

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **How's your reading?**

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Are there really that many people today who need to improve their literacy?

Yes. About 50% of adults in Québec need to improve their literacy skills. That is, half Québec adults need to improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills.

How can that be?

Literacy is no longer seen as a single line that separates the literacy from the non-literate. These days everyone can read a bit. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines five levels of literacy: Level 1 being the lowest, Level 5 being highest.

Level 3, equal to high school completion, is the level needed to cope with the demands of a knowledge-based economy and society (*International Survey of Reading Skills (ISRS), 2005*).

In West Quebec the average number of adults with literacy levels below Level 3 is 60%. People working at Level 2 have the capacity to deal only with simple, clear material involving uncomplicated tasks.

Many people with Level 2 literacy skills do not realize that they have weak literacy skills. Problems arise when they need to make changes: to read to learn on the job, for example, or to respond to ever-increasing technological demands in daily life.

Having private lessons with a tutor is an excellent way for adults to raise their literacy level. The student-tutor team determines the pace and content of the learning. You can work on reading at one level and writing at another. You can work on material from your job, for example an operator's manual, or learn computer skills.

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The student and tutor determine the schedule and location of the lessons. This adult education program is offered at no charge by the Western Quebec Literacy Council (WQLC).

Trained volunteer tutors are available in communities throughout West Quebec. Ten new tutors were trained on September 23-24 at the Chelsea Community Centre. Six come from Chelsea and four live in Aylmer. They are all looking forward to helping someone improve their literacy skills.

Since 1984 Western Quebec Literacy Council has offered free individual lessons to English-speaking adults who want to improve their reading, writing and math skills. Western Quebec Literacy Council is a charitable volunteer community-based organization.

Call WQLC to enquire about free individual lessons (1-888-647-3112).

For additional information contact Marilee DeLombard, Executive Director, Western Quebec Literacy Council, 1-888-647-3112, [info@wq-literacy.org](mailto:info@wq-literacy.org).

Data from the 2006 Statistics Canada census is available on an interactive map that shows literacy rates by municipality. These maps are found on the website of the Canadian Council on Learning:  
([http://www.ccl-cca.ca/cclflash/proseliteracy/map\\_canada\\_e.html](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/cclflash/proseliteracy/map_canada_e.html))

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