

# Welcome to Parents' Week!

Overview: This mini unit seeks to help people new to the school system to become more familiar and comfortable with various aspects of school life that involve adults. From navigating school websites to participating in Parent-Teacher Interviews, this mini unit will support students in exploring the education system in Alberta. These lessons can also be used as isolated lessons if the situation calls for a specific focus.

Rationale: Through activities that involve reading, writing, listening and speaking, students are participating in ways that encourage them to create their own authentic language as they prepare themselves for interactions within the school system. Parental involvement is important, as new students come to Canada with their families, and these lessons help parents, mentors and other involved family members become familiar with various aspects of the educational system. Hopefully by discussing things like cultural differences and parenting styles both parents and other caregivers will feel more equipped to be actively involved in the education of their families.

## Mini Unit Layout

Lessons:

- 1) PowerSchool and Password Safety
- 2) Report Cards - How to understand them
- 3) Newsletters and Volunteer Forms
- 4) Parent/Teacher Interview

Title	PowerSchool and Cyber Security
Theme	It's Parents' Week
Level	LINC 4/5
Duration	1 hour
Topic Outcomes	<p><b>Speaking CLB 5</b> Interacting with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in basic social conversations for some everyday purposes</li> <li>• Agree, disagree and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading CLB 5</b> Comprehending Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand simple to moderately complex descriptive or narrative texts on familiar topics.</li> </ul> <p>Getting Things Done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get information from simple to moderately complex business or service texts</li> </ul>

#### Vocabulary Used

- Portal, Attendance, Username, Password, Access, Rank, Guard, Cybercriminals, Infected, Attachment

#### Resources

- PowerSchool Handout
- Website about Cyber Safety - <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/cnt/prtct-yrs1f/prtctn-dntty/usng-psswrds-en.aspx>
- School Website to show (use one that is close to your area)

## Procedure

#### Opening Discussion

- Start off the class by having students share their connections to school (are they students, do they have kids/siblings?)
- Bring up a school website from around the area and look at the various tabs on the website. Then link on the parent link (this will usually take them to a website similar to PowerSchool or Safe Arrival).  
**Example:** <http://cb.lethsd.ab.ca/>
- For this website you can show the actual link to the PowerSchool website.

- Under “Menu”, you can explore all the Parents tabs which provide information about Bell Times, Lunches and more.

### **Parental Involvement**

- Every group of people have their own culture concerning how they raise their kids and how they involve themselves in the school community.
- Pair students up in groups of four to five, and have them share what either their own or their child’s day at school looks like and how parents are involved in the school.

#### **Guiding Questions (On the board)**

- When did your day start/end?
- What kind of classes did you take? What were considered the most important?
- Was school fun or was it more serious?
- Did your parents come to the school to speak to teachers? To volunteer?
- Did your parents help you with homework?
- If you were in any extra-curricular activities at school, did your parents come/participate?
- Ask students to make note of one similarity and one difference after each person at the table shares.

### **Vocabulary Work / “Balderdash”**

- Play a variation of “Balderdash” with the vocabulary words listed above and any other words you’re working on. Balderdash cards are available with predetermined vocabulary and spaces for additional words to be added.
- Divide class into two groups. Have one member of each team roll a die. The person who rolls the die and gets the highest number starts. That person will have two options:
  1. Share the correct definition of the word to the rest of the class.
  2. Share a made-up definition of the word to the class.
- Then the other team votes whether they think it’s true or not. If they guess correctly, they get two points and the other team gets none. If they guess incorrectly, the other team gets two points if the definition was correct and five points if the definition was made-up.
- First team to 20 wins!

### **Using Passwords**

- Access the government website about cyber safety at the following address: - <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/cnt/prtct-yrs1f/prtctn-dntty/usng-psswrds-en.aspx>
- Read through the website as a class, giving examples as you go through the various rules.
- Handout the PowerSchool resource and highlight the rules to create strong passwords.
- Ask participants to individually read through the example passwords on the handout and rank them from best to worst.

- Pair students up and have them compare their lists and provide a rationale for the order provided.
- Show the correct ranking and discuss as a class.
- Have students make their own passwords that follow the rules stated.

**Password Key**

1- A3k&4Hg73&mj\$2	4- 1Terry078	5- qwerty1988
6- password	3- 2h7rt52	2- @7t5F9!

Title	Reading the Report Card
Theme	It's Parents' Week
Level	LINC 4/5
Duration	1 Hour
Topic Outcomes	<p><b>Speaking CLB 5</b> Sharing Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asks relevant questions</li> <li>• Provides necessary information.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading CLB 5</b> Comprehending Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands formatted texts</li> <li>• Access and locate basic information</li> </ul>

#### Vocabulary Used

- Absent, Excellent, Basic, Expectations, Achievement, Citizenship, Development, Mathematical, Movement, Specific

#### Resources

- Are you Ready to Meet the Teacher? Worksheet
- Sample Report Cards
- Understanding Assessment as a Parent – (Calgary Board of Education)  
<https://www.cbe.ab.ca/programs/curriculum/assessment-and-reporting/Pages/default.aspx> - Click on “Parent’s Guide - Assessment and Reporting” under Supporting Documents

## Procedure

### Activate Background Knowledge

- Ask participants to think about and jot down a few notes about how their performance at school was communicated to their parents. Is the process the same now?
- After providing a few minutes for individual reflection, ask participants to get with a partner and share what they had jotted down.
- Have a few volunteers share with the whole class.
- Highlight that in Canada a child’s performance is communicated to parents through report cards followed by a parent-teacher meeting. In the lesson today, they will learn about the typical structure of a report card and scheduling a meeting with the teacher.
- Access the “Parent’s Guide – Assessment and Reporting” and ask participants to read the two pages in order to answer the following questions:
  - 1) What is formative assessment? How does it differ from summative assessment?
  - 2) What questions can you ask your child about how they are doing in school?
  - 3) What questions can you ask the teacher or administrator about your child?

- Discuss the answers with the whole class to ensure comprehension. Ask participants to identify additional questions they may want to ask a teacher or administrator and create a list.

### **Report Cards**

- Divide students into four groups and provide each group with a sample report card (every person in the group receives one copy of the same report card).
- As groups are reading through the report card provided, have them highlight vocabulary they do not understand. Encourage students to work with their group mates to identify the meaning of the words using various strategies (e.g., guessing from context, using word parts to determine meaning, translating the word, or searching the word in a dictionary).
- Ask groups to discuss the strengths of the report card and the potential concerns they would have if this were their child. The following are questions that could be used as prompts:
  - What areas were you worried about on the child's report card?
  - In what areas did the child do well? What could you congratulate them on?
- Distribute the handout "Are you Ready to Meet the Teacher?"
- Have participants individually identify three questions they would want to ask the teacher about the child's performance on the report card. Also, have them prepare a brief response to the teacher about the question posed on the report card.
- Let students share their questions and their response to the teacher with a partner. Encourage students to give feedback as a sort of editing process.

### **Setting the Interview Time**

- Highlight that the interview time listed on the report card does not work for you, so you will have to call the teacher to arrange a different time. Brainstorm a list of vocabulary that would be used when making a formal telephone call.
- Place students into pairs and have them take turns practicing calling and changing the time of the interview.

Title	Newsletter and Volunteer Forms
Theme	It's Parents' Week
Level	LINC 4/5
Duration	1 Hour
Topic Outcomes	<p><b>Reading CLB 5</b> Comprehending Instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step by Step Instructions</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing CLB 5</b> Getting Things Done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the form and completes it with all the required information.</li> </ul>

### Vocabulary Used

- Celebration, Decorating, Easter Egg Hunt, Volunteer, Museum, Fossils, Form

### Resources

- Royal Tyrell Website - <http://www.tyrrellmuseum.com/>
  - This can be used to show students where the “field trip” from the Newsletter is will be taking place and what you can see at this museum
- Newsletter – A newsletter from a local school could also be used
- Ball for ‘Last Man Standing’

## Procedure

### Class Discussion

Lead students through a discussion about parent participation in field trips and school trips.

### Some Guiding Questions

- What types of field trips have you or your family been on or experienced?
- Do you think field trips are useful? Why?
- Do you think parents should have to pay for field trips? Why/why not?

### Vocabulary Time – Last Man Standing

- Name a theme (School, Holidays, Field Trips, etc.). Your goal is to have students be comfortable with the concept of the game and then start using themes that relate to the unit/lesson.
- Students pass the ball to one another and have three seconds (or more, you decide based on the class) to say a word related to the chosen theme. If they repeat a word or say a word that is off-topic, then they are out of the game for the round.

- The goal of this game is to help students start to think quick with the vocabulary themes, so if students are struggling, have them repeat the same theme or possibly write some quick words on the board as reference.

### **Reading the Newsletter/ Volunteer Form**

- Based on your class/levels have the student either read a copy individually or with a partner. After your class has completed the reading, ask some general questions to confirm understanding/answer any questions students may have.

#### Class Questions

- What holiday happened in April? How did the class celebrate?
- What do they need volunteers for? What is the purpose of this field trip?
- After reading the newsletter have students fill out their volunteer forms, recommending that students “commit” to two different volunteer opportunities.

### **Preparing for the Interviews**

- This can be used as either an assessment opportunity by having students converse with you the teacher or as a speaking activity by having them converse with each other.
- Students will partner up with another person in the class. They will have to introduce themselves and explain which opportunities they chose to volunteer for using the Volunteer Form from the April Newsletter. The partner will then ask questions to encourage elaboration on their interests in volunteering. Let students use some of the questions listed below in their conversations but also include at least **one** question of their own.

#### Partner Questions (on the board)

- Why do you want to volunteer at the school?
- Why would you be good at \_\_\_\_\_ (volunteer position)?
- Would you be willingly to volunteer for the remainder of the school year?
- Which position would you not volunteer for?

### **Opportunities for Continued Learning**

If this lesson is done around spring, it can be easily complimented with activities or discussions that focus on the Canadian traditions that occur around Easter.

- Easter Egg Decorating/Hunts
- Good Friday/Easter Sunday

Title	Parent Teacher Interview
Theme	It's Parents' Week
Level	LINC 4/5
Duration	30 mins
Topic Outcomes	<p><b>Listening CLB 5</b></p> <p>Interacting with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies specific factual details</li> </ul> <p>Comprehending Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand relevant topics</li> </ul> <p><b>Speaking CLB 5</b></p> <p>Interacting with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opens and maintains conversation</li> <li>• Responds to small talk</li> <li>• Uses non-verbal signals</li> </ul>

### Vocabulary Used

- Schedule, Interview, Volunteer, Bullied, Current, Outdated

### Resources

- Report Card from previous lesson (Arjun)
- School Schedule - <http://ns.lethsd.ab.ca/Bell%20Times.php>
  - Used for the Pre-Task

## Procedures

### Getting to School

- Have students look at school schedule using the following website link - <http://ns.lethsd.ab.ca/Bell%20Times.php>.
- If students have access to Google Maps, provide the address to a school in town (if you can find a bell schedule for that school use that instead of the link above) and have them map out their route to school.
  - You could provide groups of students with various modes of transportation.
    - E.g., One group can drive, another takes the bus, others walk their children/siblings to school.
- After students have mapped out their route to school have them both start with the same address. The student that mapped the route with the address will describe their route (I walk two block south and then turn on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue...) while the other student follows along on their own (not mapped out) route as per the speakers' instructions. If the speaker's directions make sense, then they will arrive at the school. Then partners will switch starting with a new address.
  - If you are able to, try and set the students up in a "battleship" set up across from each other so they cannot look at each other's screen.

### Listening Assessment

- Read the example parent-teacher interview script (you could have one student read the lines for the parent, while you read the teacher’s lines). Give them five minutes to answer the questions that follow the script. If necessary, re-read the script once again and have students fill in anything they missed.
  - You can then collect them as an assessment or instead of having students write out their answers, you can ask them the comprehension questions and have them answer orally.

### Mock Interviews

- Now that the students have listened to a mock interview, have them practice their own interviews with a partner. Each student will use of the scenario cards that are below to help guide the conversation. Students should take turns acting as the teacher and the parent in the mock interviews.

\*You can also include some other more basic cues for parent-teacher interviews that are on the board for the whole class to use as a reference.

\*You can also give the students the report cards as a reference as well.

### Some Guiding Questions

- How are you?
- Where does my child excel? (Parent)
- What are areas of growth? (Parent)
- Has there been any changes at home? (Teacher)
- Do you have any concerns/exciting things going on at home? (Teacher)

### Student Scenarios

Your child keeps bringing home their food uneaten because the other students at the school say that it smells and looks funny.	Your child is having no problem reading at grade level in English, but they do not seem to be interested in reading in their home language anymore.
Your child does not participate in some religious holidays at the school and feels left out in bonding experiences.	Because of the clothes they have to wear, your child is nervous about the class field trip to do gymnastics.
Your child wants to share with the class why they are not eating at lunch (Ramadan) so other students stop asking.	Your child is struggling with speaking English so they are having problems making friends and spend recess alone.
Because they have been coded ESL, your child isn't in the class as much. You are worried they might be missing out on other subjects.	You are returning to your home country to visit family for a month, what is the best way for your child to keep learning?

