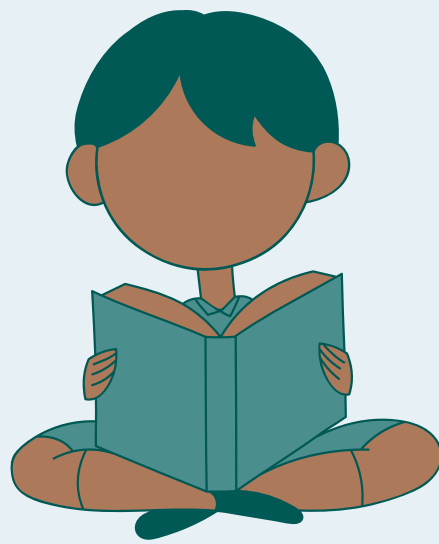


# Literacy and Poverty: Making the Connection

Almost half of Canadians struggle with literacy. About one in five (17%) have extremely low literacy.

## What is literacy?

"Literacy is ... a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world." - UNESCO[i]



## It's the little things

Seemingly small things can make a huge difference in daily life for someone struggling to read or write:

- opening a bank account
- reading a bus schedule
- applying for and maintaining sustainable employment
- securing appropriate housing



## Strong literacy skills help people to...

- complete high school and consider further education in subject that interests them
- create long- and short-term career goals and engage in life-long learning opportunities
- make informed decisions about finances, housing, health, and other determinants of well-being



## Learner-centered programs for success

- programs that focus on a learner's interests are more effective than general upgrading"
- materials that are relevant to the learner's experience, interests, culture, and goals promote learner engagement
- learning specific skills leads to workplace satisfaction and increased job retention



## Research shows

- low literacy skills and the experience of poverty are intrinsically linked
- there is a positive relationship between earnings and literacy skills
- literacy upgrading has positive impacts on job performance, increased employment, higher earnings, and job retention
- the higher your literacy level, the less likely poor health will prevent you from attending work or school [ii]



## Frontier College

Frontier College is a national charitable literacy organization leading Canada's transformational literacy movement. We work with volunteers, partners, and communities to ensure that everyone has access to effective, literacy-based learning that empowers them with the capabilities and confidence they need to realize their goals.

[frontiercollege.ca](http://frontiercollege.ca)

[i] United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization ([en.unesco.org/themes/literacy](http://en.unesco.org/themes/literacy))

[ii] Frontier College. "Literacy and Essential Skills as a Poverty Reduction Strategy." Web 2019.