

Brockton Public Schools Adult Learning Center

In 2001 our staff began developing “benchmark skills” for all class levels and content areas offered at the ALC, which was generally successful as a guide to a cohesive curriculum structure. This project allowed staff to share and compare strategies and approaches that worked at specific class levels. Teachers came to a consensus on which skills would be introduced, reviewed, or expanded upon at the various class levels.

In 2005 the entire staff participated in a year long process of revising the ALC Benchmark Skills and aligning them to the appropriate ELA, ESOL, and Math and Numeracy Frameworks for the level and focus of each class. This was a huge undertaking. Every teacher became very familiar with the ABE Frameworks and had an opportunity to reflect on how our curriculum might be tweaked to be more closely aligned to the Frameworks.

What is unique and useful for the ALC is that teachers use the benchmarks skills as a guide to course planning. Teachers use the benchmarks skills charts in various ways. Some teachers use these daily, while others use them as points of discussion for student conferences. And *students* have the class/level benchmarks in a checklist format.

The Brockton ALC teachers believe that the work of aligning our curriculum to the ABE Frameworks by developing benchmark skills for each class has made a positive difference for our students. However, this work is never “finished.” We review the benchmarks each year and revise or adjust the skills focus for classes as necessary for the current student population.

**If you have questions, please contact Suzanne Martin at
brockabe@mass.net**

BALC English Language Arts: Strands, Standards and Benchmarks
Level 1: Initial (GLE 0-1.9)

Student name _____ Class level _____ Class # _____

By the end of this level, learners will...

Reading Standard 1: Learners will comprehend and analyze a variety of texts for various purposes.

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
R1.1a Use visual clues to gain meaning (e.g. drawings, photographs)			
R1.1b Read simple sentences			

Reading Standard 2: Learners will acquire skills and vocabulary for reading and comprehending written text.

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
R2.1a Recognize words through visual/picture cues			
R2.1b Recognize upper and lower case letters and cardinal numbers			
R2.1c Recognize letter/sound correspondence			
R2.1d Recognize simple high frequency words (Dolch lists 1,2,&3), basic personal information and signs (stop, etc.)			
R2.1e Recognize common abbreviations (e.g. street/St., Monday/Mon.)			
R2.1f Recognize word and sentence boundaries			

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
R2.1g Recognize and sound out simple letter combinations			
R2.1h Recognize basic punctuation and capitalization (make sure this is included in other reading charts here)			
R2.1i Identify simple words by sounding out letter combinations			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short vowels with single consonants (one syllable words)(CVC) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short vowels with initial and final consonant digraphs 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short vowels with final “ff” “ll” “ss” and “ck” 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffix “x” 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds with –ng and-nk 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short vowels with two letter initial or final consonant blends (CCVC)(CVCC) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long vowels with –ild, -ind, -old, -ost, -olt 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short vowels with two and three letter blends, initial and/or final (CCCVC)(CCVCC) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllable division and reading multi-syllable words, where each syllable follows patterns already learned 			

Reading Standard 3: Learners will use a variety of strategies to comprehend written English.

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
R3.1a Seek assistance when aware that own reading isn't accurate			
R3.1b Reread to clarify meaning			

Writing Standard 1: Learners will express themselves through writing for a variety of purposes.

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
W1.1a Write basic information (e.g. name, address, date of birth) on a simplified lined form and from dictation on lined paper			
W1.1b Write a simple sentence on familiar topic using a model			

Writing Standard 2: Learners will apply knowledge of English vocabulary, language structure, and mechanics when they write.

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
W2.1a Copy words, as well as times, dates, and money from examples			
W2.1b Write numerals and uppercase letters from memory			

Writing Standard 3: Learners will use a variety of strategies to convey meaning through written English.

	Making progress	Mastered	Notes
W3.1a Copy models (of letters, words, phrases, numbers, language experience stories)			
W3.1b Seek assistance when needed			

**BEGINNING LITERACY (SPL 0 – 1)
READING**

Learners who are not literate in their first language or whose first language uses a non-Roman alphabet writing system will take longer to progress through this first level and perhaps subsequent levels.

Standard 1:

By the end of the level, students will:

R1.1a Read & understand simple sentences on a familiar topic (<i>Ana has a big family.</i>)
R1.1b Use visuals to gain meaning (<i>pictures, photographs</i>)
R1.1c Use prior personal experience and knowledge of context to make meaning
R1.1d Locate words in alphabetical lists

Standard 2:

R2.1a Recognize conventions of print (<i>reading left to right, word & sentence boundaries</i>)
R2.1b Identify upper & lower case letters and cardinal numbers
R2.1c Identify the sounds of letters, digraphs & diphthongs (<i>C as in cat, /k/, SH sounds like shut, Z sounds like zip /z/, OY sounds like loi</i>)
R2.1d Apply sound/symbol relationship to decode one-syllable, phonetically regular words even if meaning is unfamiliar (<i>“shed” can be decoded but students may not know its meaning</i>)
R2.1e Blend sounds together to create words orally (<i>/b/ /a/ /t/ together say /bat/</i>)
R2.1f Recognize the most common high-frequency words (<i>and, me, it, about, they</i>)
R2.1g Read words that they already know how to say (<i>word “supermarket” used in language experience story</i>)
R2.1h Develop basic vocabulary related to personal information: words, signs, & symbols (<i>stop, exit, address</i>)
R2.1i Recognize common abbreviations (<i>Mon., St.</i>)
R2.1j Recognize basic English punctuation and capitalization

Standard 3:

R3.1a Re-read to clarify meaning
R3.1b Seek assistance when aware that own reading is not accurate
R3.1c Tap or “scoop” syllables to decode words (<i>fam/i/ly, moth/er</i>)

**BEGINNING LITERACY (SPL 0 – 1)
LISTENING**

Standard 1:

By the end of the level, English language learners will:

L1.1a Listen & understand familiar topics when spoken slowly and clearly and/or with support (<i>pictures, visual aids</i>)
L1.1b Listen & follow simple warnings or one-step instructions (“ <i>Stop!</i> ” “ <i>Don’t touch that!</i> ” “ <i>Open the door.</i> ”)
L1.1c Listen for intonation to identify speaker’s purpose (<i>voice rises at end of question</i>)

Standard 2:

L2.1a Recognize individual letters in isolation & numbers up to 20
L2.1b Understand basic vocabulary used in social interactions & to express personal needs (<i>survival, family, work, home, immediate surroundings, daily activities</i>)
L2.1c Distinguish between a statement and a question

Standard 3:

L3.1a Seek repetition (“ <i>What?</i> ” “ <i>Say it again.</i> ”)
L3.1b Negotiate meaning with speaker (“ <i>Could you speak more slowly?</i> ” “ <i>I don’t understand.</i> ”)
L3.1c Use speaker’s facial expressions, body language, & intonation to identify context