

Intervention Essentials

IPLÉ: Inclusive Support for French Language Learners

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What is IPLÉ and where is it implemented?

As educational leaders, today's administrators collaborate and coordinate with multiple stakeholders across all levels, ensuring that supports and resources are available to meet the needs of their students. In Canada, administrators in French First Language and French Second Language schools must also ensure that these supports are inclusive of their French language learners. Intervention préventive en lecture-écriture (IPLÉ) is a student-centered, inclusive model of instruction that complements a school's comprehensive literacy plan by offering support to children needing individual support to acquire beginning literacy in French.

IPLÉ is a short-term literacy intervention offered in French to Grade 1 children who are most at risk in their literacy learning. Expertly trained teachers provide 30 minutes of daily, one-to-one instruction in French for up to 20 weeks. The emphasis is on prevention by intervening early and accelerating the child's reading and writing to the average-band of the class. Over 20 years of data monitoring have demonstrated that IPLÉ teachers are successful in helping children make gains in reading and writing.

How are students selected?

The IPLÉ intervention is an inclusive literacy support, supplementary to first-grade classroom instruction. Children selected are at their earliest stage in their literacy development in French.

IPLÉ teachers use the *Le sondage d'observation en lecture-écriture* (Clay, 2003), the French reconstruction of Clay's (2019) *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, to identify students for the intervention, and the lowest-performing children are selected. While each child is guaranteed 20 weeks of instruction, they are exited from IPLÉ as soon as they demonstrate proficient literacy growth; therefore, the length of each child's program differs. This flexibility allows for two intake periods, fall and winter, allowing a greater number of children access to this short-term intervention.

What are the advantages to schools offering IPLÉ?

There are two advantages for schools offering IPLÉ. The first is supporting children struggling to acquire early literacy skills in French to accelerate their learning. They will continue their literacy learning supported by their classroom teacher. The second is identification of a small number of children who need further assessment and support. Both provide information to school teams who monitor

and support the literacy progress of all children in their school.

How are teachers selected and trained?

The challenges in "training professionals in a different language are more complex than a simple language translation and require that the professional making the shift from one language to another work under the tutelage of an expert for a sustained period of time" (Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery® [CIRR] Standards & Guidelines, 2022, p. 7). Therefore, teachers interested in becoming IPLÉ teachers must commit to a full year of training extended by ongoing professional development following the training year. Upon successful completion of their training, participants are recognized worldwide as IPLÉ teachers.

There are two possible options for IPLÉ teacher training, and the most common path is training in French that mirrors Reading Recovery teacher training. This consists of initial training in assessment procedures followed by biweekly, inservice sessions with opportunities for teaching and observing children's lessons. Teachers are supported by an IPLÉ teacher leader providing in-school visits to enhance the teacher's learning, deepen theoretical understandings, and clarify teaching procedures.

There is an alternative route for a trained Reading Recovery teacher who has successful early elementary teaching experiences in French. This is a bridging year. Under this scenario, the Reading Recovery teacher is trained in French in both IPLÉ assessment and instructional procedures by an IPLÉ teacher leader. Training experiences include opportunities to observe and teach lessons in French and to receive school visits from the IPLÉ teacher leader. Following their initial, bridging year, these teachers also continue attending ongoing professional development sessions.

How is growth monitored?

One of the strengths of IPLÉ is its evaluation procedures for monitoring growth over time. Daily, teachers document observations of a child's problem-solving responses in reading and writing and this information is used by the IPLÉ teacher to plan the next day's lesson.

To assess students' literacy gains, the *Le sondage d'observation en lecture-écriture* is administered as a pre- and post-intervention measure. Following their intervention, students are monitored annually until the end of Grade 3. The results of these measures document IPLÉ children's literacy growth and provide schools with data to assess their literacy goals.

How does a school plan for IPLÉ implementation?

Planning is a vital component for a successful implementation. Administrators and the senior members of their boards or districts

often plan for a year prior to the implementation of IPLÉ.

Following are three key considerations in planning for IPLÉ:

- Assessing the vitality of the French language within the school
- Selecting teachers for training judiciously
- Creating a complementary job assignment for the IPLÉ teacher

Learning to read and write proficiently in French depends on a language-rich environment where children are engaged in hearing and speaking French. Oral language is the foundation of literacy learning, “the child's ultimate resource for learning to read and write” (Clay, 2016, p. 24). Therefore, administrators are encouraged to consider linking the implementation of IPLÉ to vibrant French classrooms in order to ensure effective implementations.

“The quality and commitment of the teachers recruited and selected for Reading Recovery/IPLÉ will strongly impact the success of the children” (CIRR, 2022, p. 17). They must be committed to their professional learning, the intensive training program, and ongoing professional development. Teachers must have at least 3 years of successful teaching of early literacy in French and have excellent communication skills.

Lastly, careful thought should go into the job assignments paired with IPLÉ positions. As IPLÉ is a student-centered intervention involving intensive planning for instruction,

teachers should support up to 4 students daily and assume other responsibilities which draw from the literacy expertise gained in their IPLÉ training to best enhance the school's literacy plans.

IPLÉ offers an inclusive student-centered support, an investment which benefits children, teachers, and the school — an asset to a French language school's literacy plan.

References

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