

Task-Based Activity Development

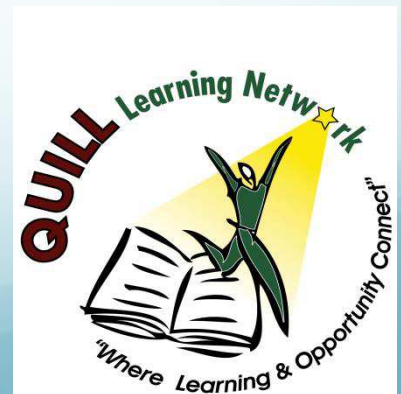
Developing Task-based, Authentic Learning Activities for OALCF Paths Part C

Webinar Series

February 2014

1:00 – 3:00 pm

Facilitated by:
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Partnership of:
QUILL LN & PRLN



Webinar Agenda*

Part A:

- Tasks & task sets
- Tasks vs. Skill building
- Theoretical basis
- Introduction to complexity

**1st Webinar
Parts A & B**

Part B:

- Characteristics of a good document
- Level the task not the document
- How to find documents for specific paths

**2nd Webinar
Part C**

Part C:

- Complexity scale
- Task Checklist

Part D:

- Complexity in-depth
- Review
- Final Assignment

**3rd Webinar
Review & Samples**

Goals & Outcomes

Goal:

- Train 100 practitioners across Ontario
- Create 100 Tasks sets for inclusion on the Portal

<http://taskbasedactivitiesforlbs.ca/>

Outcomes:

By the end of the webinar series, practitioners will have:

- Enhanced ability to recognize and acquire good quality authentic documents
- Increased capacity to create task sets
- Enhanced understanding of how tasks are different from skill building activities
- Increased ability to create high-quality, task-based learning activities
- Increased understanding of how to dissect tasks into OALCF competencies
- Increased capability to understand and assign complexity levels to their tasks

Part A & B Reminder Quiz

1. A Level One Task is defined as:
 - a) Finding two pieces of information in a document
 - b) Cycling through the document to find information
 - c) Locating one piece of information at a time
2. What does TOM stand for?
 - a) Type of match
 - b) Typical open match
 - c) Type of method
3. A task set is defined as “a set of questions that replicate an authentic experience that a learner will have in any of the five pathways”.

True or False
4. Good samples of authentic documents are: bilingual on the same page, well-designed, visually interesting, and can be used to create many tasks.

True or False

Part C Agenda

- Complexity scale
- Types of tasks
- Tasks & goal path
- Wording & Responses
- TOM & TORI
- Task Checklist



Adapted from 'Developing Work-Related Learning Materials'. SkillPlan BC 2007 Essential Skills Workshop", Jane Tuer and Through the Worker's Eyes, 2009

Level the Task!

Key Rule of Thumb:

Level the Task not the document

Tasks have levels and competencies and skill domains ascribed to them.

Authentic documents do not.

Three Step Process

Step 1: Collect Documents

Step 2: Develop Focused Learning Activities

Step 3: Control Instructional Focus, Complexity

Step 2



Step 2: Develop
Pathway-Focused
Learning Activities

Developing Apprenticeship & Worker-focused Tasks

At the workplace, the worker's job is to complete a series of tasks/questions.

Workers may:

- Enter information on a form
- Locate information in a manual
- Check dates and times on a schedule

Developing Student-focused Tasks for Academic Pathways

In the classroom, the learner's task is to learn the material (curriculum) and apply it in various academic situations (post-secondary, secondary school credits, in-school portion of apprenticeship).

Learners may:

- Study for an exam or test
- Write a paper or report
- Take class notes

Most closely resembles skill building activities.

Developing Independence Tasks

In real life, the learner must deal with a variety of tasks linked to the variety of life roles.

E.g. parent, caregiver, community volunteer, patient, coach, mentor, religious community member, etc.

Learners may:

- Complete a rental agreement or medical form
- Read a school newsletter or local newspaper
- Calculate a budget or a discount on a purchase

In Summary

Learning activities/tasks should replicate authentic situations. To check if the task does, ask the question:

- “Does the worker do this task on the job?”
- “Does the learner do this task in class?”
- “Does the adult do this task in real life?”

*Refer to Practitioner Guide pg 11-15

Three Parts to a Task Set

1. Tasks or questions
2. The related, authentic document or scenario
3. The purpose for learning or instructional focus (OALCF competencies & pathway)

Where to Start?

There is some flexibility for a starting point for creating task set.

Document:

- Found an interesting authentic document?
- Learner brought in a document?

Pathway:

- Popular learner pathways?
- Local labour market info indicating particular jobs or industry sectors?
- Then find authentic documents

Document > Tasks > OALCF

- ✓ Review the document
- ✓ Determine the relevant pathway
- ✓ Begin drafting tasks (3 – 7 questions)
- ✓ Review each task for OALCF competencies & levels
- ✓ Check for scaffolding – working from easy to more difficult
- ✓ Revise as needed

Two Parts to a Question

Each question or task has 2 parts:

- Information given (TOM)
- Response requested (TORI)

Example: What does the driver need to have in the vehicle before leaving the yard?

Given: driver needs something in the vehicle

Response: item needed before leaving the yard

Developing Types of Tasks

- Develop a variety of Who, What, Where and How tasks
- Develop tasks with different types of response modes (i.e. circle, list, highlight, enter)
- Different OALCF competencies and levels (difficulty)
- ***Keep each activity independent of each other so the answer to one is not needed to complete the answer for another***

*Refer to Handout “QuestionWordsandTORI”

Wording of Tasks

- Use the active voice to make tasks more clear
 - What product number is entered into the computer? (passive)
 - vs.
 - What product number does the clerk enter into the computer?
- Avoid gender or racial stereotypes
 - Name the occupation instead of using he or she

Wording of Tasks continued

- Avoid localized jargon in the activity - if it's critical to the job, explain it in the task.
- Break longer questions into several sentences
Calculate the total price to charge if there is a 5% discount for new customers.

vs.

New customers receive a 5% discount off the total price. Calculate the total price with the 5% discount.

Wording of Tasks continued

- Avoid questions that require yes/no answers or encourage guessing
 - Tasks on the job rarely have multiple choice options.
- Use words that match the level of the activity.
 - Who, Where, How much and When suit low-level
 - How, Which, Why, Explain, What suit high-level.

*Refer to Handout “QuestionWordsandTORI”

Handout Exercise # 2

- Refer to handout “Exercise2WFTaskWorksheet.PDF”
- Compare the questions in the left column with questions in the right column.
- Why are the questions in the left column not worker-focused?
- Take 5 minutes to complete it. If you’re viewing the webinar video now, pause it and take a few moments to complete the exercise.

TORI = Type of Requested Information

Questions have 2 parts: **given** information and **requested** information

- Question words and Types Of Requested Information (see handout)
- Identifying the type of requested information is the key to successful answering of the question/task
- Taking time to identify TORI increases the learner's comprehension of the task and ultimately performance on the task.

TOM = Type of Match

Use the information from the question/task to match it to the document (locate).

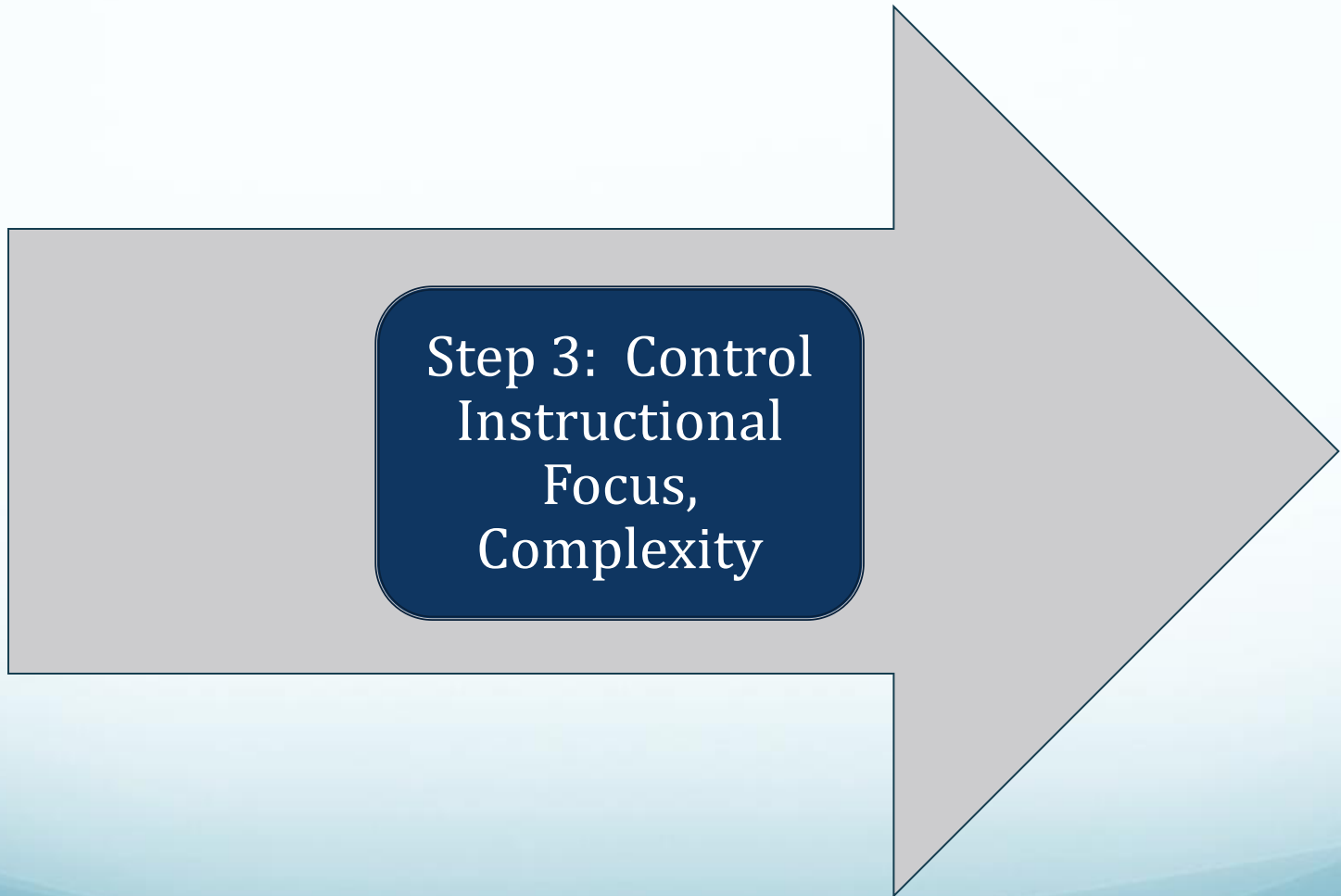
Locate & Cycle -> Easy

Integrate -> Moderate

Generate -> Difficult

The amount of given information influences complexity.

Step 3



Complexity & Scaffolding*

Begin with a task/questions that orients the learner to the document.

Follow that task with tasks that increase in complexity.

Gradually increase the level of the tasks to scaffold/bridge learning.

Complexity is built on a hierarchy of cognitive processing. The more thinking involved, the more difficult the question.

LCIG: Locate -> Cycle -> Integrate -> Generate

Types of Responses

The type of responses you want should be similar to what is actually done on the job, in academic setting or and in real life:

- **Calculating** a total
- **Entering** information on a form
- **Highlighting** or **circling** information
- **Explain or discuss** information

Low-level activities

- Learner finds/locates key words in the question and matches those same words in the document.
- Learner does not need to have a strong understanding of the document format to find the answer.
 1. What is the customer's address?
 2. What is the model number of the part?
 3. When is the work shift finished?

Higher-level activities

- Learner must locate multiple pieces of information.
- Learner must compare info from different areas of the same document.
- Learner must generate information
 1. Calculate the new total after 5% discount
 2. Give a reason why this method should be recommended

Numeracy Tasks

Quantitative tasks are **easier** when:

- Numbers to be used are obvious. The task is more difficult if the reader has to look for the values and figure out the labels associated with amounts.
- Numbers appear in row or column format rather than in a random arrangement (as for example in a prose paragraph).
- Arithmetic operations are explicitly signalled by the use of mathematical symbols (+, x, =, etc.) or explicit verbal cues ('add,' 'subtract,' 'total,' etc.)
- If the operation is signalled by the use of relational statements such as 'how much,' 'what amount,' or 'calculate the difference,' the operation **becomes more difficult**.
- When these operations are indirect or implied as in 'what is the net profit,' or 'what is the discounted price,' the task becomes **even more difficult**.

Numeracy Tasks

Quantitative tasks are **more difficult** when:

- Reader is required to work with ratios (one in four, two to one). Working with rates (miles per gallon, litres per square yard) is yet more difficult.
- Operations require sequential steps. Tasks are made more difficult when the amount resulting from one operation or task is used in the next calculation.
- Answer requires some transformation – hours and minutes to hours only, converting ratios to a common denominator, changing measurements from one system to another, fractions to decimals, etc.

Handout Exercise # 4

- Refer to handouts “Exercise4RewritingTasksDocument.PDF” and “Exercise4RewritingTasksWorksheet.PDF”
- Read the tasks and take a few minutes rewrite the tasks to improve the wording.

(Click Pause now if you’re watching the video!)

- Let’s review (Press Play when you’re ready)

Samples

Lets review some good and not so good samples of tasks sets (5 sets).

Samples from QUILL Portal, Ontario Skills Passport and Measure Up.

- LegoBldgInstructions
- PSS_CAATPrepTest
- BusandTrainSchedule
- GlazierWindshield
- RecipeProblem

Comments or questions?

Task Development Checklist*

- ✓ Activity is authentic. The worker uses the document in this way on the job.
- ✓ Wording is appropriate for the difficulty level of requested information.
- ✓ Activities are varied, using a combination of How, What, Where, Name, etc.
- ✓ Wording is clear and brief.

*Refer to Handout “TaskWritingChecklist.PDF”

Task Checklist Continued

- ✓ Activities start with an orientation task/question.
- ✓ Activities are ordered from least difficult to most difficult.
- ✓ Activities are independent of each other.
- ✓ Requested response is how the worker could complete the task on the job.

*Refer to Handout “TaskWritingChecklist.PDF”

Task Checklist Continued

- ✓ Requested response modes are varied (highlight, circle, enter).
- ✓ Questions request open-ended responses, not yes or no answers.
- ✓ Activities avoid specific gender.
- ✓ Activities are written in the active voice.
- ✓ Info (names, addresses) retains authenticity.

*Refer to Handout “TaskWritingChecklist.PDF”

Part C Review

1. Three parts of the question are: tasks/questions, purpose/instruction focus, and authentic document/scenario

True or False

2. Name one of the three easiest types of questions. Use the “question” box to write your answer.
3. Wording of Tasks should:
 - a) Avoid gender, use localized jargon, and avoid active voice
 - b) Use active voice, use words that match the level of the task, avoid yes/no questions
 - c) Use yes/no questions, avoid racial stereotypes, avoid the passive voice

Other Resources

Ontario Skills Passport

<http://www.skills.edu.gov.on.ca/OSP2Web/EDU/Welcome.xhtml>

Measure Up

<http://www.skillplan.ca/measure-up>

Essential Skills Profiles

<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/profiles/profiles.shtml>

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) Website (formerly HRSDC)

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/home.shtml