

What does a school staff need to know about the definition of Literacy?

This learning guide is designed for use by instructional leaders and learning communities or as a self-paced study to explore literacy.



This learning guide is intended to be used after viewing the Alberta Education video clips, [Literacy: A World to Discover](#) and [Literacy in a Digital World](#).

The definition of literacy is evolving and the videos offer thought-provoking examples to help educators rethink what literacy means in the 21st century and ensure they are building these types of experiences into their classroom instruction.

Key understandings:

- Literacy is acquiring, creating, connecting and communicating meaning in all aspects of our daily lives.
- Although reading and writing are essential components of literacy, an evolving definition is more broadly understood that encompasses a more inclusive and expansive perspective.
- Literacy is foundational for continuous learning and provides individuals with the ability to achieve personal goals, develop knowledge and potential, and participate fully in society.
- Challenges us to rethink what being a fully literate person means.
- The proliferation of new digital technologies and the growing accessibility of information on the Internet are transforming how students acquire, create, connect and communicate meaning.
- Responding effectively to students' literacy needs requires innovative solutions, a clear direction, and a collaborative approach.
- Students need opportunities to use literacy knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts to master and efficiently transfer them across disciplines K-12.
- Although many literacy skills are transferable, there are literacy skills that are specific to content area subjects (e.g. reading a periodical table).
- The diversity of learners in Alberta illustrates the need for a broad, inclusive approach to literacy that addresses individual learners' needs.
- All educators are teachers of literacy.

Questions for discussion:

- How do the examples in the videos challenge or affirm what you know about literacy?
- What does it mean to be a teacher of literacy in your context?
- What does the video suggest as a next step for you?
- What does it mean to be a fully literate person?
- How does technology change what it means to be literate?
- Are there literacies that are missed in this video?

For more information:

[Literacy and Numeracy](#) (Alberta Education)

[Literacy First: A Plan for Action](#) (Alberta Education)

[Literacy for All: In conversation with Dr. Caroline Musselwhite](#) (ARPDC)

[Literacy for All](#) Videos (ARPDC)

[Learning Technologies](#) Support for Implementation (ARPDC)

Learn more about essential conditions that support implementation planning for new educational policies and initiatives at <http://www.essentialconditions.ca>

Talking is Key <http://humanservices.alberta.ca/family-community.html>

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