PARTICIPANT WORKSHEET

Integrating Digital Literacy into Your ESOL Program

MCAEL Conference Workshop | October 24, 2026

The Decision Framework

Four stages that move a program from questions to evidence-based decisions. Today focuses on Stage 1.

STAGE 1
Determine Your Direction
Needs assessment · Program constraints · Prioritize skill areas · Goals and objectives

STAGE 2
Plan Your Approach
Mode of delivery · Integration of content · Digital literacy materials

STAGE 3
Make Final Preparations
Student evaluation and placement · Teacher preparation and training

STAGE 4
Evaluate Success
What to measure and how · Use results for improvement

STEP 1

What Do You Already Know?

What digital-literacy challenges are you already seeing among your ESOL learners? Write 2–3 ideas.

Examples: difficulty using email · trouble navigating websites · difficulty completing online forms · limited ability to use video-conferencing tools

1.

2.

3.

STEP 2

Observation or Need?

An observation is where a needs assessment starts, not where it ends. Pick one challenge from Step 1 and ask: What don't we know yet?

SAMPLE OBSERVATION

"Our learners struggle with online forms."

Questions we might still need to answer:

- Which parts of the process are difficult?
- Is the problem language, digital skills, or both?
- Does the difficulty vary by device?
- Which forms are most important to learners?
- Are learners already using strategies to solve the problem?
- Do teachers see the same problem?

My observation:

What I don't know yet:

This is why we need to collect data instead of jumping straight to a solution.

STEP 3

A Simple Needs Assessment Framework

1

What do our learners need to do?

Focus on real-life tasks

2

What can they do now?

Base it on current evidence

3

What do we still need to find out?

Name the gaps to investigate

STEP 4

Plan Your Inquiry

1. One thing I need to find out about my learners' digital-literacy needs is…

2. Who could help me answer this question? *Check all that apply.*

- ☐ **Learners:** What do they experience? What do they need to do?
- ☐ **Teachers:** What do they observe in class?
- ☐ **Program staff:** What barriers or patterns do they see?
- ☐ **Community partners / employers:** What digital tasks do learners encounter outside the program?
- ☐ **Existing program data:** What information do you already have?

3. Which ONE source will I start with — and why?

STEP 5

Your First Needs-Assessment Action

When I return to my program, the first thing I could do is…

_____

_____

_____

Ideas to get you started

- Ask three teachers what digital tasks their learners struggle with most.
- Add two digital-literacy questions to our next learner survey.
- Observe learners completing a common online task.
- Review what digital skills are already included in our curriculum.
- Talk with learners about the digital tasks they need to complete outside class.

DEMO

Needs Assessment Tool - The Digital Skills Check

A short, low-stakes self-rating form that shows what ESOL learners can already do with technology, what they want to learn, and which everyday tasks they need it for.

Core principles

PURPOSE
Not a Test
No scores, grades, or placement. It listens to learners to inform instruction.

DESIGN
Accessible
Short "I can" statements (under 12 words) in everyday language

RESPONSES
Simple Choices
I can do this · I can do this with help · I want to learn this

FOCUS
Goal-Oriented
Ties skills to real goals: jobs, online classes, patient portals

Two ways to offer it

- **Paper (Word).** Best for learners with limited device experience or no internet access.
- **Online (Microsoft Forms).** Done on a phone or computer; responses and summary charts are collected automatically. Either way, data stays private to your program.

Using the results

Look for patterns, not scores: which tasks learners can do on their own and where they most often ask for help. Then use that information as part of your needs assessment to create manageable instructional priorities tied to learners' goals.

NEXT STEPS

Continue in the free E-Learning Course

"Integrating Digital Literacy into Your ESOL Program" helps ESOL program leaders develop a clearer picture of what their learners need, what their program should prioritize, and how to implement those priorities.

1. **Determine Your Direction**
2. **Plan Your Approach**
3. **Make Final Preparations**
4. **Evaluate Success**

Questions?

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