
Skill Builders for Youth

**Embedding Literacy and
Essential Skills**

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to Education, Culture and Employment for their financial contribution for this project.



The NWT Literacy Council is a territorial non-profit group that promotes and supports literacy in all official language of the NWT. Our program areas include Aboriginal languages, family literacy, adult literacy and essential skills, youth literacy, and plain language.

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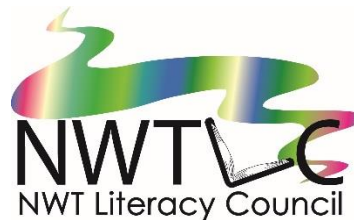
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Introduction to Youth LES Project

The project aims to improve youth literacy and essential skills (LES) by increasing community capacity to re-engage disengaged northern youth in learning.

This project will:

1. **Develop teaching and learning resources** to support youth LES programs. (facilitator manual, short modules for learners, etc.)
2. **Train community-based groups**, like youth centres, friendship centres, recreation centres, cultural centres and community learning centres to integrate youth LES into their programs.
3. **Provide outreach and support** from project staff to groups offering programs.
4. **Provide funding** to encourage groups to set up programs, and help them start up.

What are essential skills?

The Government of Canada has identified nine essential skills for work. The essential skills are integrated into each workshop. The essential skills are:

1. **Reading Text:** Refers to reading books, information sheets, and pamphlets.
2. **Document Use:** Refers to understanding documents that have graphs, symbols, numbers, colours, shapes, and text together.
3. **Writing:** Refers to writing letters, memos, and emails and filling in forms.
4. **Numeracy:** Refers to using numbers and thinking in quantitative terms.
5. **Oral Communication:** Refers to talking to give and get information.
6. **Thinking Skills:** Refers to problem solving, decision making, critical thinking, job task planning and organizing, significant use of memory, and finding information from people, text, and the computer.
7. **Working with Others:** Refers to how people work together to carry out their tasks.
8. **Digital Technology:** Refers to the ability to use computers and other related technical tools: cell phones, word processing software, email, iPods, etc.
9. **Continuous Learning:** Refers to acquiring and applying new skills and knowledge.

Why essential skills?

Essential skills are the basic skills that help people deal with the increasing and ever-changing demands of home, work, and community life. Some say they are the “Velcro” to which other learning and training sticks.

Essential skills help people advance in the workforce, take advantage of new opportunities, take a more active role in their community, and successfully deal with daily tasks.

Essential skills development is much more than work-skills training. It is important that literacy practitioners, employers, and others recognize that developing essential skills can be very positive for adult participants and employees. Research indicates that essential skills development is associated with:

- Greater independence.
- Increased self-respect.
- Effective problem solving and communication.
- Better overall health and well-being.
- Higher learning and earning potential.
- Increased ability to use technology.
- Flexibility and capacity to adapt to change.

Why is adult and youth literacy important?

Approximately 42% of adults in the NWT aged 16 to 65 have literacy levels below the level they need to function in today's society.

This is the same as the Canadian average, but it means 4 out of 10 people face literacy challenges. The gap between the literacy levels of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations is significant. Approximately 69% of the Aboriginal population has low literacy compared to 30% of the non-Aboriginal population.

Considering these numbers, adult literacy and adult education programs are of vital importance in the NWT as well as other northern regions.

People with low literacy skills have a fundamental right to have opportunities to return to school to improve their literacy skills.

What does this mean?

People with low literacy face inequalities in areas like poverty, health, justice, economic opportunities, children's learning and more. This has serious consequences for them, for their families, their communities, and the NWT as a whole.

Today literacy is more important than ever. Yet only a small percentage of people with low levels of literacy are getting the training and support they need. We need to look seriously at targeting literacy programs and services to people with low literacy and we need to ensure that our programs better meet their needs. And we need to look at how we are delivering programs? We need to think outside the box and deliver programs that are relevant and culturally appropriate to both youth and adults.

What does embedded literacy and essential skills mean?

Embedded literacy and essential skills is not a new approach. Almost all programs have some kind of literacy in them. If you are running a nutrition program, most likely participants are reading recipes, measuring ingredients, doubling recipes, and shopping for food. All these things are literacy related. Often literacy is an unintended outcome of a program.

Embedding literacy and essential skills means that there are three sets of learning goals in place in any learning situation, each clearly defined and each clearly addressed.

1. The first set of learning goals deals with the subject matter at hand and usually focuses on improving technical skills, increasing understanding of a topic or raising awareness around an issue.
2. The second set of learning goals targets literacy and essential skills and strives to improve specific competencies.
3. The third set of learning goals is aimed at the wider application of knowledge and skills gained, applications that facilitate life-long, life-wide and life-deep learning.

Examples of embedded literacy and essential skills

Embedded literacy and essential skills is intentionally adding literacy and essential skills to a program to help participants understand the material they are learning. Some examples of embedding literacy and essential skills into a nutrition program are:

- **Learning fractions.** If you need to double or triple a recipe, you need to know how to multiply fractions with whole numbers.
- **Finding the unit cost.** If you are shopping for ingredients—a great math activity is to learn how to find the unit cost and compare prices.
- **Reviewing writing skills.** Teach the writing process, grammar, expository paragraphs, etc. Youth can develop a cook book of all the recipes they tried. Or they can write down shopping list of all the ingredients they need.
- **Teaching digital literacy.** Digital literacy is an essential skill needed in today's world. Ask youth to set up a blog or Facebook page on their program and all the recipes they are trying out. They can rate the recipe and/or make changes.

Sample 1: Working on a Team



Topic: Working on a Team

Working on a team is a great topic to integrate into any program. You can use this idea for any kind of workshop or training activity. Working on a team is an important skill to have for work, volunteer work, and group projects.

Integrated literacy and essential skills: reading, writing, document use, working with others oral communication skills, thinking skills,

1. Warm-up Activities
 2. Working on a Team
 3. Teamwork Statements
 4. Effective Teams
 5. Problems on a Team
 6. Team Planning
 7. My Strengths and Attributes
-

Warm-up Activities (for instructor)

Duct tape Project

Ask participants to work in pairs of two to three people. Give each group a roll of duct tape and ask them to create something. Give participants at least 20 minutes.

Ask groups to share their projects when they are done.

Now ask these questions:

- How were decisions made?
- Who influenced the decisions and how?
- How could better decisions have been made?
- Did people listen to each other? If not, why not?
- What roles did group members adopt?
- How was conflict managed?
- What kinds of behavior helped or hindered the group?
- What have you learned about the functioning of this group?
- How would you do the activity differently if you were asked to do it again?
- What situations at work/home/school do you think are like this exercise?

Brainstorm Rummy

Divide participants into groups of three people. Give each group a piece of flipchart paper. Announce a general topic to the entire group, such as cars, music groups, foods that start with “b”, video games, etc. Give groups one to two minutes to brainstorm and write down as many examples of the topic as they can. When the time is up, all teams must stop writing. On the board write Team 1, Team 2, Team 3, etc.

Ask each team to read out a word and write it under that team. Once a word has been written on the board, another team may not use it. Keep going until all the teams run out of words. The team with the most words wins that round.

Do several rounds.

Ask participants these questions after this game:

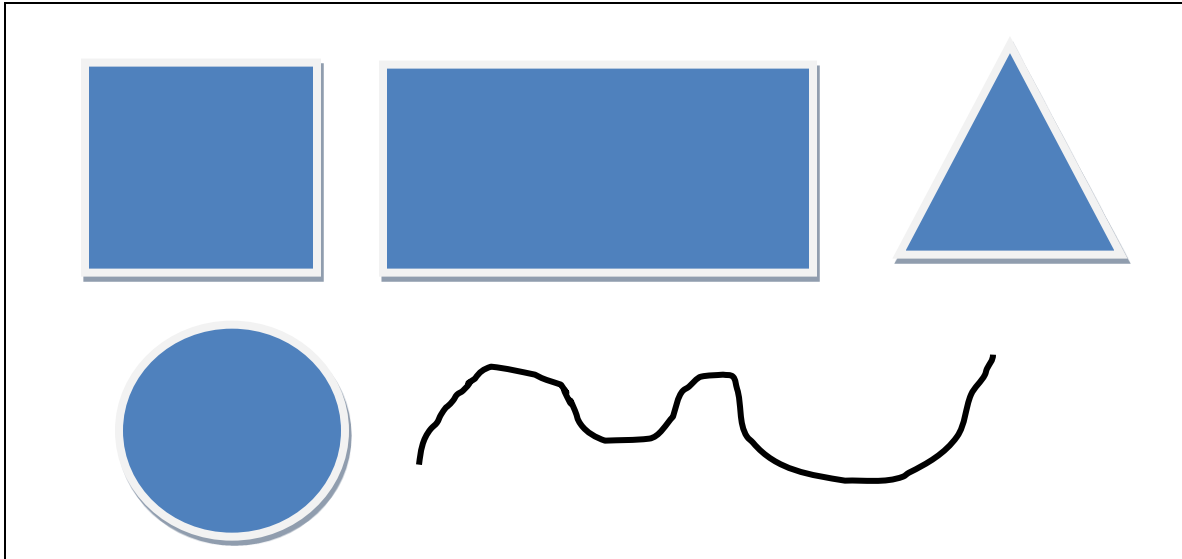
- What adjustments did you make after the first round?
- Did you have specific roles for each member? Recorder, reporter, facilitator?
- What challenges did you have?

Symbol Test—Personality Test

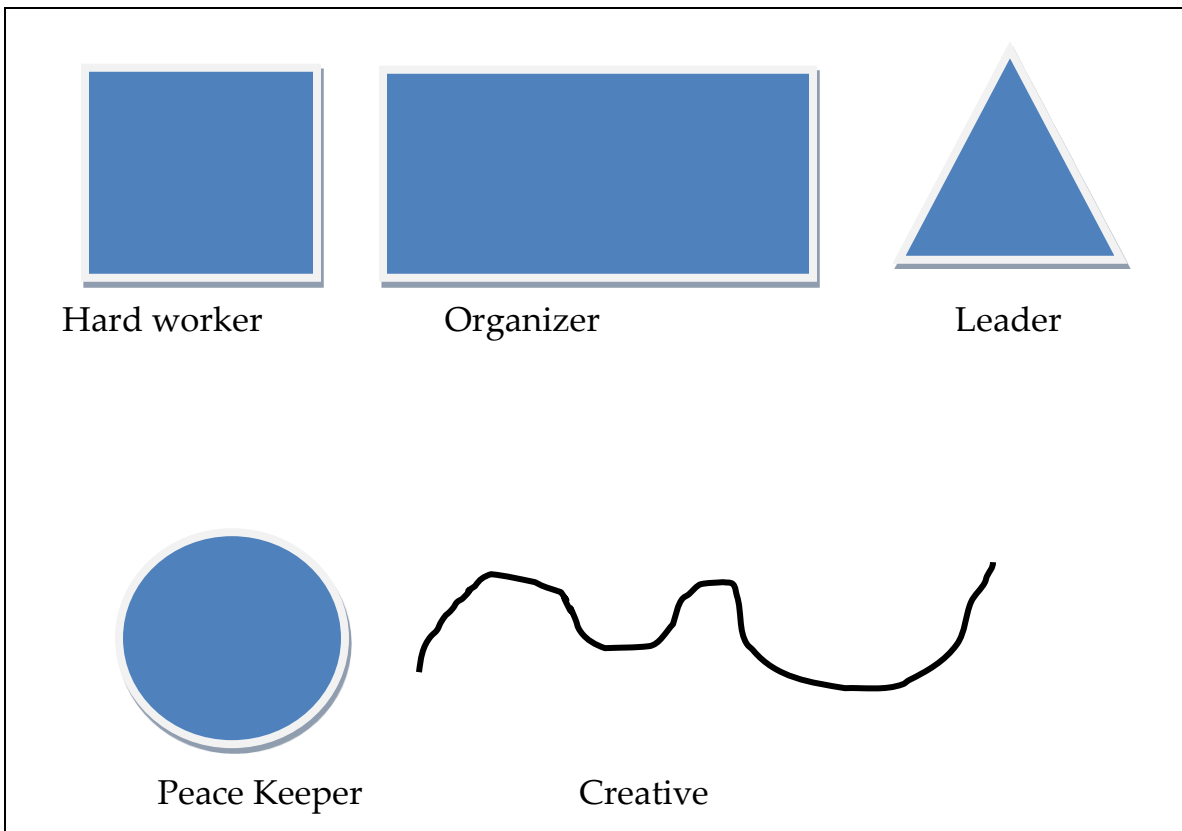
This is a brief activity. Tell participants that this is just a fun activity and to not take the results to seriously.

1. First tell participants that this is just a fun personality test.
2. Show participants the symbols on the next page. You will need to print the page out and cut it in half, or write down the symbols on flipchart paper.
3. Ask participants to choose the symbol that they like the best and then the one that they like second best.
4. Ask participants to draw their answers and then hold them up.
5. Try and get participants to make quick decisions.
6. Show them the answers.

Symbol Test



Symbol Test Answers



Working on a Team

What is a team?

A team is a group of people who work toward a common goal. The goal might be to make a product, complete a task, or solve a problem.

Working on teams (teamwork) can be positive for the following reasons:

- Knowledge, skills and ideas can be shared among the group members.
 - Work can be completed more quickly.
 - Difficult tasks or those with a number of steps can be broken into parts and one part given to each person on the team.
-

Group Discussion

1. Give me an example of where you worked as part of a team.
 2. Give me an example of a time when a team you worked on worked really well together.
 3. Give me an example of a time when a team you worked on didn't work well together.
-

Teamwork Statements

Read each Teamwork Statement below. Write a “T” in the My Rating column if you think the statement is true. Write an “F” in the My Rating column if you think the statement is false. Leave the Group Rating column blank.

Teamwork Statements	My Rating	Group Rating
In teamwork, conflict should always be avoided.		
A silent member is not a good team member.		
In teamwork, it is important to talk about ideas.		
The most experienced person should be the team leader.		
A weak team member makes the team weak.		
All team members should think the same way.		
Teamwork helps people improve their skills.		
A team should regularly assess its work and results.		
If a team fails, it is the team leader’s fault.		
Team members must like each other to work together.		
It is better to have large teams to spread out the work.		

Effective Teams

Form small groups. Read the following information about effective teams. Decide as a group what each point means.

What are Effective Teams?

1. The team has a clear goal (something the team wants to do). All members of the team help to decide the goal and feel they "own" the goal.
 2. Team members know they will not always get along. But they are willing to deal with conflicts and solve problems.
 3. Team members respect each other. Team members do not have to like each other or be friends, but they value each other's ideas, skills and actions.
 4. Team members do not talk about each other or criticise each other "behind backs." Also, team members do not form private groups within the team.
 5. Team members carry their own weight.
 6. The team helps each team member to grow and make his/her skills better.
 7. Team members talk about roles and tasks. All team members help to decide what they will do and when tasks must be done.
 8. Team members feel they are listened to.
 9. The team helps quiet members to say what they are thinking and to feel comfortable saying it. Silent team members usually have good ideas.
 10. Leadership is shared. Team leaders are facilitators and not dictators.
 11. Team leaders do not allow the team to break into small groups that work against one another.
 12. Teams are the right size. If a team is too large, it is hard to work together. If a team is too small, team members get overworked.
 13. The team regularly reviews its progress and working style. How is the team doing? What changes need to be made?
-

Write down what each point on the previous page as a statement. Use complete sentences. The first two are done for you.

What are Effective Teams?

1. Make a clear goal for the group.
 2. Deal with conflict and solve any problems.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.
 - 9.
 - 10.
 - 11.
 - 12.
 - 13.
-

Problems on a Team

Sometimes teams have problems. The five main reasons that teams fail are:

1. Team members do not have the resources to do the job.
2. Goals are not clear, or team members do not accept team goals.
3. Team roles are unclear or the team leader is weak.
4. There are no processes for how the team will get the work done and how problems will be solved.
5. Team members do not respect each other or some have bad attitudes.

Below is a list of actions that can be taken to solve or prevent team problems. For each one, write the number of the problem it solves (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5). Some may have more than one answer. Work together as a team to do this activity.

	All team members help to set the project goal.
	The team makes sure it has the skills it needs for the project.
	Team members write down who will do what during the project.
	Team members agree to put the team's goals first rather than their negative feelings for other team members.
	The team gets all the materials and tools required before starting.
	The team decides what will happen if team rules are not followed.
	The team chooses the best team leader for the job.

Sample 1: Working on a Team

	Before the project starts, the team decides how decisions will be made and how complaints will be handled.
	People who do not get along work on different tasks
	The team comes up with a plan for doing the project.
	All team members know what they are responsible for.
	Project progress is reviewed regularly by the team to see if changes need to be made to the work plan.
	Conflict resolution is used when team members have issues.
	The team reviews what is going wrong and develops new ways of doing things.
	The team trouble maker is asked to leave the project when no other solution can be found.
	All team members sign the group rules and processes they develop, saying they will follow them.
	Team members get training if they need it.
	The leader is changed if he/she is not able to handle the job.
	The project does not start until it is clear to all team members what the purpose of the project is.

My Strengths as a Team Member

Check off your strengths as a team member.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable | <input type="checkbox"/> Gets along with everyone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listens to others | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helps out | <input type="checkbox"/> Has a good sense of humour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respectful of others | <input type="checkbox"/> Committed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy going | <input type="checkbox"/> Have lots of ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participates | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strives for excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good problem solver | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive attitude |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

The Ultimate Team Member

Work with your group to make the “ultimate team member” by combining each team member’s strengths and positive attributes into one imaginary person. This “person” should also receive a name, have a picture drawn of them, and have their different attributes labelled.

Team Planning

As a team, complete the following:

1. What is your team's goal for this project?

2. Who will be your team leader? Leader: _____

Write down three reasons why your group has chosen this person as the leader.

-

-

-

3. Write five rules your team will follow to be sure the team works well and that everyone has a say in decision making.

-

-

-

-

-

4. What will the team do if a team member does not follow the rules?

5. What will the team do if the team has a conflict?

6. What will the team do if a team member does not pull his/her weight?

Team Signatures:

Name	Signature

Idea 2: Planning a Community Feast



Topic: Planning a Community Feast

All a lot of planning goes into organizing a community feast. You have \$1,000 to spend to organize a community feast for 40 people. Participants must plan, buy groceries, find volunteers, find a space, advertise, serve the food, and much more. There are many literacy and essential skills needed to plan a community feast.

Integrated literacy and essential skills: reading, document use, working with others, organizing, writing lists, shopping, reading, calculating, comparing prices, creating posters, etc.

1. Food Groups
 - Food Guide
 - Yesterday I Ate...
 - Portion Size Matching Game
 - Food Group Bingo
 2. Planning for the Feast
 - Practice Planning
 - Brainstorming
 - Food for the Feast
 - Making a Grocery List
 - Estimating Groceries
 - Finding the Best Deal
 - Finding Volunteers
 - Advertising
-

Food Guide

Look at the NWT Food Guide and answer the questions below.

1. How many servings of Fruits and Vegetables should you have each day?

2. Give two examples of servings for Fruits and Vegetables.

3. How many servings of Meat, Fish, Birds, and Eggs should an adult have each day?

4. Give two examples of servings for Meat, Fish, Birds, and Eggs.

5. How many servings of Bannock, Bread, and Cereal should a child have each day?

6. Give two example servings of Bannock, Bread, and Cereal.

7. How many servings of Milk and Milk Substitutes should a nine year old child have each day.

8. Give two examples of servings for Milk and Milk Substitutes.

Shade in the minimum number of servings for each group.

Food Group	Number of Servings	Total
Fruit and Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Bannock, Bread, Cereal	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Milk and Alternatives	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Meat, Fish, Birds, Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

Yesterday I Ate...

Complete the chart below on healthy eating to see how you compare to your classmates.

Did you eat	YES ✓	NO ✓
3 - 4 servings from the milk and milk substitutes group?		
2 servings from the meat, fish, birds and eggs group?		
3 - 5 servings from the bannock, bread, cereals group?		
4 - 5 servings from the fruits and vegetables group?		
Regularly during the day?		
Food from at least three food groups?		
Different foods from each food group?		
A fresh fruit or vegetable?		
Only nutritious snacks (low in fat, sugar, salt/high in nutrients)?		
Very few extras?		

Give yourself two points for every **Yes**. Take two points away for every **No**. Add up your total number of points (maximum 20 points).

What was your score? _____

Compare your results with others.

Portion Size Matching Game

Can you guess popular portion sizes? A portion of each food or group of foods listed on the left matches up in size with one of the things listed on the right. Draw a line to connect each left-hand food with the correct right-hand object.

1 cup fruit, vegetables, cooked cereal, pasta or rice	Computer mouse
3 ounces of cooked meat, poultry or fish	6 dice
1 tortilla(1 oz)	2 checkers
½ bagel	baseball
1 teaspoon of margarine or butter	Small soft drink lid
1 tablespoon of peanut butter	1 can
1 small baked potato	Your thumb up
1 pancake or waffle	Deck of cards
1 medium apple or orange	baseball
3 cups popcorn	2 baseballs
1 ½ ounce of cheese	Small 6 inch plate
1 ½ cup of regular soft drink or fruit drink	1 music CD

Food Group Bingo

Place the word below into the correct category on the next page. Write them down in random order. When everyone is finished, your instructor will call out bingo.

apple	bannock	whitefish	cheese	chips
cereal	oatmeal	glass of milk	chocolate	scrambled eggs
caribou	dried meat	yogurt	muffin	banana
carrots	Whole wheat bread	soya milk	pretzels	brown beans
peas	chocolate milk	pastries	cookies	cranberries

Milk and Alternatives	Meat, Fish, Birds, Eggs	Other Foods	Bannock, Bread, Cereal	Fruit and Vegetables

Practice Planning

Suppose your program gave you \$200 to buy snacks for a family literacy night celebration. There will be around 40 people there. You have to spend as much of the \$200 as possible without going over.

Food Price List			
Bag of oranges (10)	\$7.50	Muffins (6)	\$4.99
Bag of apples (10)	\$8.25	Cookies (bag)	\$5.21
1 pineapple	\$7.99	Broccoli (1 head)	\$4.15
1 box of crackers	\$3.50	Cauliflower (1 head)	\$4.89
1 block of cheese	\$8.32	Carrots (bag)	\$4.99
1 package of pepperoni	\$5.99	Cucumber (1 English)	\$3.89
Coffee (Tin)	\$10.50	Vegetable dip (1 jar)	\$6.45
Milk (1 jug)	\$8.89	Dried caribou	Free
Juice boxes (6 per package)	\$4.50	Dried fish	Free

Directions: Work with someone in your program and decide which of the foods above you might want for your snacks. Write the type of snack you want and the quantity and the cost in the chart on the next page. Tally up your amounts.

Brainstorming

Work with a partner and write down a list of food items that you think would be good to serve at a community feast. Remember to try and include food from the four different food groups!

Your Ideas

-
- Compare your list with others.
 - Decide on what food/ dishes you would like to server at the feast.

Food for the Feast

Write down all the food that you are going to serve at the feast. Write down all the ingredients for each dish or food that you will serve. Use your own recipes or research recipes online that you would like use. An example is shown.

Food for Feast	Ingredients
Bannock	Flour, baking powder, salt, margarine, water

Estimating Your Groceries

Usually when we go to the grocery store we don't have a calculator with us. We usually estimate how much things will cost.

Part 1: Emily has \$60 for grocery shopping. When shopping, Emily estimates the total amount of the groceries. To estimate, round each item to the nearest dollar. Keep track of the running total to see if Emily has enough money. The first one is done for you.

Item on list	Price per unit	Your estimate	Estimate running total
3 kg of ground beef	\$2.69/kg	\$9.00	\$9.00
3 kg of chicken	\$3.99/kg		
5 cartons of juice	\$2.28/carton		
2 kg of bananas	\$.99/kg		
2 packages of butter	\$3.29/package		
3 dozen(12) eggs	\$2.59/doz		
5 kg of potatoes	\$1.19/kg		
2 packages of carrots	\$3.19/package		

1. Calculate the total without estimating. _____
2. What is the difference between the actual and the estimate?

Part 2: Jacob has \$75 for grocery shopping. When shopping, Jacob estimates the total amount of groceries. To estimate, round each item to the nearest dollar. Keep track of the running total to see if Jacob has enough money. The first one is done for you.

Item on list	Price per unit	Your estimate	Estimate running total
5 loaves of bread	\$3.05/loaf	\$15.00	\$15.00
2 kg of apples	\$3.99/kg		
3 boxes of cereal	\$3.89/box		
4 cans of beans	\$1.29/can		
5 cans of pizza sauce	\$.89/can		
4 boxes of macaroni and cheese	\$1.79/box		
4 L of milk	\$2.69/2L		
2 kg of cheese	\$4.78/kg		

1. Calculate the total without estimating. _____
2. What is the difference between the actual and the estimate?

3. We had \$_____ left over from the \$200

Make a Grocery List

Make a grocery list of all the things you will need.

Food Item	How Much	Estimated Cost
Flour	10 kilogram bag	\$15.00

Food Item	How Much	Estimated Cost

Finding the best deal

Sometimes things seem like they are a good deal and stores tell you they are. But how do you know for certain? In order to find the best deal, you need to compare prices. Because different brands and products are often sold in different sizes and quantities, you must compare unit prices.

Example:

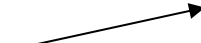
Which is the better deal:

- 3 loaves of bread at \$1.25 per loaf
- 3 loaves of bread for \$4.00?

Step 1: Figure out what makes one unit.

One unit is 1 loaf.

Step 2: Write the unit price of 3 loaves of bread at \$1.25 per loaf

Unit price: \$1.25 per loaf 

Step 3: Write the unit price of 3 loaves of bread for \$4.00.

Total cost of the bread = \$4.00

Number of units = 3 loaves

$\$4.00 \div 3 = \1.33

Unit price: \$1.33 per loaf

Compare \$1.25 per loaf and \$1.33 per loaf (\$1.25 is cheaper)

For each of the following, calculate the unit prices and compare. Underline the one which is the best deal.

Total Costs	Calculations and Best Deal
6 for \$1.90 or 8 for \$1.50	$1.90 \div 6 = 0.32$ per unit <u>$1.50 \div 8 = 0.19$ per unit</u>
5 / \$99 or 7 / \$119	
\$14.99 / 4 or \$19.99 / 6	
10 for \$14.00 or 6 for \$10.50	
3 at \$1.19 each or 3 / \$3.99 total	

Total Costs	Calculations and Best Deal
2 at \$9.98 each or 2 / \$19.99 total	
6 at \$56.90 each or 6 / \$350.00	
100g bag / \$8.60 (unit = 100g) or 300g bag for N\$26.50	
12 / \$840.00 or 3 / \$210.00	
5 / \$37.50 or 3 / \$14.28	
\$340.00 for 12 or \$298.00 for 10	

Finding Volunteers

You will need quite a few volunteers for your feast and drum dance. Think about all the things you need people to help out with like setting up, serving food, drum dancers, music, etc. Make a list below and think of a person who might be able to volunteer. Write down who will ask them to help from your program.

Job	Person who could help	Who will ask them to help?

Sample 1: Working on a Team

Job	Person who could help	Who will ask them to help?

Advertising

Make posters to put up around town. You can use the computer or use cardboard stock to create visually appealing posters to invite people to your feast.

Free

Community Feast & Drum Dance

When: Saturday, October 15, 2014

Where: Community Hall

Time: 6 pm to 9 pm



Hosted by the Youth in our Community!