Integrating Habits of Mind into your ESL literacy curriculum provides a learning opportunity for both instructors and learners. We encourage you to resist assumptions about learners’ characteristics, such as their level of responsibility, motivation, resourcefulness or engagement in learning. Using Habits of Mind as a way of understanding the key non-language skills which contribute to success provides an opportunity for learners and instructors to discuss cultural and individual differences. In many ways, learners have much to teach instructors about other ways of learning, interacting, thinking and being. You may better understand your learners’ strengths when you learn from them about how the Habits of Mind are demonstrated in other cultures.

The skills for demonstrating the Habits of Mind (resourcefulness, motivation, responsibility and engagement) in this framework are based on cultural expectations in Alberta. It is important to note that culture is not fixed and unchanging. For example, when learners enter the workforce, they often find that there is a culture particular to the organization for which they work. Another example can be seen in the way cultural beliefs about gender roles in North America have shifted over time. You can foster learners’ ability to question and analyze cultural expectations by reflecting on these throughout your own teaching practice.

Below are some questions to guide your reflective practice in this area:

- In what ways have the learners demonstrated Habits of Mind in the past?
- In what ways are the learners demonstrating Habits of Mind in the class?
- What strengths do the learners bring that will help them develop the skills and strategies for demonstrating Habits of Mind in ways that are appreciated and valued in Alberta?
- What other ways of thinking about time (or learning, goals, motivation, preparation, etc.) might influence learners’ behaviour?
- As an instructor, what can I learn from these other ways of thinking?

Habits of Mind are developed over time and in different ways. Aim for a balance between:

- recognizing and celebrating Habits of Mind as learners demonstrate them and
- explicitly teaching and practicing skills that enable learners to demonstrate Habits of Mind in Albertan contexts

Habits of Mind can be developed through purposeful, intentional skill development and practice. A safe, supportive classroom and program environment that encourages reflection, risk-taking and empowerment will be most effective in developing the skills and strategies to support these Habits of Mind.
For each of the four Habits of Mind outlined in this section, you will find:

- a description of the **Habit of Mind**
- a description of **skills** that support learners in demonstrating the Habit of Mind
- considerations for **understanding learners’ challenges**
- considerations for **building on learners’ strengths**
- **A process of skill development** for building each skill that demonstrates Habits of Mind. Each step in the process is accompanied by a self-questioning technique, which aims to increase learners’ awareness of their learning processes. Each skill incorporates an element of learner reflection, which contributes to learners’ metacognitive awareness (*ability to think about thinking*).

*See Stage 4: Integrate Assessment for considerations in assessing Habits of Mind.*
HABIT OF MIND: Responsibility

**SKILL:** Manage time

Process for **SKILL** development

**SKILL:** Manage time

- **Identify routines, activities and commitments**
  What do I do in my life?

- **Connect routines, activities and commitments to time frames**
  When do I do things?

- **Determine amount of time spent on different activities**
  How much time do I spend on these things?

- **Consider expectations**
  What do I expect of myself?
  What do people expect of me?

- **Reflect**
  Am I satisfied with the way I spend my time?
  What do I want to change?

- **Plan for change**
  How can I balance my activities and commitments?

- **Use appropriate tools**
  What can I use to manage my time?
  (e.g. watch, calendar, schedules)

- **Reflect and re-evaluate**
  Are the changes I made working?

---

How can instructors foster and develop learners’ ability to manage time?

- model effective time management
- recognize the extent of learners’ responsibilities
- provide instruction and practice in time management strategies (e.g. backward planning: *I need to be at work by 8:00 and my bus comes every 30 minutes. What time do I need to leave?*
- encourage problem solving and brainstorming based on time and responsibilities
- provide regular opportunities to discuss, reflect on and re-evaluate strategies
- include instruction on using time management tools
- develop learners’ numeracy skills related to time management (e.g. numbers, hours, minutes, estimating, etc.)
- reflect on your own culturally-based assumptions about time and time management
HABIT OF MIND: Responsibility

**SKILL:** Manage information

How can instructors foster and develop learners’ ability to manage information?

- model information strategies in the classroom
- practice strategies in class and connect them to household, work and school contexts
- build time into the classroom routine for managing information (e.g. papers, schedules)
- develop different methods of organizing information for learners to experiment with
- provide frequent opportunities to manage authentic information from school and life settings (e.g. sorting mail into junk mail and personal mail)
- recognize and celebrate learners’ own strategies and successes