

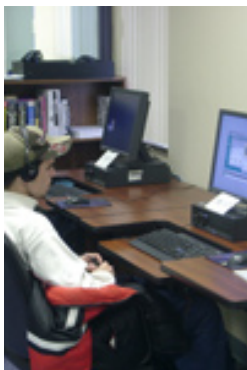
NEW FRONTIERS in Literacy

Workplace Literacy for 110 Years

From frontier work camps to modern offices



Since 1899, Frontier College has helped workers upgrade their literacy skills to improve their employment prospects. Back then the workplace consisted of remote mining, logging and railway camps. “Wherever and whenever (people) have occasion to congregate, then and there shall be the time, place and means of their education,” wrote Alfred Fitzpatrick, our founder. In Fitzpatrick’s day, tutors, who were university students, worked side-by-side with labourers by day and taught them to read and write at night. This was the beginning of the concept of the “Labourer-Teacher,” a program that Frontier College continues to this day, primarily in the agricultural sector with migrant workers in southwestern Ontario.



Labourer-Teachers are placed primarily in agricultural settings: on farms and in processing plants. They have also worked on rail gangs, in lumber and mining camps, in prisons, in urban factories and in remote communities. They do the same physical work as their fellow labourers by day and at night volunteer their time to help workers learn to read and write or upgrade their language skills.

In the years since, Frontier College expanded its workplace literacy focus to encompass those who often find themselves on the margins including Domestic Workers in Vancouver and at-risk inner city youth across Canada looking to raise their literacy levels to improve their employment prospects.

Domestic Worker Adult ESL Program in Vancouver offers one-on-one or small group tutoring to Domestic Workers (live-in caregivers and nannies). Tutors work independently with caregivers on ESL lessons and learning activities which are guided by the interests and requests of the caregivers. Activities may include helping learners with conversational English, grammar, pronunciation and comprehension, or developing skills related to writing resumes and cover letters.

Workplace Literacy for 110 Years (Cont'd)

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Literacy Upgrades for At-Risk Youth helps at-risk inner city youth across Canada looking to escape the streets and find meaningful employment. These programs include GED (General Educational Development) preparation; computer skills upgrades; help with homework; reading books and writing.

Tamara Rebeiro, a young single mother in Toronto who dropped out of high school, completed her Microsoft Office Specialist certificate at Frontier College and today works full-time as an office assistant at a company that provides professional, temporary and virtual office space and services. Tamara applies the various programs she learned, including PowerPoint, Excel, Word and others to her current position. "The computer skills that I learned at Frontier College are helping me with this," she said. (Beat the Street helps youth turn their lives around, Toronto Sun, August 6, 2008)

