NORTHSTAR DIGITAL LITERACY
A program of **Literacy Minnesota**

Teacher Resource Guide
Routines to Build Essential Digital Literacy Skills in ESL Classrooms

Why build in digital literacy routines?

[Literacy Minnesota](#) defines digital literacy as "the ability and knowledge needed to access and operate internet-connected devices, to successfully use commonly available software, and to navigate and utilize online resources in order to effectively communicate and complete social and work-related tasks in a virtual space." These skills are essential for success in the workplace, post-secondary education, and life.

The need for digital literacy skills for adults is increasing rapidly. [The National Skills Coalition (2023)](#) reported that 92% of jobs now require digital skills.

Many states recognize the following standards to describe the academic, professional and digital skills adult learners need in order to succeed in work, college, or other life goals: The College & Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS), along with the ACES Transitions Integration Framework (TIF) and the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards.

To best serve learners, teachers should integrate standards into instruction to help learners develop academic, soft, and digital skills. Adult Basic Education curriculum often supports teachers to integrate instruction in core content and soft skills. However, trained volunteers, licensed teachers, and program coordinators report struggling with integration of digital literacy skills into core instruction, especially in lower-level English language learner courses.

What can you expect from this guide?

Integrating digital literacy skills into core instruction doesn't have to be complex! This guide was created to support teachers to do just that by including easy-to-plug-in digital literacy-building routines, available in Google Slides to support beginning digital learners at beginning ESL levels and beyond!

The routines are organized by essential digital literacy topics, and the specific [Northstar Digital Literacy Standards](#) supported are listed along with links to Northstar units of curriculum for further skill exploration and extension. In addition to the full Northstar Digital Literacy Curriculum, Literacy Minnesota also offers a complete English learning curriculum, *English Unlocked.* Routines include ideas of specific units and pages in *English Unlocked* where digital literacy skills would align with the content being taught, giving ideas for authentic application of the skills.

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Finally, self-assessment rubrics are included for students and teachers to check in before and after practicing the routines to assess skills built and areas still needing support.

We hope this guide will provide encouragement and support to teachers integrating digital literacy into their core instruction with beginning level ESL learners. Repetition helps learners to build the essential skills of digital resilience and digital literacy. Additionally, building in digital literacy routines is a great place to begin to build instructional confidence in guiding learners through tech skills! We are all life-long digital literacy learners.

In Support,
The Northstar Digital Literacy Team

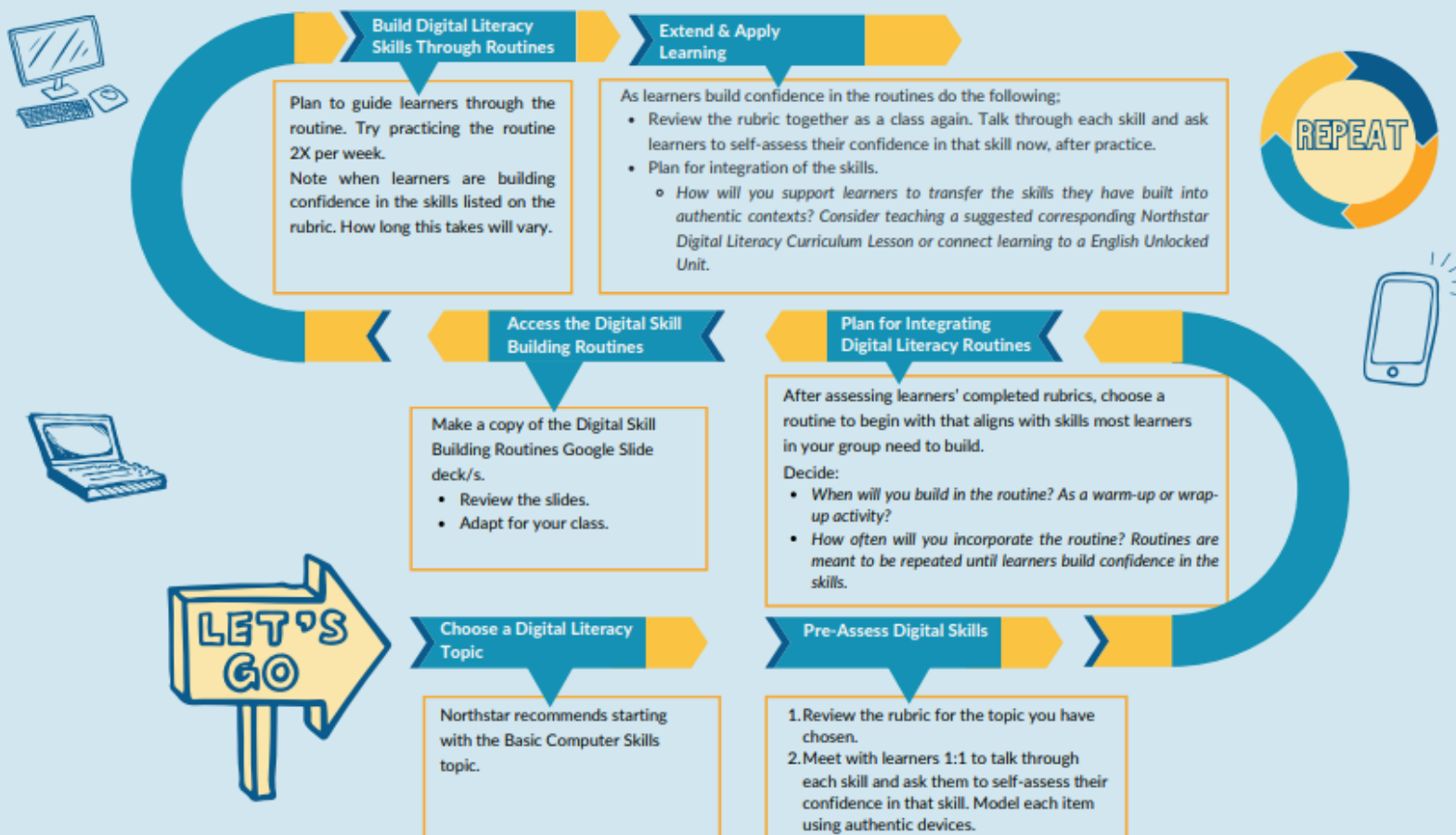www.digitalliteracyassessment.org

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Build Digital Literacy Skills Through Routines

Plan to guide learners through the routine. Try practicing the routine 2X per week.

Note when learners are building confidence in the skills listed on the rubric. How long this takes will vary.

Extend & Apply Learning

As learners build confidence in the routines do the following:
- Review the rubric together as a class again. Talk through each skill and ask learners to self-assess their confidence in that skill now, after practice.
- Plan for integration of the skills.
  - *How will you support learners to transfer the skills they have built into authentic contexts? Consider teaching a suggested corresponding Northstar Digital Literacy Curriculum Lesson or connect learning to a English Unlocked Unit.*

REPEAT

Access the Digital Skill Building Routines

Make a copy of the Digital Skill Building Routines Google Slide deck/s.
- Review the slides.
- Adapt for your class.

Plan for Integrating Digital Literacy Routines

After assessing learners' completed rubrics, choose a routine to begin with that aligns with skills most learners in your group need to build.

Decide:
- *When will you build in the routine? As a warm-up or wrap-up activity?*
- *How often will you incorporate the routine? Routines are meant to be repeated until learners build confidence in the skills.*

LET'S GO

Choose a Digital Literacy Topic

Northstar recommends starting with the Basic Computer Skills topic.

Pre-Assess Digital Skills

1. Review the rubric for the topic you have chosen.
2. Meet with learners 1:1 to talk through each skill and ask them to self-assess their confidence in that skill. Model each item using authentic devices.

Guide Sections Explained

Topic

Classroom Routines to Build Essential Basic Computer Skills

Basic Computer Skills Assessment Rubric: Before digital literacy instruction, identify the digital skills the learners need to build. For intermediate level ESL learners and above, the Northstar Digital Literacy Assessments are a great way to assess learners' skills. Alternatively, use the rubric to assess and/or support learners to self-assess where they are in their digital literacy journey.

Rubric for Pre-assessment of topic skills

Skills	Digital Skill Building Routines	Application of Digital Skills to Content	Extension of Digital Literacy Skills
Standards supported by routines	Mini-lessons built in Google Slides. Routines can be used again and again to build basic digital literacy skills for ESL (all levels) while supporting College and Career Readiness Standards and Soft Skills.	Ideas for application of skills in core ESL content. Suggestions of English Unlocked units where a digital literacy routine could be incorporated as an application of foundational digital literacy skills built.	Once foundational skills are built, consider teaching the listed Northstar Digital Literacy lesson plans to extend and apply basic skills. *Note: Northstar digital literacy curriculum was written for intermediate ESL or higher. These lessons can provide additional practice ideas for teachers to differentiate for lower-level learners, or if you are working with intermediate or higher, you may choose to teach one or more of these lessons as extensions to routines.*

Classroom Routines to Build Essential Basic Computer Skills

Basic Computer Skills Assessment Rubric: Before digital literacy instruction, identify the digital skills the learners need to build. For intermediate level ESL learners and above, the Northstar Digital Literacy Assessments are a great way to assess learners' skills. Alternatively, use the rubric to assess and/or support learners to self-assess where they are in their digital literacy journey.

Skills Supported	Digital Skill Building Routines	English Unlocked Curriculum: *Application of Digital Skills to ESL Core Content*	Northstar Curriculum: *Extension of Digital Literacy Skills*
Northstar Digital Literacy Basic Computer Skills Standards **CCRS, Anchor 1:** Begin to associate wh-question words with specific types of information. Ask and answer information questions with wh- words. **TIF:** Effective Communication (LS) Skill 3: Utilize a variety of technologies for communication	Get to Know Your Device Mouse Practice Keyboard Keys and Typing Practice	**Core Digital Literacy Skill to Apply to Content:** Learners will be able to navigate a device in order to send, read, and respond to a message. **Beginning Literacy Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Home Problems** **English Unlocked: Making Plans with Friends** **Beginning Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Making Plans with Friends** **English Unlocked Unit: Work and Family** **Intermediate Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Asking for Help** **Advanced Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Invasive Species**	**Northstar Curriculum:** Lesson 1: Devices and Computer Log On Lesson 2: Mouse Skills Lesson 3: Mouse Shapes Lesson 4: Fixing Typos Lesson 5: Keyboard Keys Lesson 6: Drives and File Movement Lesson 7: Screen Interaction Lesson 8: Customizing and Updates **Northstar Online Learning Basic Computer Skills Module** **Note* Learners must be logged in to their NSOL accounts to complete all practice and review question items.*

Classroom Routines to Build Essential Internet Basics Skills

Internet Basics Skills Assessment Rubric: Before digital literacy instruction, identify the digital skills the learners need to build. For intermediate level ESL learners and above, the Northstar Digital Literacy Assessments are a great way to assess learners' skills. Alternatively, use the rubric to assess and/or support learners to self-assess where they are in their digital literacy journey.

Skills Supported	Digital Skill Building Routines	English Unlocked Curriculum: *Application of Digital Skills to ESL Core Content*	Northstar Curriculum: *Extension of Digital Literacy Skills*
Northstar Digital Literacy Internet Basics Standards **CCRS, Anchor 1:** Begin to associate wh-question words with specific types of information. Ask and answer information questions with wh-words. **TIF:** Navigating Systems (NS) Skill 1: Identify and utilize electronic resources (websites, search results) that aid in finding specific information.	Connecting to the Internet Finding Information Online Websites	**Core Digital Literacy Skill to Apply to Content:** Learners will be able to perform an internet search to find specific information. **Beginning Literacy Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Making Plans with Friends** **English Unlocked Unit: Shopping for Clothes** **Beginning Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Community Places** **English Unlocked Unit: Shopping for Clothes** **Intermediate Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: Describing Homes** **Advanced Level:** **English Unlocked Unit: The Problem with Plastics**	**Northstar Curriculum:** Lesson 1: Connecting to the Internet Lesson 2: Navigating Websites Lesson 3: Tabs and Favorites Lesson 4: Search Terms Lesson 5: Search Results Lesson 6: Control Shortcuts Lesson 7: Internet Privacy Lesson 8: Viruses and Email Scams Lesson 9: Online Forms **Northstar Online Learning Internet Basics Module** **Note* Learners must be logged in to their NSOL accounts to complete all practice and review question items.*

Teacher Planning Guide [Flowchart](#) for Planning

Planning Questions	How to	Planning Notes
What foundational digital skills will you start with?	We recommend starting with the Basic Computer Skill Topic. But, you may want to begin with other foundation skill topics that are of specific interest/need for your group of learners.	
When will you pre-assess where learners are with the digital skills you would like to start with using the rubric?	1) Review the rubric for the topic you have chosen. 2) Meet with learners 1:1 to talk through each skill and ask them to self-assess their confidence in that skill. Model each item using authentic devices. 3) Alternatively, lead the class through a self-assessment of skills. Then, review each learner's completed rubric.	
What digital literacy routines will you build in?	After assessing learners' completed rubrics, choose a routine to begin with that aligns with skills most learners in your group need to build. Decide: ● When will you build in the routine? As a warm-up to your core lesson? ● How often will you incorporate the routine? Routines are meant to be repeated until learners build confidence in the skills.	

Do you need to adapt the routine slides? Or, do they work well as is?	Make a copy of the routine's Google Slides. Review the slides. Are there any that you would like to adapt for your class?	
How will you incorporate a digital literacy routine?	Plan to guide learners through the routine. Try practicing the routine 2X per week. Note when learners are building confidence in the skills listed on the rubric. How long this takes will vary!	
How will you support learners to transfer their new digital literacy skills into an authentic context?	Once you notice learners building confidence in the routines do the following. ☐ Review the rubric together as a class again. Talk through each skill and ask learners to self-assess their confidence in that skill now that you have practiced. ☐ Plan for integration of the skills. How will you support learners to transfer the skills they have built into authentic contexts? Will you teach a corresponding Northstar Digital Literacy Curriculum Lesson? Or connect learning to an English *Unlocked* Unit?	
Start the process again with a new skill!	↻	↻