



Digital Literacy Support Package

Overview, Best Practices and Guidance for Delivering Training

Funded by



Ministry of
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and Competitiveness

Overview, Best Practices and Guidance for Delivering Training

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About the Digital Literacy Support Package

Introduction

This **Digital Literacy Support Package Overview, Best Practices and Guidance for Delivering Training** document outlines key information and guidelines for implementing digital literacy support for newcomers who are using mobile phones to interact online. The Best Practices are based in a large part on research and field testing for the ISSofBC Digital Literacy Curriculum Resource 2020, with additional guidance for working with vulnerable clients. The Best Practices are important to read prior to delivering digital literacy training with clients in order to create optimal conditions for success, for clients and the program.

The Purpose of the Digital Literacy Support Package

More than ever, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the need for newcomers to Canada to have a base of digital literacy to connect, to communicate and to access resources. The **Digital Literacy Support Package** was developed to provide a method and materials to help newcomers who only have access to a mobile phone to develop and practice critical digital skills for accessing Settlement services remotely.

Best Practices to Support Newcomers Learning Digital Skills

The insight in the first part of this section is largely reprinted, with slight modification for the needs of this project, from the ISSofBC Digital Literacy Curriculum Resource Best Practices document. Following "Best Practices for All Clients" is a section entitled "Additional Guidance for Vulnerable Clients" which has been added for this project.

Best Practices for All Clients

Two main threads of research informed the ISSofBC Digital Literacy Curriculum Resource (DLCR): focus groups and surveys with newcomers, teachers and administrators in the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program; and expert information on digital literacy from the Coordinator of Computer and Drop-In Programs at the UBC's Learning Exchange program. An environmental scan of existing digital literacy programs, best practices information, curricula and materials aimed at newcomers was also conducted. In total, 587 newcomers and 71 professionals in the teaching or settlement/employment field responded to research questions for the DLCR project.

What we know about digital literacy for newcomers...

Digital skills need to be practical, useful and relevant. Many newcomer learners can be fearful of learning how to use technology and feel that digital skills are beyond their ability or understanding. In addition, they may not see the need to learn how to use digital devices since someone else, such as a spouse or child, can perform digital tasks for them. It is important to get buy in from learners.

Find out what kind of digital challenges learners have in their daily lives and what skills they need to learn in order to overcome those challenges. Show learners how mastering basic digital skills can have a positive impact on their daily lives. Learners who are excited to learn new digital skills will be more engaged and motivated to continue learning on their own.

Digital skills do not correspond to language skills. It is possible for a newcomer learner to have strong language skills and be able to communicate well on a wide number of topics but who is not comfortable changing simple settings or does not know how to access information on the internet. Conversely, it is not unusual to find learners who are just beginning to learn English but are already digitally literate and who have no trouble using online resources to aid in their language learning. It is important not to assume a level of digital literacy from a client's other abilities.

Of course, while language skills are not a measure of digital skills, a low level of English will impact understanding of instructions that are only given in English. The use of visuals and demonstration is key to overcoming this potential barrier to learning.

Newcomers are not always good at assessing their own digital literacy. Some learners will tell you that they desperately need to “learn the computer” in order to find a job and function in Canadian society, when in fact, what the student is looking for is instruction in particular software such as MS Office 365. Others will say that they know how to use online programs, when they have simply memorized a series of steps to reach the desired program but have little to no understanding of how to actually navigate websites.

Relying on a self-assessment alone may not give you accurate information to plan digital skills instruction. Giving learners a simple digital task to perform, and observing how the learner responds to the task, will help give you a better understanding of true digital skills. In addition, asking the learners specific questions about when, where, how they use computers, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, etc. in their daily lives will give you better insight into what type of instruction and practice is needed.

Research shows a tendency for others to overestimate learners’ digital skills. Low level learners, whether they are language learners or digital skill learners, develop coping skills in which they learn to do tasks by rote.

For example, a low-level language learner may have developed the ability to leave a message for their teacher on a school voicemail, but that does not mean that that learner is able to answer the phone and carry on a conversation. Similarly, a learner's ability to scroll through information on their mobile phone, or their ability to log onto an online language learning site, does not equate with the learner having strong digital literacy skills.

Being able to access information on a mobile phone or access an online language learning site may demonstrate steps that the newcomer has learned by rote rather than showcasing skills that demonstrate true understanding of how/what they are doing. If the learner has learned to access information or sites by rote, it is unlikely the learner can transfer those steps to other tasks or applications. It is often not until learners are unsuccessful in tasks that require strong digital literacy skills that teachers realize the need for instruction and practice in digital skills.

What program administrators need to know about digital literacy for newcomers...

Volunteers and interpreters should be utilized. The use of volunteers is encouraged. If volunteers are also able to speak the first language of the learners, especially when working with low language level learners, this can be beneficial, since the focus of the lessons is on helping learners improve digital skills rather than learning new vocabulary, etc. The more volunteers your organization is able to recruit, the better. Field testing has shown that having one volunteer for every 4 to 8 learners is optimal; however, any volunteer assistance in the classroom is valuable.

Keep class size small. Unless your organization has the capacity to supply volunteers on a consistent basis, try to keep your group size to a maximum of 8 learners. Even in a class of 8 learners, having volunteers present to help individuals who struggle is invaluable. Larger groups benefit from having multiple volunteers present in the classroom that learners can call

upon when they are struggling to keep up with the pace of instruction or when they find a particular digital skill challenging to understand.

Try to group learners by digital need and language level. A digital literacy course works best when most learners approach it with similar abilities and needs. If learners cannot be grouped by first language and the course is to be taught only in English, set up your course for a specific Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) level range (e.g. CLB 1/2 or lower beginner, CLB 5/6 or lower intermediate, etc.). Conduct a needs assessment and/or diagnostic prior to beginning the course to determine where individuals are at in terms of digital literacy and try to also group learners by digital competency.

What facilitators need to know about digital literacy for newcomers ...

Give yourself enough time. Each lesson in each unit of the **Digital Literacy Support Package** includes expected timing of instruction and activities. However, this timing does not take into account review of previously taught skills or any supplemental activities or materials you may wish to add. Field testing has shown that trying to complete a single lesson within a 2 or 3-hour time period is extremely aggressive. Depending on the background of the learners and experience with digital devices, it is not unreasonable to double the amount of time allotted to completing a unit. Lessons may need to be divided into smaller sections so that more review of previously taught components can be built in.

Review and practice are essential. This statement may seem obvious; however, field testing has shown us that teachers and facilitators often feel pressure to complete certain components of a lesson within the time available. This may not allow learners the time needed to understand and internalize what they have been taught. At the beginning of the class, be sure to review what was taught in the previous class. Leave time at the end of the class to review the highlights of the current lesson. Specific concept check questions such as “Do I tap here or here?” or “Do I tap or swipe up to close the app?” will help you check in with learners to see if they have understood what was taught.

Remember there needs to be ample time to practice all new skills. Since individuals need differing amounts of time to process information, this may mean that you are not able to complete the lesson, or portion of the lesson, that you had planned. Be prepared to allow as much practice time as needed without worrying about completing the lesson. Do not be tempted by the fastest learner to move on: pace the lesson by the bottom quarter of the class, not the top quarter.

Ensure prerequisite digital skills are taught. A needs assessment or diagnostic task can be administered to determine which broad digital skills learners need to learn (e.g. basic phone skills, navigating online, etc.). Each unit in the **Digital Literacy Support Package** contains a lesson on a different broad digital skill. These lessons also reference prerequisite skills from lessons in other units. Be sure all prerequisite skills have been mastered before teaching a new digital literacy skill. For example, the lesson on email requires that learners have basic phone skills before they can master composing an email.

Additional Guidance for Vulnerable Clients

Some newcomer clients, such as those with multiple health issues, physical or financial constraints, or who have experienced trauma, are more vulnerable than other newcomers without those barriers. While multi-barriered clients often have strengths such as persistence and resiliency that are valuable assets, experience shows they are also likely to experience more struggles in learning to use technology confidently and competently. Below is some guidance, based on many years of experience, for teaching skills to vulnerable clients.

What facilitators need to do when teaching vulnerable clients ...

Be aware of possible barriers to learning. Some barriers to learning are visible; others can be hidden.

- Some people, including educated and accomplished people, have a fear of technology, and can feel that they might break a phone or laptop from using it improperly. Feeling afraid can cause strong emotions to be displayed during the learning process that may seem out of place.
- The language of technology tends to be English; this includes a lot of “techno jargon” that also must be understood to operate comfortably in a digital environment.
- Experiencing trauma can seriously impact daily functioning, including learning and the ability to retain information.
- Cell phones are small devices, with small keyboards, and text and icons that can be difficult to see, particularly for clients with vision issues.
- Needing to complete a task using technology can be stressful, particularly if the task is urgent.

Create an environment for learning rather than for performing.

- Reassure clients that it is normal and expected for everyone to take time to learn and retain digital skills. Normalizing the gradual learning process allows clients to relax.
- Set a very slow pace in class. A slow pace allows those who learn more slowly to have the time they need, and those who learn faster to feel a sense of accomplishment. Remember that the slow pace will likely feel “boring” to the facilitator far earlier than to the learners.
- Use simple, direct language. Simple structures and vocabulary guarantee that no one is left behind during explanations and directions. This does not mean using broken, incorrect or childish language. It means choosing words and phrases that are more concrete than abstract as well as shorter sentences. Use the example language given in the lessons as guidance for simple, direct language.
- Break training into “chunks.” Trying to cover too much material in one class will be frustrating and overwhelming, which adds more stress to learning. Instead, plan lessons with smaller objectives, and use any leftover time in a session for review and additional practice.
- Be patient with learners, and encourage learners to be patient with themselves.

Focus on building skills. Depending on circumstances, there may be a sense of urgency from the client as well as from those who support the client, to acquire the needed skills as quickly as possible.

It is important to note and to convey that trying to rush the learning is more likely to cause frustration than acceleration. Steps to do a very simple task might be able to be memorized but building transferable and lasting skills takes time and consistent practice.

Looking at the visuals that accompany the lesson in each unit, there are sets of instructions that might seem feasible to “jump ahead” to. For example, getting the client into Zoom (Unit 3) before teaching or reviewing basic phone skills (Unit 1). While it is perfectly reasonable to use the included instructions to help a client access services (getting into Zoom to attend a presentation on resources in the community), when teaching the digital literacy course, lessons should begin at the beginning. If clients clearly demonstrate facility with basic skills, the first unit might be completed more quickly. But reviewing basic skills ensures that clients have a firm foundation for building and retaining more complex digital skills over time and should not be skipped. Clients clearly demonstrating that they can do the discrete digital skills consistently should be the measure of whether it is time to move on.

Don't be tempted to show or tell everything you know! It can be difficult for a teacher or facilitator to remember a time and the experience when their own skills were at the beginning level like the clients. Depending on their own process of learning, the facilitator might feel it will be faster and easier for the client to learn technology shortcuts. Or the facilitator might feel it is important or interesting for the clients to learn some background or additional knowledge about the technology. Clients can also sometimes ask for extraneous information, for example about vocabulary, that is not necessary to learning and practicing a particular skill at that time.

Keep in mind that the goal is to build digital skills and the **Digital Literacy Support Package** is designed for that purpose. Extra information or shortcuts can be overwhelming and confusing as learners try to remember everything that is necessary. Stay focused on the lesson and keep the learners focused on the lesson to ensure objectives are met.

Digital Literacy Support Package

Contents

The Digital Literacy Support Package consists of 5 Units for developing digital literacy on a mobile phone.

- Unit 1
 - Basic Phone Skills for Android - Lesson
 - Basic Phone Skills for Android – Visuals
 - Basic Phone Skills for iPhone - Lesson
 - Basic Phone Skills for iPhone - Visuals

 - Basic Phone Skills – Extra Practice Activity
 - Connecting to WiFi – Extra Practice Activity

- Unit 2
 - WhatsApp For Android – Lesson, Part 1
 - WhatsApp For Android – Visuals, Part 2
 - WhatsApp For Android – Lesson, Part 1
 - WhatsApp For Android – Visuals, Part 2

 - Using WhatsApp – Extra Practice Activity

- Unit 3
 - Zoom For Android – Lesson, Part 1
 - Zoom For Android – Visuals, Part 2
 - Zoom For Android – Lesson, Part 1
 - Zoom For Android – Visuals, Part 2

 - Using Zoom – Extra Practice Activity

- Unit 4
 - Navigating Online For Android – Lesson
 - Navigating Online For Android – Visuals

 - Navigating Online – Extra Practice Activity

- Unit 5
 - Gmail For Android – Lesson
 - Gmail For Android – Visuals
 - Yahoo For Android – Lesson
 - Yahoo For Android – Visuals

 - Using Email – Extra Practice Activity

Using the Support Package Lesson Plans and Visuals

The Digital Literacy Lesson

At the beginning of each lesson, you will find:

- the learning objectives for the lesson
 - the overall objectives for the entire lesson
- a list of the prerequisite digital skills required to complete the lesson
 - the digital skills taught/learned in prior Digital Literacy Support Package modules
- lesson preparation instructions
 - important to read this in advance of teaching this lesson
- a list of materials needed for the lesson
 - important to prepare materials in advance of teaching this lesson

Basic Mobile Phone Skills Android Lesson	
Learning Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Phone Words-Basic Terminology Basic Actions on Android Phone: Press; tap; swipe left, right, swipe up; scroll up/down;; pinch to zoom in/out Basic Tasks on Android Phone: Turn on phone; unlock phone; go to different home screens; open apps; close apps; use Home Key; connect to WiFi; Turn off WiFi More Tasks on Android Phone: Download an app; open, read and reply to a new text message; Find text messages from someone; Find a past text message by scrolling; Recognize a link in a text message; Close text message; Close text messages app; Close website; Look at a whole linked document by scrolling
Pre-requisite Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical ability to hold a phone and tap, swipe etc Ability to recognize very simple symbols (icons, some words)
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read through the lesson and look at the related visuals. Print any visuals you decide to give as handouts to learners. Turn on the Document Camera, Projector or the Interactive Whiteboard (The Document Camera, if available, is ideal for projecting when demonstrating the digital skills on the phone) <p>Note about the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the lesson, the → symbol is used to give the answer when it is a part of the script. Otherwise, the word 'Answer' is used. Vocabulary: Do not spend time teaching lots of vocabulary. Demonstrate where things are on the phone and how they work.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phones (students bring their own) Visuals Interactive Whiteboard or projector for displaying the visuals to demonstrate skills to students. <p>If these are not available, use your phone, and/or enlarge the visuals for teaching.</p>

The lesson is divided into a series of discrete digital skills. Each discrete digital skill lists the objective and vocabulary relevant to that skill. It is important that you do not spend a lot of time teaching vocabulary but rather that you ensure vocabulary is recognized by students. The vocabulary for each discrete digital skill is followed by a **Learn** section in which the facilitator teaches and demonstrates the specific digital skill with the aid of visuals and handouts. The **Learn** section also includes suggested instructional language.

Download an app	
Objectives	Learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> locate the Google Play (app) Store search for apps download and install an app locate the downloaded app close Google Play (app) Store app
Vocabulary	<p>app/application - a program on your device</p> <p>download - to copy information or a program from the internet to your computer/phone</p> <p>search bar/box - a rectangular box/space on the web page where you type words to look for something on the website</p>
Learn	<p>Note: Remove/Uninstall Zoom app from your phone before demonstrating this. Demonstrate on your phone. Use the visual: Download an APP (Download Zoom)</p> <p>Point to different apps on Home Screen. Elicit: What is this ? → app...app...app Maybe I want another app. For example, Zoom app. How do I get a new app ? → Play Store</p> <p>Point to Home Screen. Elicit: Find Play Store. Tap Play Store to open. You see this. (Play Store Home Screen)</p> <p>You may need to tap Apps at bottom of screen if another category is open (games, Movies and TV, Books). Don't show learners all categories now. It will overload them.</p> <p>Point to Search bar Search bar Search for apps & g... Tap here (in Search bar) Now you see keyboard Type Zoom...z...o...o...m Finished ? Tap Search or here (or on magnifying glass icon) You see this Zoom app (Zoom Cloud Meeting) You see this. Point to Screen showing Zoom app and then point to Install Install</p>

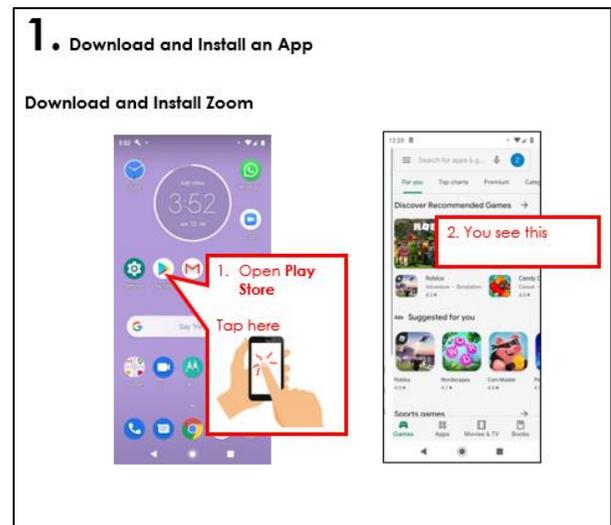
Suggested simple and direct instructional language is italicized

After the instruction for a digital skill is given, there is a **Practice** section in which students participate in guided practice of the new skill, often with the aid of handouts.

<p>Practice</p> <p>Approximate time: 30-60 min</p>	<p>Have learners practice: Download an app</p> <p>Display the Visuals: Download an App (Download Zoom) Close Play Store App</p> <p>Write on board and say: Now you practice: 1. Open Play Store 2. Download Zoom Follow the steps (in Download an app visual) 3. Close Zoom App 4. Close Play Store App</p> <p>Optional: Have learners practice twice. Uninstall the Zoom app for the learner. Do not teach them how to uninstall an app now. It may overwhelm them.</p> <p>Go around and guide learners as needed.</p>
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Visuals for the Digital Literacy Lesson

Each digital literacy lesson is accompanied by a package of visuals to illustrate the digital skills and the steps to be taken to accomplish digital tasks. On their own, these visuals act as instructions; used with the lesson they guide the learner to build skills and practice. It should not be assumed that a client has gained digital skills just because they can follow the instructions in the visuals one time. The instructional steps in the lesson, along with time, repetition and review, are needed to build digital literacy.



Using the Extra Practice Activities

Extra Practice Activities (EPA) are just that – extra practice. These activities are not meant to be in-class teaching tools or self-study lessons. Clients should access the EPA on their own time to practice and strengthen their skills after they have received instruction from a facilitator on a given digital skill.

Before assigning an EPA for the first time, open it during class time so that clients can see how to access it and become familiar with the format. Lower language level clients especially might initially need help from someone at home to use the EPA. Encourage clients to do the EPA as many times as needed to feel comfortable with the digital skills being practiced.

Using the Support Package Remotely

Background to this section

Teaching digital skills remotely is not ideal, particularly when the client is learning on a mobile phone. This is because the learner will have to open attachments sent in email or WhatsApp, toggle between the attachment and talking to the facilitator, and do other complex actions on the mobile phone *just to begin learning*. As well, during the lesson, the facilitator may be able to see the client, but won't be able to see what the client is doing, and because the client does not have familiarity with the online environment, they generally cannot describe and explain the problem adequately for the facilitator to help when they get stuck even if both facilitator and client are both fluent in a shared language.

However, in the circumstance where improving digital literacy is imperative and newcomers absolutely cannot be met face-to-face to support their learning, the following information and instructions provide guidance to help newcomers learn and practice digital skills.

Remote learning of digital skills should never be undertaken where face-to-face learning can be arranged.

Given the recommended interactions, the following visuals are also provided for clarity in this section:



= the newcomer with digital literacy issues (the learner)



= the person in the newcomer's household who speaks the newcomer's first language and is able and willing to help facilitate the newcomer in learning and practicing digital skills (the helper)



= the Facilitator

First Language Support for Newcomers Learning Digital Skills Remotely

It is very important to acknowledge that newcomers who have low levels of English as an additional language combined with low levels of digital literacy will need first language support to both understand what is needed to improve digital skills, and to access the Extra Practice Activities (EPAs) provided in the **Digital Literacy Support Package**.

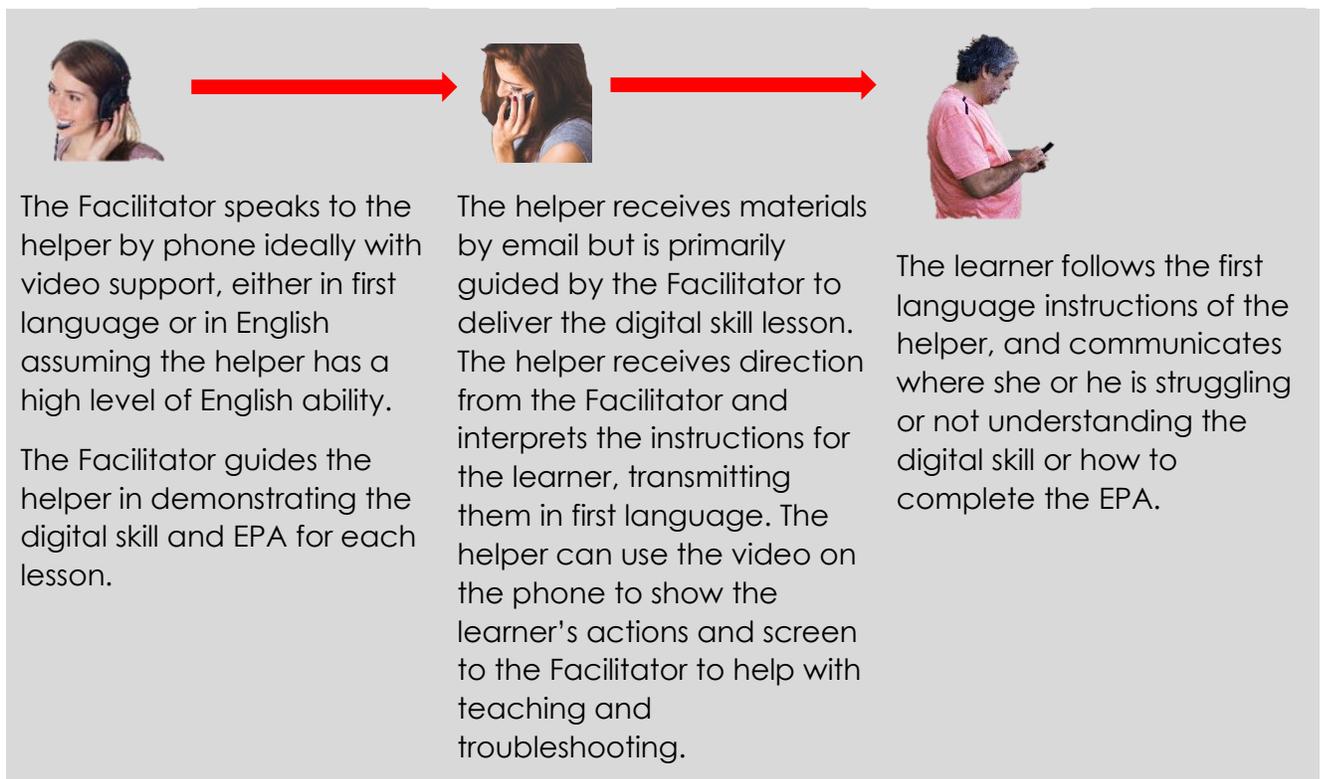
Although the EPAs are hands-on practice, they were not designed to be used without first receiving instruction and in-class practice guided by an experienced facilitator. If a newcomer must learn and practice the digital skills remotely, ideally someone in the learner's household who speaks the learner's first language will be available to explain concepts, help teach the digital skills, and give instructions to the newcomer to get into an online environment in order to practice the digital skills.

1. Ideally, someone in the learner's household who speaks the learner's first language (a helper) will be able to set up a distance learning platform (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.) to allow the Facilitator to speak to the learner directly and show them what to do by sharing a screen. Alternatively, if the helper is unable to set up a distance learning platform on the learner's mobile phone or a household computer, the helper will have a separate phone with video capabilities (WhatsApp, Skype, WeChat, etc.) so that they can show the learner and the learner's interaction on the phone or computer screen to the Facilitator as the lesson is delivered remotely.
2. The helper should also be able and willing to receive an email with teaching materials and instructions for accessing the extra practice activity online spaces. **Alternatively, consider printing a package of visuals and handouts for the client, to be picked up or delivered prior to beginning the course.**
3. The helper should never be expected to deliver instruction on their own. The helper should always be guided by a Facilitator who is experienced with the DLSP and who can use a distance learning platform to teach the digital literacy lessons, or who at least has a phone with video capabilities (WhatsApp, Skype, WeChat, etc.) to use with the helper. The Facilitator will guide the helper to use the teaching materials with the learner, then help the learner to access the online Extra Practice Activities for practice of the digital skills learned in each lesson.
4. **To lessen confusion and misunderstanding, the Facilitator doing the guiding and the helper should share a language, whether a high level of English or the helper's first language.**
5. **Caution!** If there is not someone in the learner's household who speaks the learner's first language and is able and available to help, the Facilitator will need to remotely guide the learner in first language directly. This is not an ideal circumstance, as the Facilitator and the learner will not share a common understanding of the online environment and the vocabulary to describe and navigate the online environment, nor will they be looking at the same device at the same time to help aid understanding. Experience has shown that this situation seldom results in a successful outcome despite the best intentions of both Facilitator and learner.

6. **Caution!** The least likely circumstance to be successful is if the Facilitator needs to remotely guide the learner with low English levels combined with low digital skills only in English. In this case, there are too many barriers to understanding and the result is most likely to be confusion and frustration, with extremely little if any success. It is not recommended to use the DLSP in this circumstance.

Instructions to Guide the Newcomer Remotely to Improve Digital Literacy

Regardless of any self-assessment of digital ability, Facilitators should start at Unit 1: Basic Phone Skills and work through the activities. If the learner can easily demonstrate each discrete digital skill, the Facilitator will know that the foundation for learning is firm and it is safe to move on.



Instructions:

1. The Facilitator must carefully read each lesson in order to familiarize themselves with the concepts that must be communicated, and the discrete digital skills that must be taught and practiced, before trying to deliver the lesson. **The Facilitator's own level of digital skills is not necessarily an indicator of how well they can break down and teach the lessons.**
2. Once the concepts and methods for teaching are understood, the Facilitator should set up a regular lesson time with the learner and the learner's helper when both will have access to mobile phones and quiet, undisturbed time to complete lessons and practice.

3. Prior to each lesson, the Facilitator should email the helper with the visuals and handouts from the lesson that will be used to support teaching and learning, and a link to the location of the EPA (along with the password) that the learner will access and use for practice following the lesson. Alternatively, a package of visuals and handouts can be printed for the learner (to be picked up or delivered prior to the first session); the helper should keep these printed visuals and handouts organized so they can be easily retrieved as needed during the lesson.
4. At each designated lesson time, the helper should open or take out the lesson handouts for the learner. The Facilitator should connect with the learner through a distance learning platform with screen sharing (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.) if at all possible; at the least, the Facilitator and the helper should connect by phone using video (WhatsApp, Skype, WeChat, etc.) if they can.

Using the distance learning platform, the Facilitator can teach the digital skills lesson directly, with the helper offering assistance and interpretation as needed. In the absence of a distance learning platform, the Facilitator should guide the helper through using the visuals and handouts with the learner to demonstrate the digital skills to be learned and practiced. In the latter case, the helper should communicate and demonstrate the digital skills being taught to the learner in first language, using the video app on the phone to show the Facilitator the learner's actions and their screen as needed for teaching and troubleshooting.

5. Following the digital skills lesson, the Facilitator should guide the helper in opening the EPA associated with the lesson (navigating to the location and entering the password) on the learner's phone. The Facilitator should then guide the helper in demonstrating the EPA to the learner and ensuring that the learner is able to use the EPA for practice. If available, the helper should use a video app on their own phone to show the Facilitator the learner and their screen as needed for demonstrating and troubleshooting.
6. With the helper for support, the learner should use the EPA to practice, several times over several days, before another lesson building on the prior skills is attempted.

Experience shows that it takes repetition, patience and perseverance for newcomers with low levels of English and low digital literacy skills to gain confidence and ability with basic digital skills such as navigating the home screen and opening and closing apps, even when circumstances are ideal and the teaching and learning can take place in a face-to-face environment. Expectations for learners, helpers and Facilitators should be tempered by recognition that trying to learn digital skills remotely is not ideal, and gains in digital skills may take more time.