider waiving or altering (number or format) standard assessment practices for a learner who is suffering from trauma or has an impairment.
- ☞ Create more skill-using (versus skill-testing) activities that may be less stressful and are clearly connected to the life and work goals of the learner.
- ☞ Give additional support or scaffolding on tasks and offer action-oriented feedback which helps the learners move forward in their community, work and study goals.
- ☞ Highlight learners' successes using their portfolios to document their progress and abilities as they relate to settlement outcomes. This is important for learners who are frustrated or discouraged at not completing a CLB level within a designated reporting period.
- ☞ Emphasize assessments as ongoing indications of ability (assessment for learning), rather than “tests” in the traditional sense that often produce anxiety.

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