



# Nunavut Literacy Framework K-12



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*For more information, contact:*

Department of Education  
Government of Nunavut  
PO Box 1000, Station 910  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Tel. (867) 975-5600

**[www.gov.nu.ca/education](http://www.gov.nu.ca/education)**



Δεσφιστερεπιδε  
Ilinniaqtuliyikkut  
Department of Education  
Ministère de l'Éducation

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# Section 1: Literacy in Nunavut

Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and Inuit Societal Values underlie life in Nunavut and the goals of our education system. Educators in Nunavut, like those across Canada and elsewhere, are helping students achieve greater self-reliance by focusing on high-level skills known as global competencies. These high-level skills help learners become inummariit, able human beings who are self-reliant regardless of time or circumstances, and who use their strengths, skills, and interests to serve their families and communities.

Global competencies are integrated across the curriculum strands from K–12. People who have these competencies are able to think deeply, solve problems creatively and innovatively, and communicate effectively in multiple ways. Focusing on global competencies in our schools will help our children thrive in the era of rapid change in which they will live and work.<sup>1</sup>

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Principles	Global Competencies
<p><b>Qanuqtarrunnarniq</b> Being innovative and resourceful, and seeking solutions.</p>	<p>critical thinking and problem-solving</p> <p>innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship</p>
<p><b>Avatimik Kamattiarniq</b> Respect and care for the land, animals, and environment.</p>	<p>global citizenship and sustainability</p>
<p><b>Piliriqatigiiniq</b> Working together.</p> <p><b>Pilimmakasarniq</b> Development of skills through practice and effort.</p>	<p>learning to learn/self-awareness</p> <p>self-direction</p>
<p><b>Aajiiqatigiingniq</b> Decision-making through discussion and consensus.</p> <p><b>Pijitsirniq</b> Serving and providing for family and/or community.</p> <p><b>Inuuqatigiitairaniq</b> Respecting others, fostering relationships, and caring for people.</p> <p><b>Tunnganarniq</b> Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.</p>	<p>collaboration</p> <p>communication</p>

1 Council of Ministers of Education, *Pan-Canadian Global Competencies (2016)*.

More than ever before, literacy skills are at the foundation of student success. Research shows that underdeveloped literacy skills are the primary reason why students fail to graduate from high school. The Government

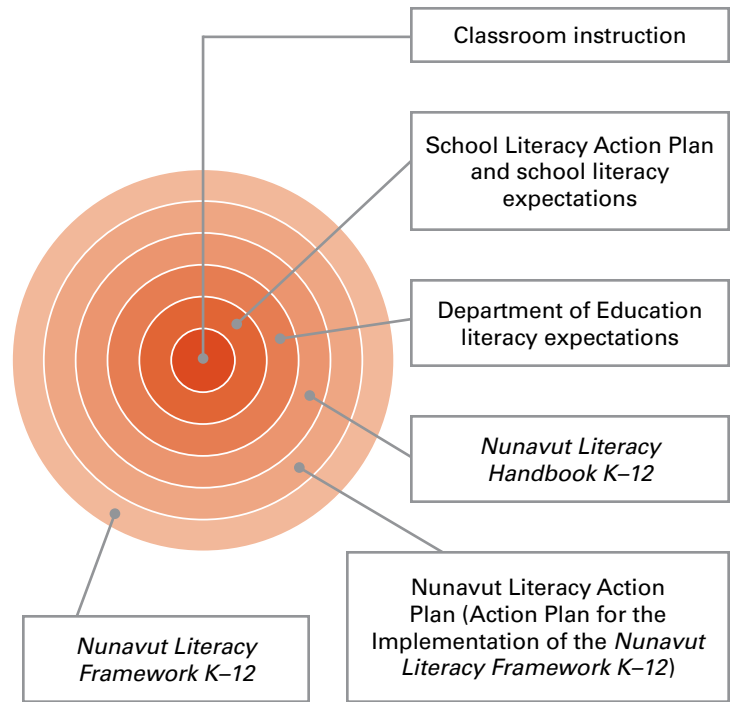


of Nunavut’s goal is to increase the number of graduates who are prepared to provide leadership in their families, communities, and beyond. This *Nunavut Literacy Framework K-12* offers research-based, evidence-based, effective approaches to teaching listening, speaking, reading, and writing to improve literacy. The strategies described in this Framework and accompanying support materials will be used across all curriculum strands and grades.

Every teacher, at every level, is a teacher of language.<sup>2</sup> The Nunavut curriculum, in all languages of instruction, provides opportunities for teachers to guide, encourage, and challenge students as they progress towards becoming successful, independent, lifelong literacy learners.

The diagram illustrates the relationship of Framework documents such as this to other authoritative documents that govern teaching and learning in schools.

Additional Department of Education and school-level documents provide guidance to educators that impacts their classroom instruction in the area of literacy.



## Our Vision for Literacy in Nunavut

Literacy is an individual’s capacity for “understanding, using, reflecting on, and engaging [with texts] to achieve one’s goals, develop one’s knowledge and potential, and participate in society.”<sup>3</sup>

Literacy is more than reading and writing; it includes listening, speaking, viewing, and representing. Literacy allows us to make sense of paper, computer screens, cell phones, radios, TVs, posters, signs, and billboards. It is the stories we tell and the conversations we engage in.<sup>4</sup> We continuously interact with information and use literacy skills. Literacy skills are the foundation of all learning.

All Nunavut schools must aspire to achieve the five Nunavut Literacy Goals outlined on the next page.

<sup>2</sup> Nunavut Department of Education, *Guidelines for Teaching in a Bilingual Setting* (2001), 2–8.

<sup>3</sup> OEC, *PISA 2015 Reading Framework* (2016), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from *Statement for the United Nations Literacy Decade* (UNESCO, 2003–2012).



## Nunavut Literacy Goals

### Goal 1

We will ensure that students have the opportunity to read, write, interpret, speak, and listen at high levels of proficiency in the languages of instruction.

### Goal 2

We will ensure that graduates are inummarit, with literacy skills that enable them to pursue careers and/or post-secondary education.

### Goal 3

We will support educators in their efforts to develop high-quality learning experiences for students through extensive, ongoing, and high-quality professional development in literacy.

### Goal 4

We will ensure literacy assessment is consistent across the territory, transparent, and understood by parents/guardians and students, and that it informs teachers' daily practice.

### Goal 5

We will have quality resources in schools that support literacy acquisition in all languages of instruction.

These broad goals align with actions described in Sharratt and Fullan's *Parameters for Literacy Learning and Instruction*. The parameters describe characteristics and actions of educators in schools as they engage in the complex work of improving literacy. These shared beliefs and understandings have been shown to transform literacy practice and to increase student success. The parameters can offer support to educators as they learn and work towards achieving the five Nunavut Literacy Goals.

### Parameters for Literacy Learning and Instruction: Shared Beliefs and Understandings<sup>5</sup>

- 1 To have all staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members share beliefs and understandings about the vision, purpose, and responsibility for literacy learning.
- 2 To have designated staff members for literacy development who act as key resources for other staff in the school.
- 3 To include daily, sustained, focused literacy instruction.
- 4 To have principals act as literacy leaders in their schools.
- 5 To provide early and ongoing intervention to ensure success for all students.
- 6 To use a ... [student-focused] approach to monitor student progress and to support personalization, collaborative problem-solving, and shared commitment to success for all students.
- 7 To provide teaching staff with job-embedded professional learning in literacy that allows colleagues to reflect together on samples of student literacy learning, discuss current educational research, and develop effective literacy strategies.

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5 L. Sharratt and M. Fullan, *13 Parameters: A Literacy Leadership Toolkit* (Toronto: Pearson, 2009).

- 8** To hold in-school grade, subject team [or School Literacy Team] meetings, with time committed to talking about literacy learning, with the goal of sharing understandings and taking an integrated approach to assessment, planning, and evaluation.
- 9** To provide students with literacy resources in a designated area of the school to support a continuum of literacy learning and differentiated instruction.
- 10** To commit sufficient funding to acquire quality literacy resources.
- 11** To engender staff commitment to learning and professional development, and assist them with accessing this training.
- 12** To encourage family involvement in supporting literacy.
- 13** To provide appropriate literacy instruction in all areas of the curriculum.
- 14** To promote shared responsibility and accountability for enhanced literacy learning needs as a whole-community response.

### Literacy Learning That Reflects and Respects Inuit Culture

The most successful teachers are those who are the best learners.<sup>6</sup>

Classroom practice must be grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Societal Values. Focusing on Inuit beliefs, values, perspectives, and expectations for learning is important to foster respect, integrity, and the preservation of culture. It is good educational practice. Research shows that learning is more meaningful and effective when it reflects a student's language, background knowledge, prior home and community experiences, family structure, and social or cultural identity.<sup>7</sup>

Students learn best when they can see themselves in the lessons. Culturally responsive teaching means that teachers "educate in [the] culture," drawing on traditional ways of knowing to help children acquire the skills and knowledge that are needed in today's changing world.<sup>8</sup> Learning experiences are designed to be relevant and authentic.

In Nunavut, the school is the "community hub" of learning. Each community is unique and provides opportunities for students to learn and be successful in the language(s) of their community. The knowledge and experiences of students, Elders, parents/guardians, families, and community members are important in daily learning.

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6 Nunavut Department of Education, *Nunavut Teachers K-6 Planning Guide: Bilingual Education* (2015), 37.

7 Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay (2000), and Villegas and Lucas (2002).

8 Ontario Ministry of Education, *Capacity Building Series K-12 #35: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy* (2013).



## Francophone Identity-Building

In order to be entitled to instruction in their own language, members of official-language minorities must meet one of the following criteria: the language first learned in childhood and still understood by one of the parents is that of the minority; the parent attended primary school where instruction was in the language of the minority; or the parent has another child who attended such a school. There is no reference to the language the children speak. Children registered in a French school who do not speak French therefore need to be “*francized*,” and the process must include the development of their identity and culture.<sup>9</sup>

This means that, in addition to offering classroom practices grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Societal Values, the Francophone school system also has the mission to foster the Francophone identity of students. It is crucial to support francophone students in building their identity and defining and recognizing themselves as Francophones.

According to the Association canadienne d’éducation de langue française (ACELF), there are eight guiding principles to ensure the coherence of actions in Francophone identity-building:

- 1 Actions are in line with a contemporary Francophone vision.
- 2 Actions are supported by creativity and innovative solutions.
- 3 Actions encourage and value diversity.

- 4 Actions foster strong partnerships between families, the community, and the school.
- 5 Actions are geared towards developing a positive relationship to the French language.
- 6 Actions support the creation of links within the Francophone world.
- 7 Actions encourage mobilization of the community.
- 8 Actions are aimed at having long-lasting impacts.

## Literacy Instruction in a Linguistically Diverse Territory

Language is key to culture and to individual and collective social well-being. Most consider erosion of Inuktitut as the most serious threat to Inuit culture as a whole. Language “encodes” our entire culture, enshrines our values and world view, and, above all, bestows our identity.”<sup>10</sup>

Nunavut is a culturally and linguistically rich territory. The Department of Education is mandated to provide an education that reflects this diversity; it is legislated through the *Nunavut Education Act* (2008), the *Official Language Act* (2008), the *Inuit Languages Protection Act* (2008), and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The *Nunavut Education Act* (2008) states: “Every student shall be given a bilingual education and the languages of instruction shall be the Inuit Language and either English or French as determined by a District Education Authority with respect to the schools under its jurisdiction. The purpose of the bilingual education required under subsection (1) is to produce graduates who are able to

9 M. Cormier, M. Turnbull, R. Bourgeois, N. Lirette-Pitre, S. Blain, P. Cormier, and M. MacPhee. “Francization in a Context of Linguistic Revitalization,” *Franquêtes. Enquêtes sur l’éducation en milieu minoritaire francophone* (2013): 10. <https://www.ctf-fce.ca/Publication-Library/FRENQUETES-10-2013-Francisatation-revitalisation-langagiere-Resume-ang-01.pdf>.

10 *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit workshop*, NSDC, 2002.

use both languages competently in academic and other contexts.”<sup>11</sup> (Note that Part 4 of the *Education Act*, from which this is taken, does not apply to the Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut [CSFN], which offers education in French.)

A multilinguistic, multicultural environment gives children many advantages for understanding and engaging with the world. Bilingualism is the goal for every Nunavut graduate. This direction is supported by the following three understandings:

- 1** The language used for education should reflect the cultural surroundings in which education takes place.
- 2** Making education available in students’ first language results in higher enrolment and greater student success.<sup>12</sup>
- 3** Fluency and literacy in a first language are the foundations for learning additional languages: “[W]hen children receive formal instruction in their first language throughout primary school and then gradually transition to academic learning in the second language, they learn the second language quickly. If they continue to have opportunities to develop their first language skills in secondary school, they emerge as fully bilingual (or multilingual) learners.”<sup>13</sup>

Teachers need to be sensitive to the first language of learners and adjust their teaching to meet learners’ needs. Many students in Nunavut receive instruction in English even though their first language is Inuktitut. Several models for language of instruction have been developed to meet the needs of students based on the linguistic characteristics of the community:

- 1** The Qulliq Model meets the needs of Nunavut communities where Inuktitut is the first language of the community. This model supports Inuktitut as the main language of instruction and builds learners’ strength and confidence in Inuktitut.
- 2** The Immersion Model was developed for communities that have experienced profound language loss. The focus of this model is to reverse the loss and produce graduates who are strong bilingual speakers.
- 3** The Two-Way Bilingual Model is designed for communities that have a large base of both strong Inuktitut first-language speakers and English first-language speakers. It integrates Inuktitut and English speakers into schools where both languages for instruction are used either in different classes or on different days. This approach enables each group of students to learn the other’s language.<sup>14</sup>

Although these language models do not apply to the Francophone school system, sensitivity to linguistic needs is crucial in this system, too. The Francophone system welcomes students from different language backgrounds, including students who are not necessarily proficient in French. Teaching strategies also need to be adjusted to meet the linguistic needs of students. The effort to meet student’s linguistic needs is generally referred to as Francization.

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11 *Nunavut Education Act* (2008), 23(1)(2).

12 K. Kosonen, *Education in Local Languages: Policy and Practice in Southeast Asia*, (UNESCO, 2005).

13 J. Ball, *Enhancing Learning of Children from Diverse Language Backgrounds*, (UNESCO, 2011), 6.

14 Nunavut Department of Education, *Nunavut Teachers K-6 Planning Guide: Bilingual Education* (2015), 35.

## Creating and Achieving Standards

Nunavut's system of education is mandated to serve all Nunavummiut. The Department of Education is committed to promoting literacy practices based on current research. Its goal is to improve literacy achievement across the territory and put in place the structures, supports, resources, and professional learning to achieve successful outcomes. The *Nunavut Literacy Framework K-12* sets forth a common vision and shared beliefs for literacy education across the territory.



## Section 2: Literacy Learning and Teaching in Nunavut

Literacy learning begins at birth. Family is the child’s first and most important teacher. The role the family plays is even more important in a setting where language is eroding and not always spoken by the majority. Throughout childhood and into adulthood, literacy skills are continuously developing.

Education grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit focuses on the beliefs, values, perspectives, and expectations of Inuit for their children’s learning. In this context, foundational concepts include:

- Ilippallianguinnarniq (continuing learning)
- Pivallianguinnarniq (continuous progress)
- Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq (learning for the future)

These concepts speak to the firmly held beliefs that learning is a lifelong process and excellence is achievable with persistence. This means never giving up.<sup>15</sup>

Throughout the territory, school staff engage in ongoing professional development in the many ways to support their students in literacy and language learning. “Every teacher at every level is a teacher and learner of language. Teachers use language to communicate, to instruct, and to interact with students and parents.”<sup>16</sup>

As teachers continue to learn, they develop greater knowledge and understanding of ways to support literacy teaching and learning. When planning for literacy instruction, teachers keep in mind these key understandings:

- Oral language provides a foundation for literacy.
- Inclusive classrooms are environments that teach and support all students in succeeding.
- Meaningful, engaging, and culturally relevant experiences enable students to make connections to their own life experiences.
- Accommodating diverse learning needs of students can be met when instructional decisions are based on the strengths, needs, and interests of all students.
- “Bilingual education contributes to the preservation, use, and promotion of Inuktitut and helps to ensure that Nunavummiut can be served in all our official languages.”<sup>17</sup>
- Tunnganarniq: fostering positive relationships with each other.

The *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum* (2007) guides teaching and learning in all Nunavut schools. The first component of this Framework is the Learning Continuum. This continuum recognizes that literacy learning is a journey, that every individual travels through stages of learning, and that learning is a lifelong process. The Learning Continuum allows us to identify where students are in their development, and what they need to learn next.

15 Nunavut Department of Education. *Inuglugijaittuq: Foundation for Inclusive Education in Nunavut Schools* (2008), 21.

16 Nunavut Department of Education. *Nunavut Teachers K-6 Planning Guide* (2015), 34.

17 From Nunavut Department of Education website: <https://www.gov.nu.ca/education/>.

## The Learning Continuum

The Learning Continuum recognizes prior learning that children bring with them to school and learning that is continually being developed outside of schools. All students are entitled to an education that validates learning at different paces in order to ensure success ... the Learning Continuum is like the continuous process of building an iglu, block by block, row by row.<sup>18</sup>

Elders identified five key learning stages for the K–12 Learning Continuum. Each stage builds on the last along the learning path for Nunavut students. Each of these stages is marked by demonstrated skills and abilities. In literacy learning, just like in any learning situation, learners will be working at different stages, depending on their strengths and interests, the topic, and the language of instruction.

The following is adapted from the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum*. The five stages of learning are described as:

### 1. QAUJILISAAQTUQ: THE EMERGENT LEARNER

#### Qaujilisaaqtuq ᖅᑲᑲᑦᓴᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ **Becoming aware**

Children at this stage use the language of their home and community as the basis for thinking and accessing new information. At first, learners begin by watching and listening. In these entirely new situations, learners attempt to form relationships with others and make sense of the learning activities and materials they are offered in the classroom. The support and respect shown for learners at this stage influence the degree of motivation they will bring to future learning experiences.

### 2. TUKISILIQTUQ: THE TRANSITIONAL LEARNER

#### Tukisiliqtuq ᑲᑭᑲᑦᓴᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ **Beginning to understand**

At this stage, learners become more committed to and engaged in the learning process. They often realize the complexity of learning and the challenges that lie ahead. With encouragement, support, and practice, learners often emerge from this stage with a sense of achievement and empowerment.

### 3. TUKISINAQSILIQTUQ: THE COMMUNICATIVE LEARNER

#### Tukisinaqsiliqtuq ᑲᑭᑲᑦᓴᑦᓴᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ **Beginning to make sense**

This stage is described as a “can do” stage of learning. This is when learners develop some confidence and begin to effectively apply information. They become more resourceful and reflective in various learning situations. Learners at this stage are more open to communicating with others, both within the school setting and within the community (e.g., Elders, parents/guardians, others).

<sup>18</sup> *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum*, 39.



**4. PINASUGUNNAQSIJUQ: THE CONFIDENT LEARNER****Pinasugunnaqsijuq ᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭ Is now able to experiment**

At this stage, learners feel confident and in control of their own learning. Learners have many strategies to use when facing new challenges. They are usually motivated and highly independent. They recognize how to adapt based on the context they are in. For example, learners at this stage understand that how one communicates with an Elder is different from how one communicates with a peer.

**5. PIJUNNAQSIJUQ: THE PROFICIENT LEARNER****Pijunnaqsijuq ᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭ Is now capable**

Learners at this stage are very engaged and show strong awareness of language diversity and cultural issues. They are proficient with learning, and they apply new information and skills in new situations. They actively use their knowledge and skills in ways that enhance and improve the environment and relationships within communities. At this stage, learners think critically, reason, and seek solutions, and design ways to apply learning in real world contexts. "Mastery at this level is what all Nunavut students should achieve."

## Supporting Literacy Instruction in Nunavut

Nunavut classrooms are diverse, complex, multi-level learning communities. All students at one time or another require support in their schooling. In order to provide appropriate environments for continuous and inclusive learning, the school system must build an approach to inclusion that promotes and enhances learning for everyone – students, parents, educators, and community members. *Inuglugijaittuq* pertains to the overall progress, holistic development, and personal success of each student in Nunavut schools. It can and should be applied equally in the elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary levels.<sup>19</sup>

To improve literacy learning for students, the Nunavut Department of Education introduced a territory-wide plan to implement research-based approaches that support effective literacy instruction. This plan included the implementation of balanced literacy as a standard approach to literacy instruction across all languages.<sup>20</sup>

Inuktit Titiqiriniq is a literacy program that includes instructional tools and resources in Inuktit to support a balanced literacy approach. In previous years, schools received resources to support a balanced literacy approach in English and in French.

Each school community will select the appropriate curriculum documents for teachers to use based on the language-of-instruction model chosen by its District Education Authority (DEA). Each curriculum outlines the learning goals and expectations for literacy. A balanced literacy approach, and the resources that support that approach, are an instructional method for meeting those curriculum expectations. Approved curriculum and resources can be found on the Department of Education website.

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19 *Inuglugijaittuq: Foundation for Inclusive Education*, 16.

20 *Nunavut Department of Education Annual Plan 2016–2017*, 27.

The following principles should be considered when implementing a balanced literacy approach:

<b>Students learn by talking.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speaking and listening support understanding of what students read and write. Conversations and discussions between peers are encouraged by teachers.</li></ul>
<b>Students need access to large amounts of written language.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular opportunities should be given for students to: independently read books of their choice; read slightly more challenging instructional material [with teacher guidance]; and hear grade-appropriate texts read out loud.</li></ul>
<b>Students benefit from talking, listening, reading, and writing across many different instructional contexts.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each mode of communication provides a new way to process ideas. Learning deepens when students process and comprehend language in different subject areas where they are required to think in different ways.</li></ul>
<b>Students build stamina as they develop independence in literacy contexts.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stamina has applications for success in all aspects of life. The opportunity to face challenges and persevere is a critical ingredient in learning. It also helps develop a growth mindset. Developing a growth mindset allows for continuous learning – a belief that change and learning are ongoing opportunities throughout life. To build reading/writing stamina, students need to read and write increasingly longer, more demanding texts.</li><li>• Stamina is the ability, confidence, and willingness to stay focused on tasks even when those tasks become challenging.</li></ul>

Balanced literacy is a framework that combines a variety of instructional approaches with the goal of developing competent, literate learners. Teachers purposefully implement a variety of differentiated strategies to meet individual student needs. Culturally relevant content and ways of learning are embedded into all components of balanced literacy.



The table below outlines instructional approaches used in a balanced literacy setting.

<b>Balanced Literacy: Instructional Approaches</b>	
<p><b>Read-Aloud (Modelled Reading)</b></p> <p>The teacher demonstrates proficient reading, and develops vocabulary and oral language skills with students.</p>	<p><b>Modelled Writing</b></p> <p>The teacher demonstrates proficient writing, and expands access to written vocabulary and language features with students.</p>
<p><b>Shared Reading</b></p> <p>The teacher and students share the text – they read together. The teacher focuses on developing a variety of reading strategies.</p>	<p><b>Shared Writing</b></p> <p>The teacher and students share the writing – they compose together. The teacher focuses on developing a variety of writing strategies.</p>
<p><b>Guided Reading</b></p> <p>The teacher works with a small group of students. Students read with teacher support. The teacher acts as a guide by scaffolding learning. The teacher engages students in conversation about reading. The teacher may use levelled texts to explicitly teach reading processing skills and strategies.</p>	<p><b>Guided Writing</b></p> <p>The teacher works with a small group of students. Students write with teacher support. The teacher acts as a guide by scaffolding learning. The teacher engages students in conversation about writing.</p>
<p><b>Independent Reading</b></p> <p>Students practise reading at their independent level. Students choose texts that they can read and understand.</p>	<p><b>Independent Writing</b></p> <p>Students practise writing independently. Students may choose the topics and purpose for writing.</p>
<p><b>Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and/or Word Study</b></p> <p>Students learn about oral language structures (e.g., vocabulary, rhyming, language patterns), letter sounds, word meanings, and spelling strategies through varied reading and writing experiences. With older students, word meanings/vocabulary, word structure, and word-solving actions may be the emphasis within the context of reading and writing across the curriculum.</p>	

## Balanced Literacy in Elementary Classrooms

In elementary classrooms (Kindergarten to Grade 6), a block structure should be used as a way of organizing balanced literacy each day. This structure provides an *uninterrupted* period of time where the teacher provides learning experiences for the whole class, small groups, and individual students, based on learners’ needs. The teacher chooses the instructional approaches and the literacy experiences that will best meet these needs. A literacy block also allows for differentiated literacy instruction where students grow their skills as listeners, speakers, readers, and writers.

During each literacy block, time is made for:

- explicit teaching and sustained focus on literacy activities
- gathering assessment data to inform instruction
- students to practise meaningful independent reading and writing tasks
- teachers to work with small groups of students, instructing them at a level that reflects their understanding

Balanced literacy aligns with Nunavut’s goals of inclusive education, and incorporates ilippallianguinnarniq (continuing learning) and pivallianguinnarniq (continuous progress). Balanced literacy supports the use of the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) model. In this model, the level of support varies based on student learning needs (i.e., as students become more independent, instruction becomes less teacher directed).

The following is an example of how teachers may structure a balanced literacy block in an elementary classroom.

<b>Sample Literacy Block: Elementary</b>		
Organization	Instructional Routines	
Whole group	Students are gathered together for mini-lessons, using instructional approaches such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• read-alouds/modelled reading</li> <li>• shared reading</li> <li>• shared writing</li> <li>• modelled writing</li> <li>• phonemic awareness, phonics, and/or word study</li> </ul>	
Small group	<b style="color: #c00000;">What is the teacher doing?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guided reading</li> <li>• guided writing</li> <li>• assessment to inform future instruction</li> <li>• conferencing with students</li> </ul>	<b style="color: #c00000;">What are students doing?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independent reading or listening to a story</li> <li>• independent writing or responding to reading</li> <li>• tasks related to word study</li> </ul>
Whole group	Self-assessment and sharing: Time to meet as a group and reflect on the learning.	

Depending on the age and stamina of a group of students, this whole-group/small-group structure will repeat multiple times during a single literacy block. Mini-lessons should be kept short and focused to maintain student engagement. As students develop stamina and become more independent, teachers are able to provide greater support within small groups and in monitoring student progress.

## Balanced Literacy in Secondary Classrooms

Children come to school with abundant experiences from their homes, the homes of Elders, the land, and diverse community activities. These experiences must be valued in the school setting. The school should reflect community values, use community resources, and involve community members. As a teacher, it is critically important to know Inuit culture, but also the parents and home-life of the students you teach.<sup>21</sup>

In Nunavut, junior and secondary classrooms include students from Grades 7 to 12 (ages 12 to 17). Literacy instruction in secondary contexts occurs both within a Language Arts block structure and embedded in subject areas (e.g., history, geography, science). Effective literacy instruction in secondary schools makes certain that:

- students participate in engaging tasks with opportunities to talk and express thoughts, opinions, and engage in relevant topics that arise within the community and the world
- teachers support literacy instruction throughout various subjects/disciplines with a focus on meeting the literacy needs of students (e.g., in reading, writing, oral language)
- students have access to information in a variety of ways (e.g., texts, technology, video, Elders in the community)
- teachers use a variety of differentiated strategies to support individual student needs
- students are assessed in meaningful ways that highlight strengths and challenges<sup>22</sup>

Students at this age are beginning to be more interested in topics and events that take place outside of Nunavut; like most adolescents, they are interested in music, sports, computers, television, and popular culture. It is important to be well-prepared to meet these challenges.<sup>23</sup>

Adolescent learners benefit from explicit vocabulary instruction, direct instruction in comprehension strategies, opportunities for discussions about texts and information, and engaging in meaningful content. These approaches can be integrated in any subject area and in any language of instruction.<sup>24</sup>

As adolescent learners continue to grow and develop, literacy skills continue to expand. As is the case in any learning situation, effective literacy instruction begins with students' interests, strengths, and needs. Secondary teachers recognize that adolescents need meaningful ways to practise and develop higher-level skills. The use of a balanced literacy block may be an effective way to support literacy instruction.


The following timetable provides an example of how teachers may structure a balanced literacy block in a secondary Language Arts classroom.

21 Nunavut Department of Education. *English Language Junior Secondary Handbook for Nunavut Schools* (2004), 26.

22 Adapted *Adolescent Literacy Position Statement*. International Reading Association (Newark, DE: 2012). <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/adolescent-literacy-position-statement.pdf?sfvrsn=8>.

23 *English Language Junior Secondary Handbook for Nunavut Schools*, 2–4.

24 Institute of Educational Sciences. *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices* (2008), 7.

Sample Literacy Block: Secondary		
Organization	Instructional Routines	
<p>Whole group (focus of the lesson)</p> 	<p>Mini-lessons provide a focus for learning. They may activate and develop background knowledge and support student motivation and engagement. They may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies (e.g., activating prior knowledge, determining importance, generating questions, visualizing, inferring, synthesizing, monitoring for meaning)</li> <li>• explicit teaching of writing, listening, speaking, and interpretation strategies</li> <li>• teacher guided discussions (e.g., fiction and non-fiction materials)</li> </ul>	
	<p>Review of learning goals and assessment for the lesson; explanation of differentiated tasks.</p>	
<p>Small group or partner work (guided instruction/ collaborative learning)</p>	<p><b>What is the teacher doing?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing small-group instruction</li> <li>• doing assessments to guide instruction</li> <li>• rotating between book club/ small-group discussions to assess and provide written and/or oral feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>What are students doing?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning specific techniques for making meaning and responding (e.g., annotating texts using reading strategies)</li> <li>• examining content-specific resources</li> <li>• book club discussions or cross-curricular assignments (e.g., examination of a news report in Geography, or a documentary in Science)</li> </ul>
<p>Whole group (independent practice)</p>	<p>Self-assessment and sharing with an authentic audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflecting on and reviewing information</li> <li>• completing exit slips to demonstrate learning</li> <li>• sharing with others</li> <li>• creating inquiry questions based on the content of the lesson</li> <li>• self-assessing learning goals for the lesson</li> </ul>	

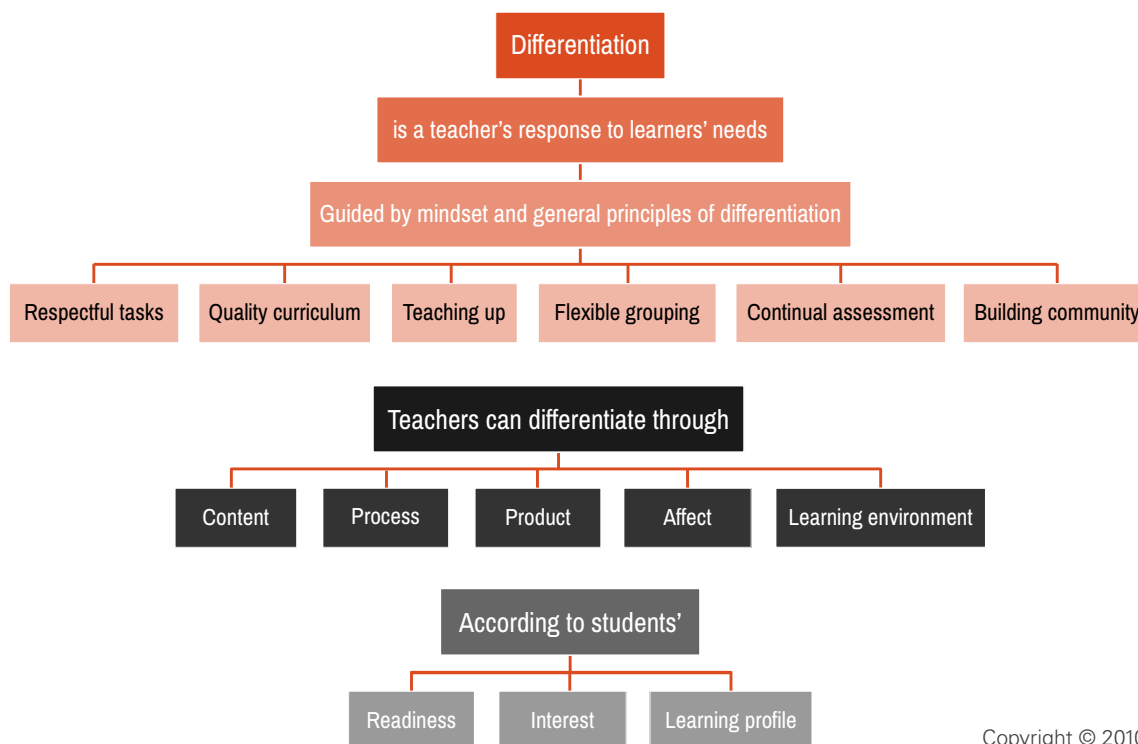
This whole-group/small-group structure may repeat several times during the literacy block.

## Inclusive Education

Inclusive schools are welcoming, accepting environments, drawing in the community and drawing on the community to help develop the vast array of skills and knowledge that students require. Learning takes place in an atmosphere of respect for diversity, an understanding of how people influence one another, and a sense of working together to achieve goals.<sup>25</sup>

Students learn to listen, speak, read, and write in different ways and at different rates. In all classrooms across the territory, an inclusive approach to teaching and learning will ensure that all students will learn and be successful. Focusing on differentiated instruction and the use of the GRR model supports literacy instruction for all students in the classroom.

The following graphic illustrates the process for differentiation.<sup>28</sup>



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25 *Ilitaunnikuliriniq: Foundation for Dynamic Assessment as Learning in Nunavut Schools*, 19.

26 G. E. Bingham and K. Hall-Kenyon. "Examining Teachers' Beliefs about Implementation of a Balanced Literacy Framework," *Journal of Research in Reading* (2013).

27 *Inuglugijaittuq: Foundation for Inclusive Education in Nunavut Schools*, 17.

28 C. Tomlinson. *Differentiation Model* (2010). <http://differentiationcentral.com/model>.

Teachers can differentiate instruction through:

<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vary content and resources based on the level of difficulty and different interests/needs of students</li> </ul>
<b>Product</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• offer challenge, variety, and choice</li> <li>• give students options to demonstrate learning (e.g., reading comprehension might be demonstrated through oral conversation, a written letter, or an annotated diagram, picture, photograph, or visual)</li> </ul>
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a variety of learning experiences at different levels of difficulty and/or based on different student interests</li> <li>• vary the level of teacher support for specific tasks</li> <li>• give students choices about how to engage in learning (e.g., artistically, verbally, kinesthetically)</li> </ul>
<b>Affect/Learning Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establish a positive classroom climate</li> <li>• manage the learning space (how the classroom looks and feels and reflects the culture and diverse needs of students)</li> <li>• provide positive, safe environments for learning</li> </ul>

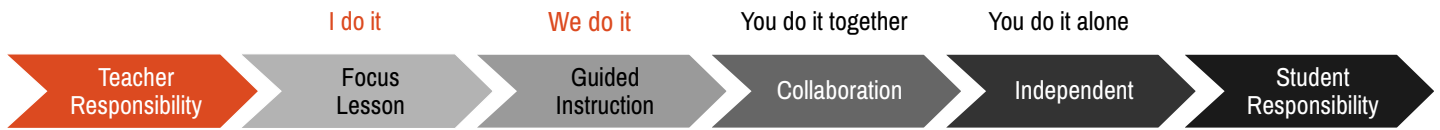
## Gradual Release of Responsibility in Literacy

Another way teachers provide inclusive learning is by thinking about the levels of support they provide to students. This is referred to as the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) model. In this model, teachers think about how to move classroom instruction from a teacher-centred, whole-group approach to a more student-centred, collaborative approach that builds student independence. Using this literacy instruction approach, the teacher supports students as they grow beyond their current level of understanding, gradually releasing responsibility to each student.<sup>29</sup>

The gradual release of responsibility is part of differentiated instruction. The learning needs of each learner are considered. The following graphic illustrates the gradual release of responsibility in literacy classrooms.

29 Adapted from *Literacy for Learning*, 30. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/literacy/panel/literacy.pdf>.

### Gradual Release of Responsibility Model



Adapted from Fisher, D. and Frey, N. (2008), *Better learning through structured teaching: A Framework for the gradual release of responsibility*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

### Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq: Literacy for All

**Inclusive education recognizes that every student can learn. It also recognizes that students may vary in their rate of learning, the goals of learning, the level of supports needed, and the timeline over which supports may be required.<sup>30</sup>**

In the Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (2013), inclusive education in Nunavut is defined as “the opportunity for all students, regardless of individual challenges or differences, to attend regular classes with children in the same age group, and to receive an education based on individual goals and achieved through the use of adequate support.”<sup>31</sup> When creating inclusive classrooms, teachers identify student needs and use a variety of differentiated instructional strategies.

An inclusive education model describes a needs-based model and focuses on supporting the needs of all students. The concept behind this model is that teachers start at a universal, whole-class level, using evidence-based strategies that support learning needs of all students. More targeted and/or individualized support is offered only after classroom-level support has been offered. As teachers learn about ways to differentiate and support struggling learners within a classroom context, fewer students require identification or interventions. This model is represented in following diagram.

### Inclusive Education Model of Support



30 Inuglugijaittuq: Foundation for Inclusive Education in Nunavut Schools, 36.

31 Barbara Hall. *Reaching and Teaching All Students*, 8.



The following chart provides an example of what each of level of support might look like.

<b>Classroom-Based, School-Wide Interventions</b>	
<i>Whole-school/whole-class approaches and supports that are good for most students</i>	Teachers use varied strategies and differentiate instruction. The learning needs of the majority of students can be met in this way. Students with identified needs are supported within the regular classroom context.
<p><b>Example:</b></p> <p>A teacher works with small groups of students in reading. All students in the classroom have small-group learning opportunities. One small-group focus is to improve reading comprehension. The teacher has oral conversations with students that focus on making sense of what was read.</p>	
<b>Targeted/Group Interventions</b>	
<i>Additional, usually short-term, supports and interventions that are required for some success by students for whom universal instruction does not suffice</i>	Areas of student needs are identified and short-term programming is provided. Support and intervention at this level is typically temporary in length, with strategies designed to get students back on track.
<p><b>Example:</b></p> <p>A classroom teacher or student support teacher (SST) works with a small group of identified students. The focus of instruction is on teaching students to learn about comprehension strategies during reading. This short-term support provides students with ways to understand how reading involves making sense of texts. This small-group support will allow for identified students to participate more effectively in regular classroom activities.</p>	
<b>Intensive Individual Interventions</b>	
<i>Additional, usually long-term supports and interventions that are essential for success by students for whom universal and targeted interventions does not suffice</i>	This level of support is used with a small number of students who have been identified with additional needs. It is likely that students at this level will have an Individual Student Support Plan (ISSP) in place. This level of support is longer-term and geared to support students who require accommodations to access the regular program or who are working towards mastering student-specific learning outcomes.
<p><b>Example:</b></p> <p>An assessment demonstrates a specific student need (e.g., challenges with writing). School teams develop individualized plans to address these needs within a specialized context (e.g., scribing, use of technology).</p>	

## Section 3: Promoting Literacy Learning through Effective Assessment

Assessment is a systematic process of gathering and interpreting information about what a student knows, is able to do, and is learning to do. It is an ongoing process that is conducted throughout the teaching/learning cycle, uses different assessment tools and approaches, and improves both teaching and learning. Effective literacy assessment starts with the purpose and goals outlined in the curriculum.

Ilitaunnikiliriniq principles (the dynamic interaction of teaching, learning, and assessment) guide all assessment in Nunavut schools. Ilitaunnikiliriniq reflects Inuit values and is supported by current evidence-based research. The assessment principles for Nunavut schools include:<sup>32</sup>

- Supporting continuous learning for all students.
- Showing respect for all learners.
- Recognizing each student's unique talents and skills.
- Emphasizing the interdependence, growth, and success of the group.
- Ensuring assessment is outcome-based.
- Having different purposes for assessment.
- Ensuring assessment is authentic, is meaningful, and builds on student strengths.

### Linguistic and Cultural Accommodation

**The Minister, District Education Authorities, CSFN, principals, and teachers shall ensure that assessments of students are culturally appropriate for Nunavut.<sup>33</sup>**

In Nunavut, the goal for students is to graduate fully bilingual in an Inuit Language and English or French, with the exception of Francophone students, where the goal is for them to be fully bilingual in French and English. In order for all students to be supported in their learning, linguistic and cultural accommodations need to be considered when developing student assessments. Instructional and assessment plans need to ensure students' language and culture are acknowledged. This way, students are not at a disadvantage because of language and/or cultural differences when they are asked to "show what they know." Teachers avoid misinterpreting a language challenge with a learning challenge. Assessments are fair, transparent, and equitable for all.

Teachers may accommodate language and cultural differences when implementing assessments. For example, when assessing comprehension in reading by asking students to retell important information, teachers may provide options to demonstrate learning. They may allow for oral retelling in the first language of the student or a written response in the language the student is most capable in. In this way, students are given the opportunity for the greatest level of success, while more accurate assessment data can be represented by teachers. A similar consideration is made when cultural accommodations are made. Students learn better when teachers plan and assess culturally relevant content. In this way, students are more able to connect with the

<sup>32</sup> Ilitaunnikiliriniq: *Foundation for Dynamic Assessment as Learning in Nunavut Schools*, 32.

<sup>33</sup> *Nunavut Education Act*, (76).

information and bring their personal experiences to the learning. The *ilitaunnikiliriniq* principles guide teachers to provide assessment that is *authentic, meaningful, and developmentally and culturally appropriate*.<sup>34</sup>

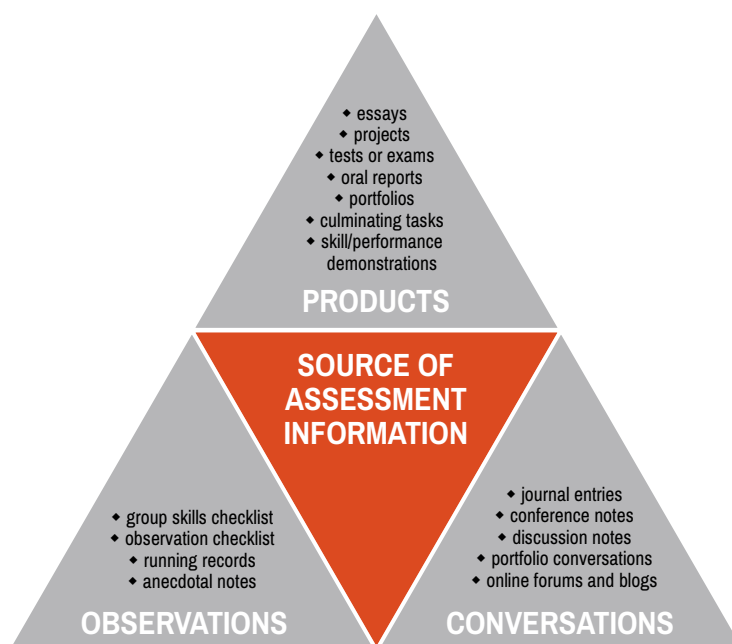
## Literacy Assessment Practices

To effectively assess literacy, teachers need to select the appropriate strategy or tool depending on their purpose. Each type of assessment adds to an overall picture of the individual student’s success. Current research supports three types of assessment:

- 1 Assessment *for* Learning
- 2 Assessment *of* Learning
- 3 Assessment *as* Learning

Teachers vary the type of assessments they use and the purpose of the assessment. Teaching strategies are not associated with any one type of assessment—the same activity could be used for different assessment purposes. It is not the nature of the activity that is important, but how the teacher uses the information gathered from assessment.

When planning for assessment opportunities, teachers ensure students are given multiple ways to represent their learning. Evidence of student learning should be gathered from three different sources. This is to ensure that evidence of learning is sufficient and reflective of student understanding. Often, the term *triangulation* is used to represent the ways teachers gather evidence of learning through conversations, observation, and products.



## Differentiating and Monitoring Literacy Learning – A Student-Focused Approach

One of the shared beliefs and understandings that underlie literacy instruction in Nunavut is that teachers will use a student-focused “approach to monitor student progress and to support personalization, collaborative problem-solving, and shared commitment to success for all students.”<sup>35</sup> In a student-focused approach, teachers review and use data to differentiate instruction and to select resources. Inclusive student-focused meetings bring together classroom teachers, learning coaches, SSTs, administrators and other staff to discuss students’ work case-by-case. Collaboratively, these educators discuss appropriate instructional supports and how to provide them. This ensures that everyone in the school collectively “owns” and takes responsibility for the literacy learning needs of all students.

34 *Ilitaunnikiliriniq: Foundation for Dynamic Assessment as Learning in Nunavut Schools*, 23.

35 Sharratt and Fullan, *13 Parameters*.

The intended outcome of a student-focused approach is to anchor the literacy strengths and needs of individual students with evidence of student learning. A range of literacy data must be collected for all students. Educators work collaboratively to identify literacy teaching strategies that can help support a targeted group of students. This student-focused approach builds teacher capacity while at the same time differentiating support for students to maximize student achievement in literacy.<sup>36</sup>



36 Sharratt and Fullan, *Realization*.

## Section 4: Roles and Responsibilities

### Literacy Is a Shared Responsibility

Ilippallianguinnarniq (the commitment to continuing learning and improvement) is a responsibility of the whole community and extended family group. Principals, teachers, students, and families all share the responsibility for student learning. Community members, such as parents/guardians and Elders, must join forces to support educators and administrators. District Education Authorities, the CSFN, and the Departments of Education, Health, and Family Services collaborate, inform, and support their work.

The whole school community is engaged and invested in promoting student achievement and success in literacy. To fulfill the philosophy of ilitaunnikuliriniq (the dynamic interaction of teaching, learning, and assessment), the community must act within their roles and authority to provide the necessary supports, including professional development, to ensure that all educators are prepared and able to meet this expectation. Within the school and community, everyone has an important part in supporting the literacy learning of students.

### The School Community

Literacy can be a powerful catalyst for change because it provides a critical entry point and focus for schools in enhancing teaching and improving student achievement.<sup>37</sup>

Inuktitut, English, or French Language Arts teachers are not the only people who have a duty to support literacy learning. Every member of the school community has a responsibility to:

- learn and understand the literacy goals articulated in the *Nunavut Literacy Framework K–12*
- advance literacy learning in all schools
- pursue professional development to deepen his/her knowledge and effectiveness in literacy instruction

Students, parents/guardians, caregivers, and Elders also have responsibilities to further literacy within their lives and the community. Some specific actions of the school community are described in the charts below.



37 Sharratt and Fullan, *13 Parameters*.



### Students

Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq (learning for the future) is the purpose of schooling. Its role is the development of self-reliance, self-direction, and responsibility. Students are active collaborators who contribute positively to the learning environment and to working with their peers to improve literacy learning. Students should:

- participate in self- and peer-assessment
- work towards self-regulating and being fully engaged
- advocate for their own learning

### Parents/Guardians

Parents and caregivers should feel welcome and encouraged to visit the school to meet with teachers, in support of their child's learning goals. Parents/guardians:

- support their children and the instructional process by understanding what their child is expected to learn
- know how their child is being instructed and assessed
- monitor their child's literacy progress and participation at school

### Elders

Elders are involved in the education of our children. Elders are important members of our school communities because they:

- play a vital role in cultural programming and in the classroom and school
- have a wealth of traditional knowledge and knowledge of the raising and educating of children
- are included in the education and assessment process

### Principals

Principals are the instructional leaders in their schools. They have numerous responsibilities that play a central role in supporting the successful implementation of literacy learning and achievement. Specifically, principals:

- guide the vision for literacy development in the school
- act as a resource for the teaching staff
- motivate staff members, and support student participation and attendance at school
- ensure quality literacy resources are organized and available
- schedule and take part in class reviews
- communicate with other educators, and the community

### **Classroom Teachers**

Classroom teachers have the primary responsibility for teaching and promoting literacy in the classroom. They play a central role in both the development and implementation of the school Literacy Action Plan. Specifically, teachers:

- know and understand the literacy strengths, needs, and interests of their students
- differentiate instruction and engage students in learning
- identify opportunities for explicit literacy instruction in their program
- develop an extensive instructional repertoire
- complete assessments and planning in collaboration with the learning coach, SST (Student Support Teacher), SSA (Student Support Assistant), and/or school team
- communicate with students, parents/guardians, other educators, and the community

### **Student Support Teachers (SSTs)**

SSTs work with teachers and SSAs on an ongoing basis to support them in their direct work with students. They help teachers and SSAs identify student strengths and needs and implement student-focused strategies. This includes student-focused collaboration with education support service providers, such as occupational therapists and speech language therapists, who are able to help identify student strengths and needs. Sometimes, SSTs work directly with students to support or demonstrate targeted and individualized interventions. SSTs:

- are thoroughly familiar with students' literacy needs
- work with other teaching staff
- take a leadership role in supporting and monitoring students who are involved in an intervention
- communicate with students and parents/guardians
- communicate with education support services team members



### **Student Support Assistants (SSAs)**

Under the direction of the classroom teacher or the SST, SSAs play an important role in helping implement the instructional strategies to differentiate learning. They most often work with individual students to support the students' mastery of individualized outcomes. They may also support small groups or the whole class while the teacher works with small groups to provide interventions. SSAs:

- attend to the specialized needs of students
- encourage and support students
- act as a link between students and the school team
- participate in class review meetings when requested

### **Learning Coaches**

Learning coaches work with teachers, rather than students, to support the development of effective instruction across the curriculum. This includes supporting literacy instruction in all classes. They are part of the teaching staff and play a role in developing and revising the school Literacy Action Plan. Specifically, learning coaches:

- coach teachers on effective literacy instruction, and model this instruction as required
- assist teachers with effective implementation and use of assessment
- help teachers create and implement literacy lessons that support differentiation
- support and motivate teachers
- support staff learning needs
- communicate with educators and the community

## The Wider Community

The Nunavut Department of Education supports the efforts of all educators and communities by providing the leadership and resources needed to implement effective literacy programs. The Department creates and communicates clear goals and direction

through documents such as this *Nunavut Literacy Framework K–12*. It ensures school leaders have the resources available to support professional learning, track progress, and communicate with community members. It supports educators by creating and communicating clear policy directives related to different aspects of learning, including language requirements.

### Kindergarten to Grade 12 School Operations/ Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut

K-12 School Operations and the CSFN collaborate with other divisions within the Department of Education to establish literacy expectations for schools and identify training needs. This group:

- ensures effective literacy practices are implemented as mandated
- provides leadership and support for school leaders in their roles as literacy leaders
- monitors and supervises curriculum, assessment, and instruction in schools
- provides guidance and support to school leaders, learning coaches, and all teaching staff throughout their region to help them meet identified literacy expectations

### District Education Authorities

The role of DEAs is to:

- promote improvements in schools
- engage with the community, thereby becoming a communication channel between the school and the community
- monitor and support the effective implementation of literacy programs
- support the Department of Education’s literacy goals

### Education Support Services

Under the direction of Student Achievement staff and as per the Education Support Services directive, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, behaviour specialists, and educational psychologists visit the school when needed throughout the year. These professionals:

- support the efforts of the school team
- communicate with school team, families, and students as well as Student Achievement staff, as guided by the Education Support Services directive

## School Literacy Teams

A School Literacy Team (SLT) is established in each school. This team focuses on supporting literacy across the school. The SLT must include the learning coach. Other members of the SLT are identified by the principal. These might include an Inuktitut language specialist, bilingual teacher, SST, and classroom teachers representing various grades. The SLT provides leadership and guidance in the area of literacy learning. Its members act as literacy ambassadors among the staff, generating enthusiasm and assisting with the development of the Literacy Action Plan (LAP). They may assist in completing the “Implementation Continuum,” which allows each school to determine one or two goals in literacy to work towards during the school year. The SLT helps support the staff and students in achieving these goals.

## The Literacy Action Plan

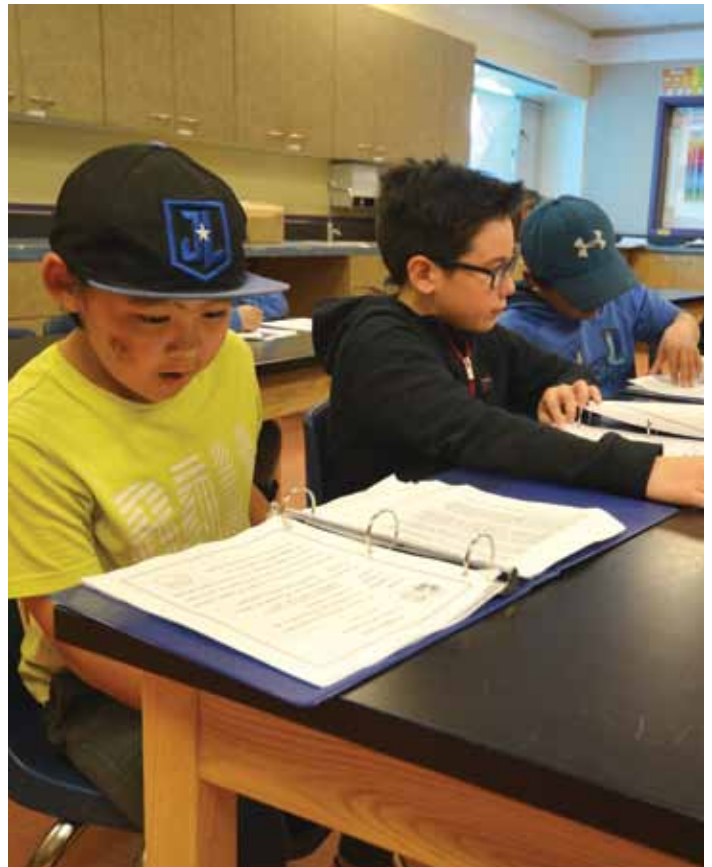
A Literacy Action Plan (LAP) plan is developed to document the focus for literacy-related school improvement. The LAP describes how the school will support the literacy learning needs of students. Additionally, the LAP outlines specific goals for literacy, and maps out the school’s plan for literacy instruction. Schools use the plan to guide instruction and programming with the goal of increasing student literacy skills and promoting literate graduates.

## Features of a Successful Literacy Action Plan

A successful LAP:

- helps create a culture that supports literacy improvement throughout the school
- supports teacher development of literacy knowledge and practices
- introduces effective strategies that schools will use to support differentiated instruction, intervention, and continuous learning

Commitment to continuous improvement and to advancing each student’s literacy skills are attainable when all community members work together to support high levels of literacy achievement. Every school may have a different entry point, but all schools develop their own ways to motivate, engage, and support *all* Nunavut learners.



## Moving Ahead

Literacy is our priority because we have a responsibility to our children, our communities, and the future of our territory. All students have the right to learn, listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent with proficiency and a deep sense of culture. It is imperative that our children have the skills to successfully take part in the workplace and communities of the twenty-first century.

Literacy learning and, more generally, effective communication using the languages of the territory, are the priorities of the Nunavut Education system. Legislation (*Education Act, Inuit Languages Protection Act*), government mandates (*Turaaqtavut*), and the Department of Education’s *Annual Plan* all prioritize the goal of Nunavut students graduating with the ability to create and innovate, think critically and problem-solve, and communicate and collaborate effectively. The following UNESCO statement aptly captures the importance of fulfilling that goal:

Literacy is about more than reading and writing—it is about how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language, and culture. Literacy ... finds its place in our lives alongside other ways of communicating. Indeed, literacy itself takes many forms: on paper, on the computer screen, on TV, on posters and signs. Those who use literacy take it for granted – but those who cannot use it are excluded from much communication in today’s world. Indeed, it is the excluded who can best appreciate the notion of “literacy as freedom.”<sup>38</sup>

Providing effective literacy programs for our children is an obligation: a moral imperative. Our children need these literacy skills to build their future, to express their freedom, and to keep their culture alive.

It is our hope that this *Literacy Framework* will be a starting point for all community members to better understand the importance of literacy and why this is a priority for our education system. All members of the community have a role to play in achieving that goal. Together we will build successful programs, helping to secure our children’s future.



38 Statement for the United Nations Literacy Decade.

# Glossary

Term	Definition
13 Parameters: A Literacy Leadership Toolkit	A professional learning resource that describes the process for implementing whole-school change and increasing literacy achievement. The 13 parameters identify critical elements involving system improvement, change management, instruction and assessment, professional learning, planning, and instructional leadership—factors that have proven to impact the classroom, school, and literacy policies and practices. The work and research originated with the York Region District School Board in Ontario.
Adolescent learners	Students in Grades 7–12 who bring a range of literacy learning and experiences to the classroom and who engage with increasingly complex content-area texts.
Assessment	A systematic process of gathering and interpreting information about what a student knows, is able to do, and is learning to do. Assessment focuses on identifying strengths and areas for improvement in both teaching and learning.
Assessment <i>as</i> learning	A process of using self- and peer-assessment to strengthen a student’s understanding of his/her learning and progress towards learning goals.
Assessment <i>for</i> learning	Involves both diagnostic and formative assessment strategies to determine where students are in their learning and how learning is progressing in relation to curricular objectives. This form of assessment looks at both the products and processes of teaching to inform both learning and teaching strategies.
Assessment <i>of</i> learning	Often referred to as <i>summative assessment</i> . It is done at the end of a learning cycle to evaluate whether learning outcomes have been achieved.
Balanced literacy	An approach to literacy instruction that includes read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, modelled/shared writing, and independent writing. These instructional practices are used to support literacy development.

Term	Definition
Block structure (see also Literacy block)	An approach to structuring literacy class time in which the class is broken into uninterrupted blocks of time. Students move from whole-class work to small-group work and independent work. Literacy blocks need to involve a gradual release of responsibility and effective differentiated instruction, using individual student assessment data and balanced literacy approaches to improve achievement in literacy.
Book club	Students work in a small group to select a book that is at an appropriate level for group members. The group meets to discuss the book, make predictions, and reflect on the author’s messages. Alternatively, students may select a theme to discuss. Each group member reads a book at a level of difficulty appropriate for him/her and meets with the group to engage in discussions about the theme. This strategy is often used with adolescent learners.
Continuum of literacy	Describes the literacy behaviours of students aligned to instructional literacy practices (balanced literacy). This approach encourages teachers to monitor students’ progress and provide feedback on next steps.
Culturally responsive teaching/ learning	An approach to learning that takes into account the students’ cultural references in all areas of the teaching/learning environment.
Diagnostic assessment	Using assessment tasks to establish where students are in their learning.
Differentiated instruction	Instruction provided to accommodate different learners, taking into consideration their strengths, challenges, interests, skills, learning preferences, and abilities.
Evaluation	The process of determining the quality of learning that took place in relation to established performance standards or criteria. Evaluation also involves making decisions based on the interpretation of evidence gathered through assessment.
Formative assessment	Assessment tasks completed while learning is taking place to assess the success of the lessons and identify whether students understand what they are being taught.

Term	Definition
Francization	A process allowing students who speak little or no French to develop oral and written language skills in French so that they can engage in a full range of interactions in their social and school lives. It also includes the development of their identity and culture.
Gradual release of responsibility	A strategy for gradually allowing a student to take greater control of his/her learning and the application of his/her skills and/or knowledge.
Guided reading	A learning strategy in which students receive reading instruction in small groups working with levelled texts.
Guided writing	Small-group lessons guided by the teacher that focus on writing strategies.
Ilitaunnikuliniriniq principles	The principles that guide dynamic assessment in Nunavut.
Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) (one of two types of individual student support plans, see also Individual Education Program)	A plan that describes the support, services, goals, and expected outcomes for students who are working to achieve curricular outcomes and need extra assistance.
Individual Education Program (IEP) (one of two types of individual student support plans, see also Individual Accommodation Plan)	An individual program with student-specific learning goals determined through a collaborative process with the school team and parents/guardians. This monitored differentiated learning plan addresses the needs of individual learners and ensures that they are supported to access successful learning.
Individual Student Support Plan (ISSP)	A plan that describes the support, services, goals, and expected outcomes for students who need extra assistance. This monitored differentiated learning plan accommodates the needs of individual learners and ensures that they are included in the classroom.
Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit	Includes traditional Inuit beliefs, laws, principles, values, skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Its principles underlie all aspects of life in Nunavut.
Inummarik	An Inuktitut term meaning “an able human being.”



Term	Definition
Global competencies	Global skills and competencies include collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. These cross-curricular skills promote innovation, teamwork, and problem-solving. They prepare learners for future employability and to meet the demands of the workplace.
Literacy	A range of interwoven communication skills, including reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and representing.
Literacy Action Plan (LAP)	A school improvement plan that outlines a school’s literacy goals for the year. It identifies the community members who will be involved, the school’s plan to meet the goals, and the criteria that will indicate success.
Literacy block (see also Block structure)	An approach to structuring literacy class time in which the class is broken into uninterrupted blocks of time. Students move from whole-class work to small-group work and independent work. Literacy blocks need to involve a gradual release of responsibility and effective differentiated instruction, using individual student assessment data and balanced literacy approaches to improve achievement in literacy.
Literacy intervention	An instructional strategy to support struggling readers and writers.
Phonemic awareness	The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.
Phonics	The study of the relationship between letters or symbols (graphemes) of written language and individual sounds (phonemes) of spoken language.
Reading comprehension	A student’s ability to make meaning from text.
Scaffolding	The support given to a student to help him/her complete a task successfully. The amount of support depends on the student’s current abilities.
School Literacy Team (SLT)	Site-based team of cross-disciplinary teachers that establishes common beliefs, identifies literacy goals, and engages all staff to deepen their literacy practice and support parental engagement strategies.

Term	Definition
<i>Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq</i>	The philosophy of education and basis for Nunavut school existence, based on the foundation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.
Stamina	The ability to persevere and stick with the task, which is part of creating a growth mindset.
Student-focused approach	An approach in which the teaching staff and other school team members work together to assess individual students' performance and then establish and provide appropriate instruction and resources to help students read and write at the expected standard.



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