

What is Numeracy? A Definition of Numerate Behavior

For purposes of this framework, the following definition is incorporated for describing *numeracy* and what it means to be a *numerate* adult:

Numerate behavior involves:

Managing a situation or solving a problem in a real context

everyday life
work
societal
further learning

by responding

identifying or locating
acting upon
interpreting
communicating about

to information about mathematical ideas

quantity and number
dimension and shape
pattern and relationships
data and chance
change

that is represented in a range of ways

objects and pictures
numbers and symbols
formulae
diagrams and maps
graphs
tables
texts

and requires activation of a range of enabling knowledge, behaviors, and processes.

mathematical knowledge and understanding
mathematical problem-solving skills
literacy skills
beliefs and attitudes.

Source: Gal, I., van Groenestijn, M., Manly, M., Schmitt, M.J., and Tout, D. (1999). *Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey Numeracy Framework Working Draft*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.