Module: ABRA-ePEARL Connection

Teaching Early Literacy with the Learning Toolkit+

Welcome to the CSLP's Teaching Early Literacy with the Learning Toolkit+. As you move through these modules, you will familiarize yourself with each broad literacy skill and its corresponding sub-skills, gain a deeper understanding of various teaching approaches and practical tips, and explore how the CSLP's Learning Toolkit+ also known as LTK+ supports the development of these literacy skills.

These modules can be used in a variety of settings; from asynchronous and fully online to synchronous, blended and in-person workshops. Each of the modules has a similar structure, outlined in a table of contents. All of the modules focus on explanations, practice, and interactive content to insure understanding and engagement. We hope these modules provide you with new knowledge, useful suggestions on how to integrate the various literacy tools into your teaching, and helps you develop your expertise in early literacy instruction.

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Introduction

Introduction

The LTK+ also offers a portfolio tool, called ePEARL. That stands for **E**lectronic **P**ortfolio **E**ncouraging **A**ctive **R**eflective **L**earning. ePEARL is best suited for educators who wish to use electronic portfolios in a learner-centered way, but who also wish to experiment with multimedia content and a collaborative approach. It provides learners with an environment where they can plan, create, reflect, collaborate and demonstrate their learning.

Module Objectives

This module will help you understand the ePEARL software so that you can determine how to best use it to enhance your teaching, or your own reflective practice. At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Summarize the key components of **Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)**.
- Navigate to the ePEARL tool within the LTK+.
- Distinguish between the different levels of ePEARL.
- Identify the key features of the ePEARL tool.
- Determine how ePEARL can enhance your classroom and personal endeavours.
- Plan how ePEARL and ABRA can be used together to support the development of early literacy and SRL skills.

Pause and Think

Activity: Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions:

- In your own words, state the purpose of creating a portfolio.
- Have you ever created your own portfolio? If so, how did it help you work towards your personal or professional goals? If not, what steps can you take to find out more about the benefits of portfolios?
- Are portfolios suitable for your class? Why or why not?
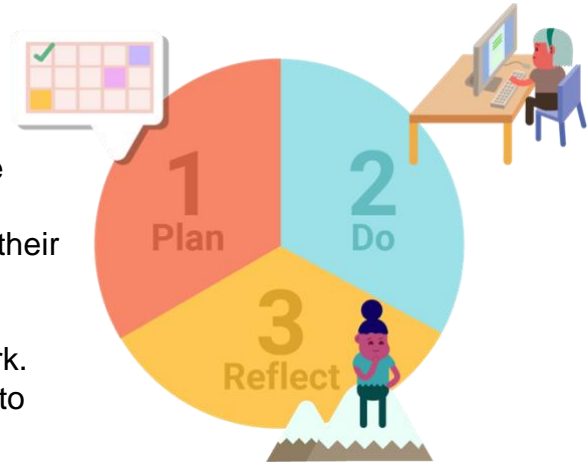
Self-Regulated Learning

SRL Skills

There are three cyclical phases that will help learners build self-regulated skills: plan, do, and reflect. Each of these phases comprises of smaller tasks which support learning and encourage the learner to be aware and take ownership of their learning.

Learners engaged in the SRL process:
- Set goals.
- Develop strategies to attain their goals.
- Identify their motivation in relation to the work.
- Articulate the task set by teacher using their own words.
- Create an action plan for their work.
- Self-evaluate and self-observe their work.
- Incorporate teacher and peer feedback to improve their work.
- Provide peer feedback to others.
- Reflect on the process, the end result, and plan for future work.

Teachers should support their learners through this process by scaffolding the steps and providing feedback.

What is Self-Regulated Learning?
In the online version of this module, there is a video that describes SRL skills. The transcript is provided in the PDF version of the module.

In this video, you will learn about self-regulated learning, which refers to how people generate the thoughts, actions, and emotions necessary to attain their personal goals. ePEARL was designed to help learners build these skills.

ePEARL is web-based electronic portfolio software that has been designed to support, scaffold, and encourage self-regulated skills in students. The tool is based on the best-available evidence for how individuals learn successfully. All levels of ePEARL are structured around the model proposed by Professor Barry Zimmerman, who has identified three key phases in self-regulation: *Forethought*, which refers to a learner's planning skills; *Performance Control*, which is how students do the actions needed to attain their goals; and *Self-Reflection*, which refers to students reflecting on their learning process. This is a cyclical process where learners move back and forth between the phases.

In the *Planning* phase, learners are asked to describe their task, set goals, and develop a work plan. Vague goals should be avoided as there is no indication for when a learner has achieved them. Self-regulated learners understand the importance of creating SMART goals. That is, goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound. Long-term goals can be helpful in guiding learners in a particular direction,

but should be broken down into short-term measurable goals. Creating goals, and a strategic plan to attain them, helps learners develop a sense of ownership.

In the *Doing* phase, learners monitor their work while following the plan they created. They use the strategies they identified that would help them attain their goals. Part of the process involves reviewing and editing their work as a task unfolds. If learners feel their plan is not working, they can return to the planning phase and adjust their strategies.

In the *Reflecting* phase, learners take the time to evaluate the results of their work and the many aspects of the process they used. Reflections should point to evidence to ensure a meaningful evaluation takes place. Reflection allows learners to deconstruct what happened so they can identify the positive elements they want to replicate in their next task, or the elements that they need to improve upon in the future.

Learners can also share their work in order to obtain constructive feedback. In turn, they can provide feedback to their peers seeking the same support. The benefit of obtaining this kind of feedback is that it allows learners to reflect on another's perspective. Learners can then apply what they have learned by either returning to the doing phase and improving their work, or adjusting their plan and strategies as they move forward.

Young children can use *Level 1* of ePEARL to help guide them on this life-long endeavor. The interface design and the type of interaction are simplified to suit beginning readers and writers as they start to develop the foundational skills. ABRACADABRA or ELM and ePEARL can be used together at this level to help facilitate children's acquisition of both self-regulated learning and literacy or numeracy skills.

Level 2 of ePEARL is geared to older primary school children and the SRL components are further developed. Learners also have the ability to customize their environment and determine who they will share their work with, thus giving more ownership over to the learner. The information literacy tool – IS-21 may also be used with this level of ePEARL so that students are able to set goals and reflect throughout the inquiry process.

The same premise is used in *Level 3* of ePEARL which is designed for secondary students, as all of the SRL features are further developed for older learners.

Adults can use *Level 4* of ePEARL to continuously improve their self-regulation skills. The components of self-regulated learning are more in-depth at this level in order to support learners' as they cultivate their abilities.

Developing these self-directed skills will help learners with academic accomplishments, but also benefit them throughout their lives in a variety of contexts and tasks. Self-regulation learning is a lifelong skill that fosters a sense of ownership in the learner.

The ePEARL training and support materials provide more guidance in how to best use the tool to develop self-regulated learning skills, essential lifelong learning skills.

Pause and Think
Activity: Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions:
- What did I learn from this video?
- What questions to I have after watching this video?

Plan
Before learners jump in to doing a task, they should develop a work plan. This involves determining what learners hope to accomplish (a task goal) and developing strategies to attain that goal. The learner should also consider how this task will help them work towards attaining any general goals they have set. When tasks are set by someone else, such as their teacher, learners should define the task in their own words to ensure they have grasped what is being asked of them.

Another important element of planning, involves exploring the learner's feelings and motivation around the task. Important factors are the learner's beliefs in how relevant a task is for them and their self-perception of their abilities.

Defining Goals and Strategies
Setting clear goals is challenging for both children and adults. When goals are vague, there is no clear path to take and no way to evaluate when the goal has been reached. In the following activity you can practice helping learners go from vague statements to specific goals and strategies.

Things to consider:
- General goals, or long-term goals, require planning, time, and multiple attempts or steps to accomplish.
- Task goals, or short-term goals, are things you want to accomplish in the near future.
- Strategies are purposeful actions that help achieve goals.

Scenario (Question 1): Ms. Akter has noticed one learner, Yuri, struggling with setting goals. She's asked him to tell her three things he wants to do. Which of these is the most appropriate as a general goal?
   a) Get better.
   b) Become good at handwriting.
   c) Learn 3 new vocabulary words.

Hint: General goals are long-term goals. Choose an option from the list that would take planning and has multiple steps.

Question 2: Ms. Akter is happy to see that Yuri is going in the right direction, but isn't sure if "become good at handwriting" is the best way to phrase Yuri's objective. Should they rephrase this goal, and if so, how?
   a) I will write more.
   b) I want to become very good at writing by hand.
   c) I want to be able to print clearly and without any errors so my ideas are clear.
   d) It doesn't need to be rephrased.

Hint: Yuri can refine his goal by using the S.M.A.R.T. approach. Consider incorporating one or more of the following characteristics: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Question 3: Ms. Akter has assigned a creative writing activity. Yuri thinks it's a good opportunity to work towards his general goal. Which of the following is a strong task goal?
   a) I will do the writing assignment.
   b) I will practice using a keyboard with my parents' help.
   c) I will write 5 clear sentences for this assignment by the end of the week.

Hint: Yuri's general goal is "I want to be able to print clearly and without any errors so my ideas are clear". Which of these statements relates to that in a S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) way?

Question 4: Yuri's task goal is "I will write 5 clear sentences for this assignment by the end of the week", but he isn't sure what steps to take to make sure his handwriting is clear and has no spelling errors. Ms. Akter helps him brainstorm strategies. Which one of the following strategies does **not** directly help Yuri work towards his goal?
   a) I will reread my writing.
   b) I will draw pictures.
   c) I will use finger spaces between words.
   d) I will make sure all my sentences start with a capital letter.

Hint: Strategies help learners achieve their task goals by breaking up the task into smaller steps and applying purposeful actions to accomplish each step.

Answer Key

Scenario (Question 1): Ms. Akter has noticed one learner, Yuri, struggling with setting goals. She's asked him to tell her three things he wants to do. Which of these is the most appropriate as a general goal?

    a) Get better.
       This is way too vague. What does Yuri want to get better at?
    b) Become good at handwriting.
       Yes, this goal would take time and practice before Yuri could accomplish it.
    c) Learn 3 new vocabulary words.
       This would be a good task goal as it is something Yuri could accomplish in the short-term.

Question 2: Ms. Akter is happy to see that Yuri is going in the right direction, but isn't sure if "become good at handwriting" is the best way to phrase Yuri's objective. Should they rephrase this goal, and if so, how?

    a) I will write more.
       This is too vague to use as a goal. However, Yuri could elaborate on this idea when working on his strategies (ex: practice writing 3 times a week).
    b) I want to become very good at writing by hand.
       This rephrasing essentially says the same thing as before. What does "very good" entail?
    c) I want to be able to print clearly and without any errors so my ideas are clear.
       Yes, this clarifies what Yuri means by "good" and provides criteria that Yuri can use to evaluate his own progress. It also states why he wants to achieve this goal.
    d) It doesn't need to be rephrased.
       This goal is pretty vague. How will Yuri know when he's achieved this goal? Is there a particular aspect he wants to focus on?

Question 3: Ms. Akter has assigned a creative writing activity. Yuri thinks it's a good opportunity to work towards his general goal. Which of the following is a strong task goal?

    a) I will do the writing assignment.
       Yuri needs to consider how this assignment will help him work towards his goal. How can he use a creative writing assignment to help him improve his printing and spelling skills?

b) I will practice using a keyboard with my parents' help.
   This can be another goal that Yuri wants to work on, but it doesn't relate to the current general goal. Which of the other options helps him work towards his long-term goal?

c) **I will write 5 clear sentences for this assignment by the end of the week.**
   Yes! This goal is relevant to Yuri's general goal and the current task. It's a measurable goal because it specifies 5 clear sentences. It is also is achievable in the stated timeframe.

Question 4: Yuri's task goal is "I will write 5 clear sentences for this assignment by the end of the week", but he isn't sure what steps to take to make sure his handwriting is clear and has no spelling errors. Ms. Akter helps him brainstorm strategies. Which one of the following strategies does **not** directly help Yuri work towards his goal?

a) I will reread my writing.
   This strategy fosters Yuri's self-evaluation skills to identify problems in his own work.

b) **I will draw pictures.**
   Correct. This strategy will help the reader understand what Yuri's trying to express in the assignment. However, it does not help him move closer to his goal of improving his handwriting skills.

c) I will use finger spaces between words.
   This is a good strategy for Yuri to use to improve the legibility of his sentences.

d) I will make sure all my sentences start with a capital letter.
   This strategy reinforces grammatical rules and sentence structure.

Do

In this phase of the SRL process, learners monitor their progress as they create their work. Learners determine if they are moving towards their goals. If the strategies identified in the *plan* phase are not working, they can go back and adjust them or develop new strategies.

This phase allows learners to demonstrate what they have learnt. This can take on many types of formats, such as text, images, video, or audio recordings. As learners are going through this phase, they assess their work for errors and/or ways to improve their learning process.

Teachers working on their **own portfolio** could link projects (ex: lesson plans) to professional or curriculum competencies. This can help track accomplishments, and identify areas in need of additional work.

Reflect

Reflection is an ongoing process that allows one to take ownership of their learning. It is important to reflect on the learning process as much as the end result. A comprehensive reflection will point to evidence. This ensures that adjusting the negative elements and duplicating the positive elements in future work are based on sound reasoning. Developing a strong reflective practice allows one to connect with their own success.

Learners may need support and direction to help them develop this skill. Teachers can provide this support through prompts.

In the online version of this module, there are two videos that outline how a child can reflect on their learning process in ePEARL level 1. If you have access to the internet, you can watch these videos by clicking on the links below.

- Reflection in My Readings (Level 1)
- Reflection in My Creations (Level 1)

The Importance of Reflective Practice
In the online version of this module, there is a video of two Concordia University professors discussing why and how reflective practice helps learners succeed. You can watch it online.

Feedback

Receiving criticism is hard. Children don't want to hear they're doing something wrong any more than adults do. However, *constructive* criticism is helpful feedback that leads to a positive change. To provide constructive feedback, one needs to point to specific examples and suggest how it might be improved.

Learners become accustomed to receiving feedback from their teacher on their academic pursuits. Parents and peers are also helpful resources for providing feedback. Young learners need to be taught how to provide constructive feedback, so that they are not simply saying they don't like something. When they are able to provide and receive feedback, they are given opportunities to engage in dialogue, analyze what's said, and determine whether or not to adjust their work based on the feedback. Engaging in providing constructive feedback is also a useful exercise for learners; this can help them develop their own skills as they identify specific aspects and justify the reasoning behind their comments. It also develops their skills at self-evaluation.

Pause and Think

Activity: Individual Reflection. If Possible, Followed by a Group Discussion.

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions. If you are doing this module with peers, form small groups of 3-5 participants.

- In your own words, state the importance of the *Plan* phase in the SRL process.
- In your own words, state the importance of the *Do* phase in the SRL process.
- In your own words, state the importance of the *Reflect* phase in the SRL process.
- In your past experiences, which SRL skill has been the most difficult for your leaners to develop? Why?
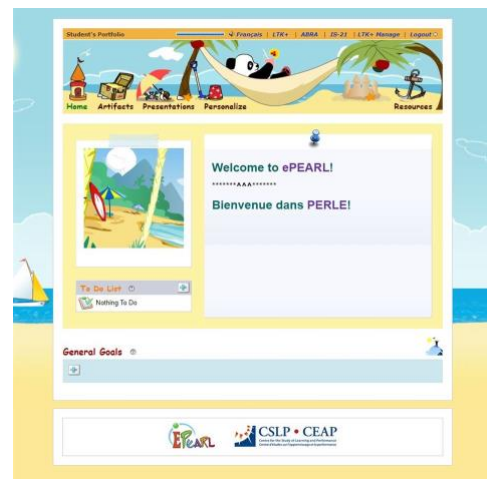
ePEARL

What is ePEARL?

ePEARL is a web-based portfolio software. It has been designed to encourage and support learners as they develop their SRL skills. It does so by prompting learners to set goals, develop strategies to work towards those goals, and reflect on their learning throughout the process.

The first three levels of the tool are imbedded in the LTK+. The first level caters to early elementary learners. This level also links to the ABRACADABRA software by allowing learners to create ABRA-centric artifacts.

The second level is design for late elementary and possibly early secondary learners, while the third level is geared towards secondary learners. The SRL components develop further as the level of the tool increases.

There is also a fourth level of ePEARL, but it is not imbedded in the LTK+. It is aimed towards learners and educators in higher education, job seekers looking to build their portfolio, and adult learners tackling complex projects.

How can You and Your Learners Benefit from ePEARL?

ePEARL is intended to help learners develop SRL skills as they create their portfolio. Each of the four levels of ePEARL were designed to best support learners through the *plan*, *do*, and *reflect* phases at a pace and depth that is appropriate for the learner's developmental stage.

ePEARL is also designed to foster collaboration and peer feedback. Learners can choose to share their work with a peer or parents. They can then analyze this feedback to determine how they want to respond and if they want to act on the feedback.

For levels 1-3, learners have the option to bring their work from one level to the next. They can also choose to export their portfolio to keep a copy on their personal computer. This functionality allows ePEARL to follow learners throughout their educational career.

Throughout these learning modules, ePEARL has consistently been recommended as a place for you to create and reflect on the suggested activities. Consider keeping this work and comparing it to future work to see how your knowledge and skills have developed. It is recommended that teachers use level 3 for their own portfolios.

Different Types of Portfolios

ePEARL can be used to create different kinds of portfolios.

A **working** portfolio is an intentional collection of 'work in progress' tasks. This type of portfolio is not intended to be shared with others. Rather it's a place for leaners to archive milestones, and track the progress and refinement of a task. Teachers can use this type of portfolio for formative assessment, such as identifying learners' needs to guide classroom instruction.

Levels 2 & 3 of ePEARL allows learners to save an artifact as a new version. This duplicates the artifact so learners can compare different versions to help them identify and track their improvement.

A **process** portfolio documents the learners' growth and mastery of a particular skill. This portfolio focuses on a specific learning objective. Encourage learners to create this type of portfolio to follow the development of their literacy skills. For example, a learner can select different tasks that emphasize their comprehension skills to show how their abilities have progressed throughout the year. Each piece chosen for the portfolio should relate to the

objective. Learners should self-evaluate their abilities and reflect on how each task relates to the objective.

A **showcase** portfolio, sometimes referred to as a display portfolio, shows the learners' best work. A learner uses this type of portfolio to demonstrate they can apply what they have learned. This type of portfolio is the most commonly shared with others, and helps learners develop pride in their accomplishments. For young children, this kind of portfolio typically contains the work they receive grades on. Adults often create this kind of portfolio to showcase their abilities to prospective employers.

How to Access the Tool

Access the LTK+ by entering its URL in your browser.
Tip: It is a good idea to bookmark this URL for future reference.

Sign in using your personal credentials.
Once signed in, you will be taken to the LTK+ lobby page. If you are not sure what your username or password is, ask your LTK+ contact to help you find this information.

Look for the ePEARL logo. Important: No matter which level you're in, you should see ePEARL on the lobby page. However, there are different versions of this tool. To change your level, go to Manage > My Account > My ePEARL Account (follow the troubleshooting instructions below to see how this looks*).

Click on the ePEARL logo itself to go to the portfolio software.

Troubleshooting for ePEARL

To change your level:

1. Click on **Manage** in the LTK+ Lobby.

2. You should see the following screen. Click on **My Account**.

3. Click on the **My ePEARL Account** tab.

4. Select the desired level from the **Choose your level** dropdown.

How to Access Learners' Portfolio

Navigate to the LTK+ lobby.

Click on **Manage** at the top of the screen.
The *Manage* index page will automatically load.

Click on the **My Students** button.

A list of all your learners will appear. Find the learner whose portfolio you want to see. Click on the **View Portfolio** button ([image]).Their portfolio will load in a new tab of your browser.

ePEARL Features and Terminology

The following features are typically found in all levels of ePEARL.

General Goals: This is a place where learners can set long-term goals. It is not tied to any project, but something learners want to work on throughout the year. Prompt your learners to consider their goals related to developing their reading and writing skills.

When starting a new task, they will be prompted to consider their short-term goals and how the task will help them move towards attaining their general goal(s).
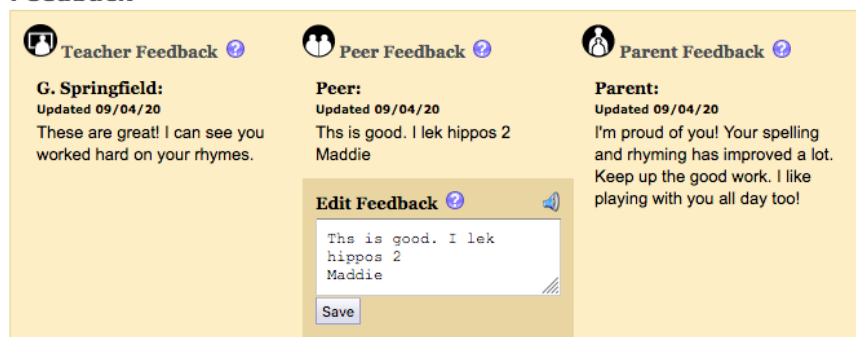
General Goals

Edit General Goal Comments

[Save]

Parent Mode: parents may provide feedback by clicking on the *Parent Mode* button within their child's account. All of their child's work will be in view-only mode, and the parent feedback text boxes will be visible.

Max's Portfolio   Français | LTK+ | ABRA | ELM | My Account | Logout →

My General Goals

Parent Mode

My Readings

My Creations

My Presentations

My Feedback

Logout

Feedback Learners can share their work with their peers and ask for feedback to improve their work. In level 1, this feedback can be provided immediately as learners work in dyads or triads. For example, one learner will focus on reading, while their partner acts as a 'technician' operating the computer. After the first child finishes reading, the second can provide feedback.

Feedback

Teacher Feedback
G. Springfield:
Updated 09/04/20
These are great! I can see you worked hard on your rhymes.

Peer Feedback
Peer:
Updated 09/04/20
Ths is good. I lek hippos 2 Maddie

Edit Feedback
```
Ths is good. I lek
hippos 2
Maddie
```
[Save]

Parent Feedback
Parent:
Updated 09/04/20
I'm proud of you! Your spelling and rhyming has improved a lot. Keep up the good work. I like playing with you all day too!

Presentations: Once an artifact has been revised based on feedback and the learner is satisfied with the end product, they can send it to the *Presentations* folder (levels 1-3).

Exporting: Learners can save a copy of their *Presentations* folder (levels 1 & 2), or selecting artifacts in their archive (level 3), by using the *Export* function. Clicking on this button creates a zipped HTML file of their portfolio. This process is designed to allow learners to keep their portfolio as long as they want, and to smoothly move to the next level of ePEARL.
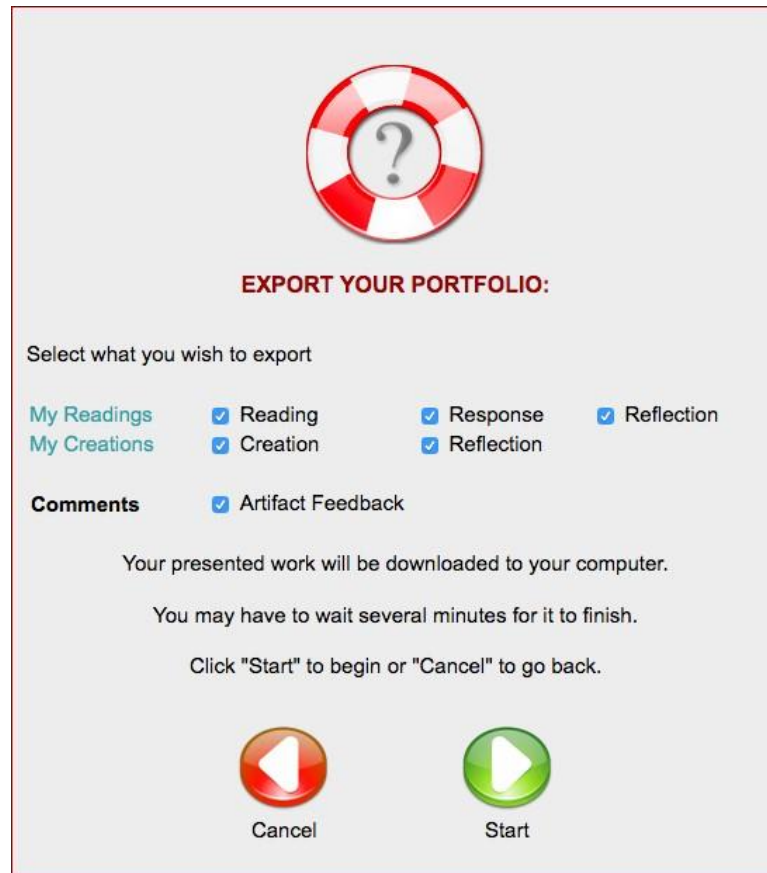
Levels
The LTK+ software has three levels that fosters SRL throughout a learners' academic career:
- Level 1: Grades 1-2
- Level 2: Grades 3-6*
- Level 3: Grades 7-12

Note: IS-21 (another LTK+ tool), is accessible only in level 2, but it is recommended for learners in grades 3-8.

In addition, a fourth level was designed outside of the LTK+ for adults as they continued their academic career, advanced their professional careers, or supported their personal interests. You may wish to use this level to create your portfolio.

Level 1

Level 1 is geared towards beginning readers in early elementary. The interface and SRL process is simplified to suit the needs of young children. The two main sections of the portfolio are: *My Readings* and *My Creations*. The *My Readings* section encourages learners to identify different components of a book, such as the book's title and author. Learners are also encouraged to record themselves as they read a book. The *My Creations* section is broader as it allows learners to showcase a variety of work, such as writing or art pieces. It is a great place for learners to practice their writing skills or work on extension activities.

For children that have not yet developed strong writing or typing skills, encourage them to use the recorder feature to share their ideas.

This is the only level whose artifacts (readings or creations) can directly connect to ABRA stories.

Using ABRA & ePEARL Together

In level 1, ABRA and ePEARL can be used together to facilitate learners' literacy skills as well as their self-regulated learning. In both the *My Readings* and *My Creations* sections, there is a special ABRA button. Clicking on these buttons will generate an ABRA artifact that connects to one of 20 digital ABRA stories.

See *Appendix B* for additional information.

My Readings

Reading one of the ABRA stories in ePEARL allows learners to record themselves as they read. The record button in these artifacts will also open the book so learners can read directly from the screen.

These recordings can help teachers and parents monitor a child's reading development. The learner can also listen to themselves and develop self-monitoring skills. Comparing early readings to ones done later in the year can help demonstrate the child's growth.

My Creations

These artifacts allow learners to work on and showcase a broad range of skills. All projects or extension activities you assigned related to or inspired by an ABRA story can be crafted in this part of the portfolio. Some examples include learners:

- Creating an alternate ending
- Retelling a story from another character's perspective
- Responding to questions about a story
- Making a presentation about a story

The Benefits of Using ABRA and ePEARL Together

In the online version of this module, there is a video of a teacher discussing how the link between ABRA and ePEARL helped her learners. You can watch it online.

Level 2

There are some additional features in level 2 that make it more sophisticated. These ePEARL artifacts are structured so that the SRL process is broken down by phase. There are more fields for learners to consider than seen in level 1, but ePEARL breaks down the process into manageable steps.

This level also contains the ability to personalize their portfolio. This includes creating a welcome message, adding a profile image, changing the top banner by choosing one of several options within the LTK or create their own, selecting one of the sixteen available background themes, generating a personal to-do list, and designating colour code tags for their work.

Use this level with older learners who are building their beginning literacy skills.

Level 3

Level 3 is geared towards secondary learners, but teachers can use it to develop their own portfolios as well.

Level 3 was designed to provide a more mature space. Learners can still personalize their environment with their own welcome message, banner, and so forth. They are also provided with a notification section where they can choose to be alerted when they receive feedback or someone shares work with them.

The major addition to this level is the *Toolbox*. The toolbox provides some additional SRL features. For example, they can connect their work to one of their general goals, or see a bank of strategies they developed and used in the past. When learners use this feature, ePEARL complies the data into an overview page so that learners can quickly see the frequency of goals and strategies selected. The toolbox also provides a journal feature and a timer to help learners keep track of their learning and plan their time efficiently.

Pause and Think
Activity: Individual Reflection. If Possible, Followed by a Group Discussion.

Individual Reflection
Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions:
- How do you see ePEARL being used in your classroom context?
- What barriers do you anticipate? How can you overcome them?
- How can ePEARL help you provide differentiated instruction to your learners?

Group Discussion
If you are doing this module with peers, form small groups of 3-5 participants. Everyone should share their individual reflection answers and get feedback from their peers on:
- The plan to get children using ePEARL, especially the ABRA-ePEARL connection.
- The challenges teachers have identified. Help each other consider various ways to overcome those challenges.
- Strategies on providing differentiated instruction based on learners' needs.

Your Teaching
Let's Go!: Tips and Techniques
Suggestions for Incorporating the ABRA-ePEARL Connection in your Classroom

Tips
Prioritize goals if you or your learners have numerous goals. Otherwise, it might get overwhelming. Focus on the top priority. Slowly incorporate more goals at a manageable pace.

Teacher Aids
The CSLP has prepared a number of resources for teachers. These include technical support for the ABRA and ePEARL tools, pedagogical support for helping children build their literacy and SRL skills, and classroom activity and resource suggestions.

Collaboration & Reflection
Suggested strategies on how teachers can learn from their own experiences, receive input from colleagues, and provide feedback to support their peers.

Tips
Here are some ideas to help you get started.
- ePEARL's recorder feature can be used to practice presentations. The learner can listen to their practiced speech and evaluate their performance.
- Create short-term goals and strategies that learners can work on each month in order to progress towards their general goals.
- If learners are having trouble setting a goal, have them start by stating three things they do well, then ask them to think of one thing they wished they could do.
- Encourage learners to attach any evaluation criteria related to the task. This way, they can refer back to it as they create their tasks and ask for feedback.
- Learners should ask for feedback from peers before showing their portfolio to the intended audience.
- Take photos of your learners as they work on their portfolios in class. The learner can attach this photo to the related work.
- If your leaners work on their portfolios during class, jot down anecdotes as you circulate in the classroom. You can add these as comments in the leaners' portfolio later on.

Teacher Aids
The following resources suggest ways to teach SRL skills using ePEARL.

Sample Level 1 Artifact (see *Appendix C*)
This document provides an example artifact for level 1.

Basic Decoding in ABRA & ePEARL (see *Appendix D*)
This provides a suggested outline for a decoding activity using both the ABRA and ePEARL tools.

Model for Reflective Practice (see *Appendix E*)
This document provides a four-part structure to help learners engage in the reflection process.

To get more resources, please visit the ABRA Teacher Resource website:
https://literacy.concordia.ca/resources/abra/teacher/en/

To get more ePEARL related resources, please visit the LTK+ ePEARL Resources site:
https://grover.concordia.ca/epearl/resources/home_en.php

Collaboration and Reflection

Here are some ideas to help you get started.

Lesson Plans

Work with a colleague that teaches the same grade as you. Together create lesson plans (see *Appendix F*), brainstorm activity ideas, and share worksheets. Once you have implemented the lesson, regroup to share your experiences. Discuss both successes and difficulties. Share strategies on how to overcome those difficulties.

- For ePEARL users: attach the lesson or activity to your ePEARL account.
  If you don't use ePEARL, write your reflections in your course notebook (see *Appendix A*).
- Send a copy to the LTK trainer for evaluation and this will contribute towards attaining a mastery certificate.

Filming Your Lessons

Consider filming your classroom when you're teaching a combined ABRA and ePEARL lesson, then:

- Share with colleagues to get feedback and/or provide a model for newer teachers.
- For ePEARL users: attach the video to your ePEARL account. After watching the lesson, reflect on the process.
  If you don't use ePEARL, write your reflections in your course notebook (see *Appendix A*).
- Send a copy to the LTK trainer for evaluation and this will contribute towards attaining a mastery certificate.
- Use this template (see *Appendix G*) to create a parental permission form.

Summary

Summary

In this module you learned…

- There are three cyclical phases (plan, do, and reflect) that help learners develop SRL skills.
- In the *Plan* phase, learners create an action plan. They set goals, develop strategies to attain those goals, and evaluate their motivation for doing the task.
- In the *Do* phase, leaners carry out their plan, monitor their progress, adjust the plan as needed, and demonstrate their learning.

- In the *Reflect* phase, learners reflect on the learning process and the end result. They solicit feedback from peers, family, and their teacher, then determine whether to act on that feedback. They also provide feedback to their peers.
- ePEARL is a web-based portfolio software that supports learners as they develop their SRL skills.
- Level 1 caters to early elementary learners, and has an embedded link to ABRACADABRA.
- Teachers can use level 3 (part of the LTK+) to create their own portfolios.

Appendices
A: ABRA-ePEARL Course Notebook
B: Using ABRA & EPEARL Together
C: Sample Level 1 Artifact
D: Basic Decoding in ABRA and ePEARL
E: Model for Reflective Practice
F: Lesson Plan Template
G: Parental Permission Form Template

Reflect on Your Thoughts and Experiences

In your own words, state the purpose of creating a portfolio.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Have you ever created your own portfolio? If so, how did it help you work towards your personal or professional goals? If not, what steps can you take to find out more about the benefits of portfolios?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are portfolios suitable for your class? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL): Watch the Video

What did I learn from this video?	What questions do I have after watching this video?
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)

In your own words, state the importance of the *Plan* phase in the SRL process.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

_____

In your own words, state the importance of the *Do* phase in the SRL process.

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

In your own words, state the importance of the *Reflect* phase in the SRL process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In your past experiences, which SRL skill has been the most difficult for your leaners to develop? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

ePEARL
How do you see ePEARL being used in your classroom context?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What barriers do you anticipate? How can you overcome them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

How can ePEARL help you provide differentiated instruction to your learners?

_____

_____

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_____

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_____

Additional Notes
Write any questions or thoughts you have as you go through the module.

_____

_____

_____

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_____

USING ABRA & ePEARL TOGETHER

## Including ePERL in your Classroom

WHAT IS ePEARL?

ePEARL is a web-based electronic portfolio software that has been designed to encourage self-regulated learning by supporting learners as they set goals, develop and monitor strategies to accomplish tasks, and reflect on their learning.

ePEARL is best suited for educators who wish to use electronic portfolios in a learner-centered way, but who also wish to experiment with multimedia content and a collaborative approach. ePEARL's features encourage planning, reflection, sharing and peer feedback, in addition to the creation and revision of work.

WHAT IS SELF-REGULATED LEARNING?

There are three main processes that will help learners build self-regulatory skills: Forethought (Planning), Performance (Doing), and Self-Reflection (Reflecting). This is a cyclical process where learners move back and forth between the steps. Developing these self-directed, lifelong learning skills will help learners succeed in a classroom environment, as well as throughout their lives in a variety of contexts and tasks.

Planning (Forethought) → **Doing** (Volitional Control) → **Reflecting** (Self-Reflection) →
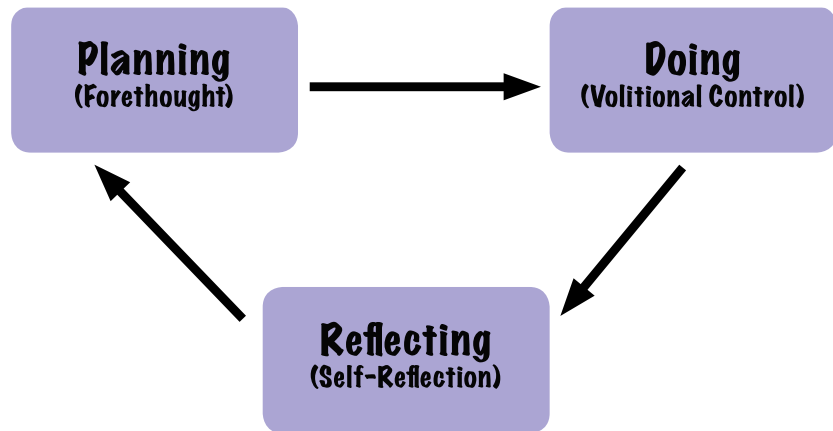
ABRACADABRA and ePEARL can be used together to facilitate learners' literacy skills as well as their self-regulated learning. When using ABRA, learners access ePEARL by clicking on its icon:

When they do so, they'll be brought to the welcome page in their portfolios. Teachers can also go to learner portfolios by first visiting "My Students" in the LTK's Manage section, and then clicking the portfolio icon next to their learner's name.

Using ABRACADABRA with ePEARL
ABRA-ePEARL Activities

Reading

Over 20 digital stories are available in both ABRA and ePEARL. Each book may be viewed and read from within either program. When reading in ePEARL, learners can record themselves reading. The recording allows them, a teacher, or a parent to monitor and track reading development. Listening to one's own reading is proven to be an extremely effective tool for self-monitoring and consequently learning.

Writing and Extension Activities

In ePEARL, learners can also practice their creative writing skills in the My Creations area. Here, teachers can encourage their learners to write a new ending to a story or to imagine new characters. Learners can also upload images and pictures of drawings (in response to an ABRA story, for example).

Learner Assessment

By implementing the ABRA- ePEARL link, teachers can track their learners' literacy development. For example, teachers can use ePEARL for assessment purposes when doing the following ABRA activities:

- Accuracy
- Comprehension Monitoring
- Expression
- Predicting
- Sequencing
- Speed
- Spelling Words
- Spelling Sentences
- Summarizing
- Vocabulary

Within ePEARL

MY READINGS

In the *My Readings* section, the software encourages recognition of the different components of a book, such as the book's title and author.

Learners may also enter the illustrator's name and the classmate they are reading with. Each entry is automatically date stamped. Learners are also encouraged to set small task goals for an individual reading.

Recording a Reading

A recorder is provided for recording reading samples. This allows learners, teachers and parents to track reading development over time. Additionally, up to three files (e.g. a scanned picture of the cover) may be uploaded.

MY CREATIONS

In the *My Creations* section, learners are encouraged to employ many different skills in their work, including numeracy, writing and arts. Learners are introduced to basic word processing commands through the use of a text editor. When commencing work on a new piece, learners are required to give the piece a title. Each entry is automatically date stamped. Learners are also encouraged to set a small task goal for their work, as this promotes self-regulated learning. Learners may also include samples of their handwritten work by scanning and uploading files.

Reflections

Learners may select a question designed to help them think about their work process, strategies they used and the skills that they have acquired or need to develop. Learners may choose from pre-set questions or learners/teachers may add their own questions. Multiple questions may be selected. Reflections may be typed or written/drawn and scanned in.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Teachers, parents and peers can all provide feedback on the ePEARL artifacts. It is important to remind learners to always leave positive and constructive feedback for their peers.

Feedback

Teacher Feedback

G. Springfield:
Updated 09/04/20
These are great! I can see you worked hard on your rhymes.

Peer Feedback

Peer:
Updated 09/04/20
Ths is good. I lek hippos 2
Maddie

Edit Feedback
```
Ths is good. I lek
hippos 2
Maddie
```
Save

Parent Feedback

Parent:
Updated 09/04/20
I'm proud of you! Your spelling and rhyming has improved a lot. Keep up the good work. I like playing with you all day too!

WORK EXAMPLES FROM LEVEL 1

This document shows examples of work (artifacts), which might be found in a Level 1 portfolio. The learner uses the *My Creation* function to develop and reflect on different kinds of work, including material directly linked to ABRA and ELM.

NEW CREATION

Using My Sight Words

Learners can use the portfolio to practice different skills they are learning in class. In the example on the right, the learner has written their own sentences to practice using sight words.

Creating and saving work in the portfolio helps learners track their improvement over time in different areas (for example, using sight words).

Feedback from teachers, peers, and parents helps learners to think more deeply about their own learning. As well, when learners provide feedback to their peers, they build critical thinking skills.

My Creation

Creation | Reflection

Using My Sight Words
Date 09/11/06

What I Wanted To Do
Text

I am going to make sentences using my sight words. (is, my, this)

My Creation
Text

This is my car.

My cat is cute.

Is this my hat?

My, this is pretty.

Feedback

Teacher Feedback | Peer Feedback | Parent Feedback

Peer:
Updated 10/30/12
Good job!

Edit Feedback

Good job!

Save

Using My Sight Words

Reflecting is an important part of self-regulated learning.

The ePEARL reflection section helps learners think about their original goals for the work and to consider if they met those goals.

If learners are unsure where to start with their reflection, ePEARL provides a number of prompts they can choose from.

Note: Learners may have difficulty typing their reflection at this age. ePEARL provides them with the option to record their reflections instead.

My Reflection

Creation   Reflection

Using My Sight Words
Date 09/11/06

What I Wanted To Do
Text

I am going to make sentences using my sight words. (is, my, this)

Reflection

My Reflection
Text

I like to think about what words to use in the sentence. I think I can do a better job next time. These sentences are pretty short.

Homeless Kittens

Learners can also create a more robust artifact, such as their own short story.

In this example, the learner has used different font colours for emphasis.

The option to change font colours helps learners to bring emphasis to certain words or to highlight words they are not sure about (misspelling, or things they want to change).

Note: This example was created by a learner with an advance vocabulary and additional support from their teacher.

.

My Creation

Homeless Kittens

Date 09/07/08

What I Wanted To Do
Text

I would like to spell better and get used to using a dictionary.

My Creation
Text

One day I was walking on a dirt road at my cottage. I was with my granddad, his friend, and my dog, Benji. We were walking for the newspaper at the top of the road. All of a sudden three kittens came out of the woods and they started to follow us. They were so cute! Benji was barking a lot at them but they kept walking with us up to the top of the road. And then they followed us back home!

We brought them to a friend's house and fed them. They were so hungry! One kitten was really friendly and one was very scared. The other wasn't too sure what to think. But it didn't take long for them to settle in.

Those kittens never left our friend's place. They are still there to this day.

Feedback

Teacher Feedback

A. Wade:
Updated 10/31/06
I bet the kittens were so cute - can I have one?? Can you think of a good ending for this story?

Peer Feedback

Edit Feedback

Save

Parent Feedback

Parent:
Updated 10/31/06
There are some pretty big words in this story, Jackie. I can't believe how well your spelling has improved. I can see that you are getting into the habit of using a dictionary!

My Reflection

Creation	Reflection

Homeless Kittens

Date 09/07/08

What I Wanted To Do

Text

I would like to spell better and get used to using a dictionary.

Reflection

My Reflection

Text

When I was writing, it was hard to....Think of interesting words to use! It is hard! I think I need to read more to give me ideas about words. I had help from my teacher, Mrs Mahler. She reminded me to write clearly.

ABRA CREATION
The Little Red Hen

Learners can also create work focused on the ABRACADABRA stories by clicking on the *New ABRA Creation* button. Learners can summarize the stories, create alternative endings, give their own opinions about the book, or create other creative works inspired by the original books.

Note: Learners can also practice their reading (fluency) skills by clicking on ABRA Reading and recording themselves reading an ABRACADABRA story aloud.

My Creation

Creation | Reflection

The Little Red Hen
Date 12/10/06

What I Wanted To Do
Text

I want to describe the Little Red Hen story which is my favourite story. I am going to try to use descriptive words.

Story Image

My Creation
Text

The Litte Red Hen is a story about a hen who has her own garden on a farm.

In the garden she planted some seeds which turned in to wheat. This wheet started to grow high and needed to be cut. After it was cut, it needed to be taken to the mill to be made into bread. The hen wanted to have some help from her lasy freinds on the farm, but nobody would help her.

The story ended with all the freinds saying they wanted to eat the bread, but the hen would not let them because they did not help her.

Feedback

Teacher Feedback | Peer Feedback | Parent Feedback

Peer:
Updated 03/19/09
You describe the story very well!

Parent:
Updated 03/19/10
You

Edit Feedback
You describe the story very well!
Save

My Reflection

Creation | Reflection

The Little Red Hen

Date 12/10/06

What I Wanted To Do

Text

I want to describe the Little Red Hen story which is my favourite story. I am going to try to use descriptive words.

Story Image

Reflection

My Reflection

Text

The animals on the farm lying down when the hen is trying to get them to help. I think this story has a good lesson. If you sit or lie around all day you will miss out on good things. It is not good to be lazy.

ELM CREATIONS

Count

Learners can also create work focusing on math themes from ELM by clicking on the *New ELM Creation* button. Combining ELM and ePEARL encourages learners to reflect on the math skills they are learning and incorporate it into their daily practices.

My Creation

Count
Date 08/09/18

What I Wanted To Do
Text

Practice counting by looking at stuff that is near me.

Animal Friend Image

My Creation
Text

One giant eraser.

Two running shoes.

Three school books.

Four binders.

Five different colour pens.

Six broken crayons.

Seven pencils.

Eight posters on the wall.

Nine superhero stickers.

My Reflection
Text

This is fun. I have to count twice to make sure. It is hard to find a some numbers around me.

Question - Reflections
Q: Next time I will try to...
Updated 08/09/18
R: find things faster than my dad can.

Feedback

Teacher Feedback   Peer Feedback   Parent Feedback

Edit Feedback   Parent:
                                Updated 08/09/18
                                We should try this while grocery
                                shopping!

Save

BASIC DECODING

ABRA-ePEARL Link – Comprehension

TIME
40 minutes.

MATERIALS
Computer, projector/smartboard, a microphone, an ABRACADABRA story.

OBJECTIVE
Learners will recognize or sound out words quickly.

ABRA-ePEARL LINK
- **ABRA:** Basic Decoding activity with any ABRACADABRA text.
- **ePEARL:** My Readings: Oral activity.

Procedures
Pre-select an ABRA story to model prior to the lesson.

1) Welcome learners as they sit in front of the projection screen.
2) Model how to do the *Basic Decoding* activity in ABRA. Allow a few learners to take turns doing the activity until learners understand.
3) Write new words from the story on the board.
4) Pair up learners and have them go to their computers. In ePEARL, have learners select *My Readings*. Go to *New ABRA Reading* and then choose the same ABRA text that was used in modeling the activity.
5) Have learners choose words from the list on the board and find them in the book.
6) Have learners take turns recording a page that has a word from the decoding activity. When they record, they should say the page number and the corresponding word(s) before they begin reading the page. When a learner finishes, his/her partner writes feedback on the recording.
7) Ask learners to create their own short sentences using the words from the list on the board. Learners will click on *My Creations*, and open a New ABRA Creation. Learners could also draw their predictions and attach their scanned drawings to their creations.
8) Remind learners to click on the green checkmark to save this work.

> **Tip**
> Visit your learners' portfolios from your Teacher Environment and provide feedback to each learner's work so you can keep track of your learners' reading development.
> Learners can read about their accomplishments and areas of improvements. This should stimulate their self-regulated process of learning. To learn more about visit the Teacher Environment.

If you want to learn more about how to record in ePEARL, please visit our virtual tutorial:
http://grover.concordia.ca/epearl/tutorial/l1_record.php

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CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

A Model for Reflective Practice
Supporting the Reflection Process

Students probably won't engage in effective reflection unless teachers provide support, frameworks, and feedback. To support your students, try to:

1) Use prompts
   - Ask what, why, and how to help your students think about their experiences, ideas, and emotions.

2) Model the task
   - Give students problem-based scenarios or simulations to practice reflecting in a low-risk, non-threatening environment.

3) Provide a framework
   - The four-step process (Ryan, 2013) presented below can provide a structure for students to reflect on why they do what they do.
   - This process also helps them feel more comfortable with the uneasy business of finding that their assumptions might be wrong, or at least incomplete.

Photo by NESA by Makers on Unsplash

A Model for Reflective Practice

A Reflection Framework

REPORT	
Prompt: What?	• Students report what happened and why it is relevant. • Reflection must have a specific focus; e.g. a critical incident or issue that posed a problem, to avoid students reporting irrelevant actions or ideas.

RELATE	
Prompt: What does this mean to you?	• Students relate the reflection to the specific requirements of their field, their beliefs and world-view. • They relate the experience to similar events they observed personally in the specific work-related context. • Students should include their beliefs, prior experiences, and strategies in relation to that situation. • Encourage them to use reconstructive language to suggest how they could improve in a comparable situation.

REASON	
Prompt: Why?	• Students should highlight the reasons underlying the problem or incident, and explain its importance based on theory. • Encourage students to challenge assumptions by considering different perspectives. How might another knowledgeable person in the field deal with this situation?

RECONSTRUCT	
Prompt: How?	• Students ask: How might I approach this differently next time? • They think of an action plan, based on evidence. • Teachers should model this process, so that students avoid using 'personal viewpoints or homespun philosophy as 'evidence' in their reflections' (Ryan, 2013).

Lesson Plan Template

Lesson Name

Grade	Lesson Duration	Date

Topic	ABRA Activity

Materials Needed	Teacher Prep

Objectives

Prior Knowledge Needed

Lesson Objectives

Curriculum Links

Other Learning Areas	Non-Formal Learning

Lesson Activities

Introduction & Warm-up Activity	Time

Main Activity	Time

Extension Activity	Take Home Tasks

Consolidation

Assessment Questions	Assessment Strategies
	Assignment (Project or Presentation)
	Discussion Questions
	Homework
	Observation
	Peer-Assessment
Key Vocabulary	Self-Assessment
	Test/Quiz
	Other _____

Reflection

Successes

Improvements

Date: [Insert]

School/Schoolboard logo

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Learning to read is an exciting time for both children and parents, but reading doesn't happen on its own. [School name] is dedicated to improving reading skills in young children. This involves teachers collaborating with each other and school ambassadors to improve teaching and learning in our schools. To this end, I, [insert teacher's name], would like to videotape and photograph the lessons your child will be part of.

In order to improve my teaching and support my colleagues, I may decide to share these videos and photographs will be shared with [insert – other teachers at the school/schoolboard, school's ambassador, etc.] for the purpose of [insert – attaining feedback, modeling the process, etc.]. All videos will be available via [insert medium – website? Indicate if access to it is password protected or not. Mention that some sites store data on servers outside of your country and thus might be subject to foreign jurisdictions].

By means of this letter, I am seeking your permission to record your child in video or audio format. We will not use your child's name or any other personal information in any of these photographs or videos. We would ask that you read and sign the attached form.

We very much appreciate your consideration of this request and your support in helping to improve teaching and learning in our schools. Please return page 2 of the signed consent form to your child's teacher by [insert date], indicating if you agree or disagree to allow your child to be part of the videos.

Sincerely yours,
[insert signature]
[insert teacher's name]

[insert signature]
[insert principal's name]

Parental Consent Form

- I have read the above statement and am informed about the intended use of filming and photographing my child's classroom.

- I understand that videos and/or photographs of my child may be taken.

- I understand that my child's name will NOT be released at any time.

- I understand that my child's image and/or voice maybe included in the videos that the [teacher, ambassador?] will create to train other teachers.

- I understand that the videos which my child maybe part of may be stored in and outside of [country].

- I understand that my child's image and/or voice may be made available online, broadcast, performed in public or reproduced for educational purposes.

- I understand that I cannot withdraw my child from the videos and photographs once they are taken.

- I understand that by signing this form, I give the [teacher/school] right to use my child's image and/or voice, both in photographs and videos in electronic format for the purposes of the project. This right is royalty-free, worldwide, perpetual, exclusive and transferrable.

☐ I agree to let my child take part in the videos and/or photographs.

☐ I DO NOT agree to let my child take part in the videos and/or photographs.

Print Your Child's Full Name: _____

Print Your Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

ABRA-ePEARL Connection Module Glossary

ABRACADABRA (ABRA): a tool in the LTK+ suite that is designed to support children's acquisition of early literacy.

Action Plan: a documented list of steps needed to achieve a task goal.

Comprehension: the ability to understand information within a text.

Constructive Criticism: helpful feedback that leads to a positive change.

Do Phase: the part of the SRL process where learners monitor their progress as they create their work and demonstrate what they learned.

ePEARL: a web-based portfolio software, offered within the LTK+ suite. It is designed to support children's acquisition of self-regulated learning (SRL) skills.

Feedback: information provided to help someone identify what is working well and what needs improvement.

General Goals: long-term goals that require planning, time, and multiple attempts or steps to accomplish.

Learning Toolkit+ (LTK+): a suite of tools designed to support the development of literacy (ABRACADABRA and READS), numeracy (ELM), inquiry (IS-21) and self-regulated learning and portfolio development (ePEARL).

Plan Phase: the part of the SRL process where learners develop goals and strategies, and determine the worth the task has for them.

Print: 1) to clearly write text by hand. Printing requires cognitive effort, hand-eye coordination and muscle control. 2) text produced from a mechanical form (printer, bound book, magazines, etc.).

Process Portfolio: documents the learners' growth and mastery of a particular skill or learning objective.

Reflect Phase: the part of the SRL process where learners evaluate the learning process and end result.

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL): the ability to control your learning environment through an awareness of how people generate the thoughts, actions, and emotions necessary to attain their personal goals.

Showcase Portfolio (display portfolio): collects the learners' best work that demonstrates they can apply what they have learned.

SMART Goals: goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

Spelling: writing or naming the letters in a word.

Strategies: purposeful actions that help achieve goals.

Task Goals: short-term goals are things you want to accomplish in the near future.

Working Portfolio: an intentional collection of 'work in progress' tasks, where the learner archives their milestones and tracks how they refined their tasks.

Writing: a skill that uses letters and words to create sentences and texts to express thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a clear way.