Adult Basic Education Association
Hamilton's Connection to Lifelong Learning

Learning Exploration Tool (LET)

Facilitator's Guide for Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Practitioners

Introduction

The LBS Practitioners version of the Learning Exploration Tool (LET) is designed to support learners who are already in an LBS program and have had an initial skills assessment.

The Learning Exploration Tool (LET) is an educational interview template that

- allows you to gather more information about a learner's education and learning history, as well as their strengths and challenge areas
- includes a learning challenges pre-screen and checklists for specific learning challenges
- results in exploring learning strategies that might be helpful in and outside of the classroom

Time to Administer the LET	30-45 minutes
Additional Administration Time	1 hour*

*This is time to complete the report, reflect on potential learning strategies that might be helpful and meet with the learner to review it and decide on next steps.

The LET incorporates the first 2 steps of ABEA's full Learning Challenges Assessment Tool (LCAT). The LET is not a full literacy assessment with activities. However, you could incorporate it into your existing initial assessment. For more details about the full LCAT, please contact ABEA.

Before you use the tool with learners, you should have a good working knowledge of common learning challenges like auditory, visual and organizational processing challenges. Please review the training slides.

Suggested Service Delivery Model – The Process

First, decide if you will use the tool within your initial assessment process with all learners or while in the program as needed.

1. Connect with the client to book a learning exploration session. This can be completed in various ways depending on the preferences of the client – in person, by phone or video conferencing. Note – be sure to ask about their devices. Will they be taking the call on a cell phone with limited minutes? Do they have a laptop for a video conference or will they use their phone? Are they comfortable using video conferencing like Zoom, Teams, etc.? Do they have a data plan/Internet plan to support this? Ensure that they won't be incurring additional costs. If it's not ideal, an in-person meeting might work better.
2. Complete the interview portions of Learning Exploration Tool (LET) with the client. Book a 2nd session with them to review the report (give yourself time to complete the report).
3. After the appointment, reflect on the session and their responses to the questions. Consider whether they likely have learning challenges in certain areas. If so, consider what learning strategies to share/try with them.
4. Meet with the client to review the draft report to make sure they agree with everything and make any changes needed. Decide on next steps including direct instruction and practice of learning strategies.
5. Check-ins – Possibly determine a schedule for check-ins to review how the strategies are working for them.

The Learning Exploration Tool (LET) Template

Before using the tool, you'll need to add your organization's logo to the top (with AltText for screen readers). Acknowledge ABEA by keeping ABEA's logo in the header and the copyright information in the footer.

Administering the Learning Exploration Tool (LET)

The LET template has various sections to complete. Within those sections, there are also embedded dropdowns and prompts for you. Facilitator prompts are in brackets [like this]. These are there to help you during the interview. Remove them for the final report. There are also some embedded links to other pages for easy navigation for the end users.

Recommended Instructions

1. Save the template as LastName,FirstName-LET and put in the learner's folder.
2. Complete the full template by doing the interview with the learner and filling out the rest of the report independently (summary).
3. When done, remove all [facilitator prompts].
4. Copy the file for the summary report and name the copy LastName,FirstName-LETSummary.
5. Remove tables after the Learning Summary so only summary information remains. You will always have these tables in your full file.
6. Make a pdf of the summary. This is what you'll share with the learner. The original file may be too dense/overwhelming.
7. In the report review, you can certainly go over the full report if the learner would like to and share the full report with them if they want it.

Sections to Complete during the Interview

Before you begin, remind the learner that all of the questions in the tool are meant to be helpful to explore their strength and challenges areas. But they don't have to answer any questions that they don't want to. They can also choose to answer it but not have it in their report.

Goals

Add the date and your name. Ask about their employment, education/training and upgrading goals and add notes on the template. You will likely know these already based on previous discussions but it's helpful to review and expand on them if necessary. For the employment goals, it might also be helpful (for the final report) to review the job profile and Essential Skills profile. These can be very helpful to determine the skills needed for the job and may help with continued learner plan development.

Learning Summary

Ignore for now. You'll complete this after the interview for the report.

Strengths

This section will allow you and the learner to discuss their various strengths, talents, hobbies, etc. This is a great way to work from a strengths/asset-based approach. By starting here, you can refer to these strengths/interests as you work through the template and when you are building the plan. However, you may find that you have had enough time to develop a rapport with the learner to ask these types of questions or they feel uncomfortable starting here. In this case, skip this section for now. Make note of any strengths they share through the rest of the interview and come back to it at the end.

Learning Preferences

This may help you get to know the learner a bit better and what their ideal learning environment looks like. You may already know the answers to the digital notes from setting up the appointment.

Learning Challenges Pre-Screen

There are some pretty sensitive questions in the pre-screen. Before starting, it's a good idea to remind the learner that they don't have to answer any questions that they don't want to and that they can answer but not have it documented on the report.

The Learning Challenges Pre-Screen has 4 sections.

1. **Learning Exploration** – questions about learning when they were young and their current skills.
2. **Health/Medical Information that May Affect Learning** - These are factors that might need to be addressed before or while in programming. If the learner has concerns in any area, ask them if they think it will affect their learning and whether they would like additional supports for that issue (there are facilitator scripting notes on the template).
3. **Daily Tasks** – For each daily task, ask the learner if they are comfortable with the task or whether they have some difficulty with it or it's difficult for them. Add notes if the client offers more detail.
4. **General Learning** – these are the general indicators of learning challenges.

Interpreting the Learning Challenges Pre-Screen

- Learning Exploration - If the learner answers "yes" to several of these questions (4+), it's likely that they do not have learning challenges. However, complete the remaining sections to be sure and to gather more information.
- Health/Medical Information – this is used to determine if there are other/additional reasons for their learning challenges that might need to be addressed.
- Daily Tasks and General Learning - If the learner answered "yes" to having difficulty with 3-4 of the daily tasks and answered "yes" to 5-6 of the general learning questions, they may have a learning challenge.
- **Action** – If they meet the threshold for potential learning challenges, complete the Learning Processing checklists. This will help to determine if they are having difficulties in certain areas. If they don't meet the threshold, skip the checklists.

Learning Processing Checklists

Complete these checklists if the daily tasks and general learning sections of the pre-screen indicated that they may have learning challenges.

If the client answers “sometimes” – check the box and then add “sometimes” to the beginning of the statement.

Each section ends with a question for the learner as to whether they think it’s a challenge area for them. This will be helpful for the Learning Summary.

School Experiences and Specific Skills

These questions allow you to dive deeper into specific subject areas as well as get more information about their school experiences. This is very helpful to better understand their strengths and challenges in each area. It may reinforce or expand on what you learn in the processing checklists.

Sections to Complete After the Interview

Learning Summary

This is the culmination of the Learning Exploration Tool (LET).

- Strengths - Add things here from the strengths table or from additional strengths and skills that came out of the rest of the interview.
- Processing Challenge Areas – If the client has several checks in one of the processing challenge areas, list it/them here (visual, auditory, organizational, attention, etc.). It’s important to note that someone could only have a few markers but they may be severe enough to consider it a challenge area. They are the experts on themselves 😊.
- Specific Markers - Optional – here you could include very specific things like has difficulty tracking, sensitivity to light, difficulty with decoding using phonics, etc.
- Learning Strategies to Try - Start a list of specific strategies the learner could try and maybe offer a learning strategy handout if appropriate. These could come from your own experience or from the learning strategies handouts.