



# LiteracyBC

## Happy Birthday, ELMO!

In order to celebrate the 2nd birthday of the ELMO Reviews website, this edition of ELMO News features a lesson plan on using ELMO as a resource in your classroom.



## ELMO Reviews Turns Two!

The ELMO Reviews website was launched in May 2008 to meet the ongoing need adult literacy providers and learners have for appropriate and high quality instructional and learning resources. ELMO Reviews is about bringing together literacy resources plus best practice in using them. Today you can find 352 reviews of literacy resources on the ELMO website. Thank you to everyone who has written reviews and helped to build ELMO Reviews into what it is today. In this ELMO Reviews newsletter, we are giving you a gift: a lesson plan that we hope you will use with your learners to introduce them to the ELMO Reviews website.

## Join Literacy BC today!

Literacy BC is a membership-based organization. Our members provide guidance and support to Literacy BC. Members vote on Literacy BC policies at our Annual General Meeting, and are eligible to join our board.

Become a member and join your voice to our provincial literacy coalition. Visit [www.literacybc.ca/SupportUs/membership.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/SupportUs/membership.php) to fill out our membership application, or call us at 604-684-0624 or 1-888-732-3234.

Student memberships are \$5, individual memberships are \$20, not-for-profit organizational memberships are \$30, and other organizational memberships are \$100.

### Literacy BC Group Health Benefits For Organizational Members

In order to help our organizational members take care of their employees, Literacy BC is proud to announce our Group Benefit Plan for Organizational Members.

Become a member of Literacy BC and your organization will be eligible for group rates on employee health insurance through [Owen & Associates](http://www.owenandassociates.com). This program allows small organizations to offer affordable health insurance to employees. As more organizations join the program, the cost decreases for everyone. There truly is power in numbers. Visit [www.literacybc.ca/SupportUs/membership.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/SupportUs/membership.php) to learn more.

### Literacy BC Individual Member Discounts on Health Insurance

Are you an individual who does not receive health benefits through your work? As a member of Literacy BC, you can receive a 15% discount on individual health benefit packages with Owen & Associates. Visit [www.literacybc.ca/SupportUs/membership.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/SupportUs/membership.php) to become a member today!

## Lesson Plan: Using ELMO Reviews in Adult Education

### Using ELMO Reviews in Adult Education, Created by Niki Penz, Librarian

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to teach adult learners how to create book reviews. Adult learners will engage with resources while connecting with other students. Creating online book reviews is a way to practice writing skills and computer literacy.

#### Requirements:

Computer and projector or a computer lab with student work stations.

#### Length: 50-60 minutes.

#### Pre-activity:

Students prepare for this lesson by reading and being ready to discuss “Bikini Sandals” by Anne Dunn (or substitute any title).

#### Objectives:

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Analyze and critique textual materials based on their own experiences and learning.
- Navigate the web interface of [www.elmoreviews.ca](http://www.elmoreviews.ca).
- Understand the process of developing a book review that is thoughtful, clear and informative and leaves the reader wanting to hear more.
- Create online reviews using either the mini-review form or the ELMO Reviews website.



Introduce your students to ELMO Reviews today.

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### Introduction

Activities	Resources And Key Concepts
Explain why we write reviews: “writing book reviews and posting them online allows other people to see whether the book was good, and how it might be used by a person or in a class.”	If in computer lab, explain rules of the room: no food, etc.
Welcome students. Introduce the topic and objectives.	
Ask “Can you think of a time when you read or watched something a friend recommended?”	Create a discussion about how hearing about a book or movie makes us want to read or see it. <b>Key Concepts:</b> the student’s own opinion is the most important element; good reviews do not include “spoilers”: reviews give readers a “taste” and leave them “wanting more”.
Explain what a book review is: look at a variety of book reviews (gather examples from ELMO Reviews and other sources, such as amazon.ca.)	<b>Total time:</b> 10-15 minutes

## Lesson Plan: Using ELMO Reviews in Adult Education

## Concept Development

Activities	Resources & Key Concepts
<p>What is ELMO?</p>	<p><b>Key Concepts:</b> No furry red monsters here. ELMO is actually “Exemplary Literacy Materials Online”, but the name isn’t important: it’s a website with book reviews that help people find resources that work in adult education.</p>
<p><b>Concept 1:</b> Develop ideas about a resource.</p> <p>Discuss the book being reviewed: talk about previous exercises in which students discussed and shared insights and opinions: brainstorm the main points they came up with, or go around and ask each student to say what was most memorable about the book. Make a list on the board.</p>	<p>Facilitate discussion, list ideas on the board.</p>
<p><b>Concept 2:</b> Write reviews using the ELMO mini-review form.</p> <p>Go over the ELMO mini-review forms.</p> <p>Brainstorm and fill one out as a group, or create several individual reviews within smaller groups.</p> <p>As students brainstorm, ask guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you enjoy the story?</li> <li>• Did you like the way the book was written?</li> <li>• Do you have any advice for someone who was to pick up the book themselves?”</li> </ul>	<p>Hand out mini-review forms: available online at <a href="http://www.elmoreviews.ca/docs/mini_review_form.pdf">www.elmoreviews.ca/docs/mini_review_form.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Key Concepts:</b> Make note of the different sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• title</li> <li>• review portion</li> <li>• reviewer’s name,</li> <li>• “Star” rating,</li> <li>• who am I?</li> <li>• permission</li> </ul>
<p><b>Concept 3:</b> Search for resources.</p> <p>Discuss how to search for books (See “Key Concepts”)</p> <p>Search for titles students are familiar with.</p> <p>Choose the mini review for “Bikini Sandals” to show students what it looks like online.</p> <p>Point out headline: a catch phrase.</p> <p>Point out the “Star” rating area: ratings are out of five stars.</p>	<p>Log in to <a href="http://ELMORreviews.ca">ELMORreviews.ca</a> using computer and projector. Students watch as instructor shows concepts.</p> <p><b>Key Concepts:</b> to search, use any word from the title, author or subject. Searching more than one word at a time will bring up more specific results. (Example: “sandals” gets two results. “bikini sandals” gets one).</p>

## Lesson Plan: Using ELMO Reviews in Adult Education

<p><b>Concept 4:</b> Enter reviews online. Demonstrate filling in the online form on a laptop. Discuss ideas introduced earlier: information such as titles, authors and publishers.</p>	<p>Students watch and listen: instructor to use computer and projector. Instructor to add online review while students watch (classroom) or model (in computer lab). Discuss information about the books. Example, “Publisher” includes a drop down menu. If publisher name is not on the list, choose “does not appear here”.</p>
<p><b>Concept 5:</b> Log in and add reviews online (practice, with computers). Guide students through the log in process. Explain site security: student email addresses and real names remain hidden. The only information visible online is ELMOname (can be fake) and “type” of reviewer (“learner”). See “about” page for privacy statement.</p>	<p>Have student LOG IN (if using computers). For classes without computers, continue practicing with mini-review forms. Instructor shall add these reviews to the website to display to class during a later class.</p>
<p><b>Summarize concepts:</b> It is now time to take these concepts and begin practicing putting reviews online.</p>	<p><b>Total time:</b> 20-25 minutes</p>



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With just a little practice, your students will soon be creating excellent reviews on ELMO.

## Lesson Plan: Using ELMO Reviews in Adult Education

### Coaching/Guided Practice

Activities	Resources and Key Concepts
<p>Give students time to practice: If online, get students to work together and take turns. Or, get students to tell instructor what to type.</p> <p>The instructor will offer advice and guidance. Identify trouble spots and offer support when necessary.</p>	<p><b>Total time:</b> 7 minutes</p>

### Summarize

Activities	Resources and Key Concepts
<p>Summarize while students add reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about books: where to find it, how to handle it during review writing/posting.</li> <li>Ask students if discussing opinions is useful.</li> <li>Writing reviews and posting them online helps practice computer skills and literacy skills at the same time.</li> </ul>	<p>Students who are interested can do more reviews anytime! There are chances for learners to take part and work behind-the-scenes with ELMO.</p> <p>Literacy BC and ELMO need volunteers for their working committee.</p> <p><b>Total time:</b> 3-5 minutes</p>

### Solo Practice or Homework

Activities	Resources and Key Concepts
<p>Work on reviews in last 10 minutes.</p> <p>Assign practice or homework as desired:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>submit a paper review form.</li> <li>create a complete online review on any resource.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Total time:</b> 8-10 minutes (as time allows)</p>

### Assessment:

Assessment is optional. Assessment of student engagement can be based on classroom discussion and activities. Completed reviews can be formally assessed in several ways:

1. The mechanics of the review(s): Is there adequate information about the book? Is the information correct?
2. The quality of the content and the correctness and detail of the entry: This may include an evaluation of spelling, overall length or detail, vocabulary and the use of examples. An important aspect of the content is that the review does not contain "plot spoilers" that give away the story.
3. Quality or quantity of in-class participation, to be observed.
4. Assessment can be based on the instructor's outcomes for the course.

## Reviewed Resources from Literacy BC's Library

For learners:

- [Bikini sandals](#). (2001) Ann Dunne. Grade 1 readability.
- [Chickenfeed](#). (2006) Minette Walters. Grade 2-3 readability.
- [Frozen tears](#). (1997) Don Sawyer. Grade 3-4 readability.
- [The breadwinner](#). (2000) Deborah Ellis. Also see the accompanying novel study booklet. Grade 5 readability.

For tutors and practitioners:

- [Diagnostic adult literacy assessment for beginning readers](#). (DALA). (2010) Pat Campbell.
- [Teaching with emotional intelligence](#). (2005) Alan Mortiboys.

For other new resources that you can borrow, go to [www.literacybc.ca/PLRC/new\\_resources.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/PLRC/new_resources.php) or search the online catalogue at [www2.literacybc.ca/catalogue](http://www2.literacybc.ca/catalogue) and order your materials online.



**Want to know what's new in the Resource Library?**

**Read our new blog: [readlit.literacybc.ca](http://readlit.literacybc.ca)**

**You will find news, reviews, contests and more.**

### Add your voice

Visit [www.ELMOreviews.ca](http://www.ELMOreviews.ca) and add your voice! You can add a resource, comment on a review, or write a review.

- **Add** a resource to the database that you think others in the literacy field should know about – book, website, or audio-visual.
- **Comment** on someone else's review – what was your experience with the resource?
- **Write** a mini-review – your opinion, short and simple, and star rating of a resource.

If you are someone who is working directly with learners, you may also be interested in writing a field review.

Contact [library@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:library@literacy.bc.ca) to learn how.

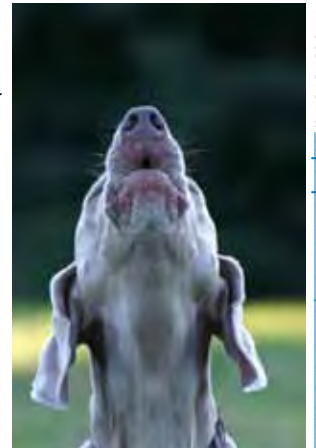


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### Thanks to ...

**Ningwakwe Learning Press** and **Orca Press** for donating books.

### Have an idea for a future ELMO Newsletter?

If you have any ideas for future newsletters – themes, resources, people to interview – we would love to hear them!

### Contact us

Please contact us for more information, for help using the website, to send us your reviews, borrow resources, or to give feedback. We welcome feedback on the site in order to improve it.

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