

How can parents help?

- speak your first language at home
- talk about concepts and ideas
- talk about everyday life, such as your child's favourite television programs
- talk about your own day

Participate in the International Languages (IL) Program on Saturdays. For more information, please call 613-239-2703 or visit the IL website: <http://www.ocdsb.ca/programs/continweb/ILP>

Why First Language?

Research shows that language skills and concepts usually transfer from one language to another. Maintaining your first language will help your child:

- learn English and other languages
- develop mental flexibility
- build problem-solving skills
- understand your own culture
- appreciate cultural diversity
- preserve links with your family
- expand career opportunities

Read, Read, Read!

Read regularly to and with your child in your language and in English. Keep a variety of reading materials at home in your language and in English. Visit the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) to borrow books in many languages as well as taped picture books in English.

For more information, please call OPL Infoservice at 613-580-2940 or visit the OPL website: www.BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca


For more information, please contact:

Family Reception Centre

202-300 Rochester Street, Ottawa ON K1R 7N4
Phone: 613-239-2416 FAX: 613-239-5990

Open all year, Monday to Friday.

September to June: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
July to August: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Gladstone		Bus #14
Bus #85	 Adult High School	Queensway
	Rochester	Booth
Carling		Bus #101



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English as a Second Language (ESL) K-8

A Guide to Understanding Stages of Language Proficiency, the Importance of First Language, and How Parents Can Help



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Who is an ESL student?

- Students from non-English-speaking countries who have limited proficiency in standard Canadian English
- Canadian-born students from homes/communities where standard Canadian English is not prevalent and who have limited proficiency in standard Canadian English
- Aboriginal students from communities where indigenous language is the first language of communication and who have limited proficiency in standard Canadian English
- Many ESL students have already developed literacy and academic skills in another language.



Developmental Stages

Stage 1: Beginner in English

- may be very quiet in class for the first few months
- is becoming familiar with the sounds, rhythms, and patterns of English
- tries to make sense out of messages and begins to understand simple directions
- shows some limited comprehension of 'chunks' of language
- uses pictures and other visual aids to help with understanding English
- often responds non-verbally or with single words or short phrases
- begins to read and write single words and short phrases

Stage 2: High Beginner in English

- listens with greater understanding
- begins to respond correctly to direct questions and instructions
- begins to speak in simple sentences
- demonstrates growing confidence
- uses everyday expressions independently and uses personally relevant language appropriately
- reads and understands a variety of simple stories with familiar vocabulary
- begins to write simple sentences with extra help from the teacher
- participates in classroom activities with extra help from the teacher but cannot fully participate in all subject areas

Stage 3: Intermediate in English

- demonstrates increasing understanding
- speaks with less hesitation
- starts and maintains fluent conversations
- produces longer phrases and sentences
- is able to use newly acquired vocabulary to retell, describe, explain, and compare
- reads independently and uses writing for a variety of purposes
- attempts to write longer, more complex stories but may have spelling and grammatical errors
- continues to develop academic vocabulary
- participates more fully in activities related to academic content areas but may still need extra help from the teacher to complete written academic tasks

Stage 4: Advanced in English

- takes all subjects in the grade level classroom
- understands spoken English in social and academic situations
- uses more extensive vocabulary with greater accuracy and correctness
- uses reading and writing skills to explore concepts in greater depth
- continues to develop proficiency in academic language
- writes using correct spelling and grammar most of the time

How long does it take?

- one to two years for everyday communication in English
- five to eight years for language and skills needed for success in school subjects