

The banner features a background of overlapping translucent shapes in shades of blue, green, and yellow. On the left side, the word "Alberta" is written vertically in a white, cursive font. The main title "Literacy and Numeracy FAQs" is centered in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

Literacy and Numeracy FAQs

How does Alberta Education define literacy and numeracy?

In collaboration with education partners, Alberta Education has created the following definitions of literacy and numeracy:

- Literacy is the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with language to acquire, construct and communicate meaning in all aspects of daily living.
- Numeracy is the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with quantitative or spatial information to make informed decisions in all aspects of daily living.

Why are literacy and numeracy important?

Literacy and numeracy play a vital role in living, learning and working in today's society. Alberta students need strong literacy and numeracy skills to navigate and make meaning in an increasingly complex and technology-driven world.

We want our students to develop strong literacy skills so that they can confidently access and critically evaluate information and communicate in a way that is effective and appropriate to the context. It is important for our students to have strong numeracy skills so they can interpret quantitative and spatial information to make informed decisions throughout their lives.

How are literacy and numeracy supported in all subjects?

Students who use literacy and numeracy in all subjects develop breadth and depth in their literacy and numeracy skills and gain a deeper understanding of the subjects themselves. Teachers of every subject are already helping students in their literacy and numeracy development. Alberta Education has prepared some literacy and numeracy documents to further support teachers as they continue to work with their students' literacy and numeracy development.

Although many aspects of literacy and numeracy are learned primarily in language arts and mathematics, every subject has aspects of literacy and numeracy that are specific to that subject. For example, re-reading and summarizing to clarify understanding are literacy strategies that students can apply across all subjects. Similarly, working with percentages or graphs are numeracy skills that can be applied across many subjects. The reading of a periodic table or the writing of a laboratory report, however, are literacy skills unique to science. In numeracy, the method by which data is gathered and analyzed, the use of specialized instruments to gather the data, or the formulae and equations used may be unique to a specific subject.

The expertise of teachers in each subject is important in supporting the overall development of literacy and numeracy for all students.

When literacy and numeracy are an integral part of every subject, students benefit by:

- developing and enhancing literacy and numeracy awareness, knowledge and understanding; and
- gaining an increased understanding of subject area content.

What is Alberta Education's commitment to literacy and numeracy?

The *Ministerial Order on Student Learning: Goals and Standards Applicable to the Provision of Education in Alberta* (#001/2013) states that one of the goals of an inclusive Kindergarten to Grade 12 education is to enable all students to “employ literacy and numeracy to construct and communicate meaning.”

Literacy and numeracy already exist to varying degrees in current programs of study and in the learning experiences that educators create for students. As Alberta Education creates future programs of study, there will be a more explicit focus on literacy and numeracy development within each subject.

What are the literacy and numeracy progressions?

Literacy and numeracy progressions have been developed by Alberta Education, in consultation with stakeholders, to support educators in developing students' literacy and numeracy awareness, knowledge and understanding. The progressions describe key literacy and numeracy milestones along a continuum of developmentally appropriate expectations and behaviours across all subjects from Kindergarten through Grade 12.

The progressions are intended to:

- support educators' understanding of the continuum of literacy and numeracy development from Kindergarten through Grade 12;
- assist in the design of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that foster literacy and numeracy growth in all students;
- provide a common language for educators, students and parents; and
- provide a tool to help educators explain developmentally appropriate literacy and numeracy expectations to parents.

In future programs of study:

- the literacy and numeracy progressions will provide curriculum developers with a consistent reference tool that describes literacy and numeracy milestones;
- the relationship of literacy and numeracy to learning outcomes will be made explicit in order to support teachers' delivery of the subject content; and
- having literacy and numeracy explicit in learning outcomes will support the development of literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.

How can the progressions be used to support students' literacy and numeracy development?

The literacy and numeracy progressions are intended to assist teachers in:

- determining students' literacy and numeracy growth;
- determining when a student may require additional literacy and numeracy supports to ensure that their understanding of subject content is not impeded; and
- supporting students in reflecting on their literacy and numeracy growth.

The progressions provide educators with a common reference for literacy and numeracy development within certain age ranges or divisions. A wide range of abilities exists within each stage of development. The progressions are associated with children's age-related cognitive and socio-emotional development as they pertain to literacy and numeracy. This development is a lifelong process that varies between individuals. The progressions are intended to be considered in their entirety and across subjects and disciplines to gain a picture of each student's comprehensive literacy and numeracy development.

Do educators assess the literacy and numeracy progressions?

The progressions are a tool to support the observation of students' literacy and numeracy growth within and across the subjects. Educators are not required to formally evaluate and report on the progressions separately from learning outcomes. However, they are encouraged to give students feedback on their literacy and numeracy growth as it relates to the learning outcomes and learning experiences.

The literacy and numeracy progressions may also be used by educators to inform the selection of assessment strategies, activities and tools that are appropriate for their students.

