Curriculum Guide
for facilitators

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Introducing the
Digital Literacy Project

The Digital Literacy Project (DLP) is an initiative of the Atwater Library and Computer Centre, which encourages youth, young adults and community groups to **discover new** and **creative ways to use digital technologies in order to discuss issues important to them, develop skills, and build community**.

The goal of the DLP is to encourage community interaction and collaboration, in order to promote cross-cultural dialogue about learning, knowledge creation and culture, through the creative media arts (video, photo, audio, web, blog).

The DLP builds workshops and activities in cooperation with partner groups, including schools, youth groups, and community organizations. The project is geared to the needs of the Anglophone community in the downtown core and the areas surrounding the Atwater Library, including St. Henri, Little Burgundy, Point Ste-Charles, Ville-Marie, and NDG. Opportunities to expand and create partnerships outside these areas are valued and sought out when possible.

This guide was created through the desire to provide support for DLP facilitators and educators in their creation of media workshops. The purpose of this guide is to enable facilitators to confidently provide **dynamic learning environments** for their participants and themselves.

By encouraging participants to explore media literacy with their own voice and contribute to the creation of new knowledge, the DLP aims to foster a sense of **responsibility around creating and consuming media**; approaching learning through experience and community involvement. We encourage our facilitators to create **accessible and inclusive spaces** to build a strong, sustainable and cohesive community through cultural, educational and social programs that bring together Montreal's diverse population.

The DLP has been able to produce such successful workshops by maintaining a degree of flexibility that recognizes the important role of structured guidance by facilitators. This is done through establishing **clear and attainable goals** from the beginning of each project. The pedagogical framework for the DLP is informed by **empowerment through education, creativity and action**. The DLP merges theory and practice to develop engaging curriculum that will challenge the relationships we have with media and communication.

Bibliothèque et centre d'informatique
Atwater
Library and Computer Centre

Planning the workshop

Develop the workshop syllabus using the learning objectives section of this guide. Provide participants with the syllabus or course outline, to be distributed on or before the first workshop, and prepare all handouts required for teaching each workshop.

Familiarize yourself with the group and the affiliated organization you will be working with. Look at their website, and what, if any, past projects they have done. In connection with the DLP coordinator, discuss the possibility of meeting with your participants or a visit to their space prior to beginning the workshop.

All material requests to the DLP coordinator, including printed documents and handouts, must be submitted one week in advance of your first workshop.

Facilitators will have substantial support from the DLP coordinator for workshop planning and facilitation.

Beginning the Workshop

Participatory type workshops are more exciting, chaotic and unstructured than regular classrooms, so this means emotions may run higher at times, making it important to set ground rules with the group. This can be done through the framework of a fun activity or discussion and by designating the classroom a safe space for learning.

Important points to mention are respectful actions and language. It is normal that difficult issues and provoking discussions may be confronted during the learning process. By advocating for a supportive group dynamic and taking responsibility for one's actions, issues can hopefully be worked through together. Here are some recommendations that can be shared with the group to help maintain a space of support and respect:

◇　Speak from your heart and your experience. Use "I" statements.
◇　We're not here to judge each other, put each other down, or compete.
◇　Listen to the wisdom everyone brings to the group.
◇　Give each person the time and space to speak.
◇　Practice "active listening". Do not interrupt each other – raise your hand as a signal
◇　Prioritize voices of people who are quiet or aren't always heard
◇　Challenge behaviour respectfully
◇　Create anti-oppressive language and group dynamics by using such phrases as:
　　　　=>　　"When you said or did... or when... happened"
　　　　=>　　"I felt/I thought"
　　　　=>　　"Because I think/feel I have experienced..."
　　　　=>　　"And I'd suggest that... What do you think about it?"

Community building activities or 'ice breakers' are good ways to allow the group to get to know each other and what kind of learning will take place.

Participants may be coming from a learning environment in which they are not encouraged to share their opinions. At times it may be challenging to get participants to speak their true feelings and thoughts in front of the group. Allowing for smaller group interaction can help certain learners warm up to sharing their ideas, and help them verbalize what they would like to get out of the workshop.

Brainstorming can be empowering. When possible, have students participate in creating concrete goals for their own learning outcomes, and encourage students to express what rules they think are important, and what they hope to achieve by the workshop's end.

When working on a group project it can be helpful to give participants clearly defined roles. Before you begin production, outline the responsibilities of each role and let the participants choose their roles in the project.

Throughout the workshop

Provide challenges through the learning material while maintaining a supportive environment that leaves space for modification and flexibility. If you feel the need to change the direction of the workshop to provide more relevant content that speaks to the learners then go ahead. If you are finding it difficult to keep the workshop relevant and engaging, here are some recommendations:

◇ Promote self-directed learning through critical thought, collective and self-reflection.
◇ Encourage connection-making with other areas of interest.
◇ As a facilitator you are not expected to know everything, but be open to finding answers.
◇ Encourage exchange and communication around ever changing technology.
◇ Work as a group to share knowledge and experience - participants and the facilitator.
◇ Help the group cooperate with each other and keep on task.
◇ Allow continual participation in creating or modifying learning goals.
◇ Encourage more hands-on learning when possible.
◇ Be open to varied styles of learning and teaching.
◇ Respect the needs and interests of the workshop participants as well as your own.
◇ Keep yourself organized and prepared to ease your own stress.
◇ Discuss issues or ideas with the DLP Coordinator.

Learning
Objectives

It is important that the participants are engaged through **relevant materials and examples**. During the workshop themes and subjects that **speak to their life experiences** will become apparent and may be incorporated. Participants may also play a direct role in the development of learning materials.

Setting basic **ground rules and boundaries** for the group and workshops should be done at the beginning of the first session. Work to create a safe space through **respect**, attention to language and behaviour to promote **open communication** and discussion.

Video

Introduction to various styles of videography, its history and purposes (video art, documentary, music)

The process of **storyboarding**

Basic uses of a video camera (lighting, setting up a shot, record, zoom)

Uploading captured footage

Basic **editing** functions using skill level appropriate software:
◇ Import video files, pictures, and audio
◇ Create, split, combine, and trim clips
◇ Add transitions and effects
◇ Add movie titles and credits
◇ Different saving options and video files such as: .asf, .avi, .dvr-ms, .m1v, .mp2, .mp2v, .mpe, .mpeg, .mpg, .mpv2, .wm, and .wmv
◇ Publish a movie (to a computer, to CD/DVD, send as an email, upload to the web/youtube)

Digital Photography / Photo Manipulation

Discuss the **history** of photography and its genres, uses, mediums and careers (art, commercial, branding, media, portraits, black and white, colour, digital etc…)

Basic digital camera **functions**

Basic **lighting** and **composition**

Uploading images

Photo **manipulation** using software
◇ Opening and importing images
◇ Using Layers
◇ Selecting parts of an image (lasso / magic wand)
◇ Color and tool correction
◇ Cropping, resizing, retouching and transforming photos
◇ Filters, effects, styles and artwork
◇ Adding text and shapes
◇ Saving options and types of picture files: .bmp, .dib, .emf, .gif, .jfif, .jpe, .jpeg, .jpg, .png, .tif, .tiff, and .wmf
◇ Publishing images (saving files for web, print, to disc, and for email)

Website Design / Development

IMPORTANT: The details of web hosting and domain name purchase must be organized prior to or on the first day of the workshop. The Atwater Library and Computer Centre is unable to fund web hosting for partner organizations and is not responsible for arranging this.

IMPORTANT: It is strongly advised that the bulk of the website content be gathered before the workshops starts, or participants will need to be committed to content creation outside of class time. If this is not addressed the chance of the website being unfinished at the end of the workshop is high.

Look at **various types** and options of websites, their uses and purposes (corporate, personal, non-profit, fundraising, informational, commercial, etc…)

Discuss needs, purpose, topics and narrow a theme

Create a **website 'map'** – lays out all the pages and connections

Develop content (see above for details)

Lessons on basic HTML, XHTML, CSS

Create a **template** or alter an existing one to meet the needs of the site

With guidance of a programmer work to **build** the website by utilizing new skills

Blogging

Familiarization with different types of blogs (updated often, or static websites) and their various purposes as a **communication tool** (social, political, artistic, economic, hobby, etc…)

Select a theme relevant and inspiring to the participants

Set it up

Register with a blogging platform (Blogger or Wordpress)
Basic **user settings**, privacy, date, comments, notifications, visitor counters, etc…
Select **template** and alter format if needed
Create **pages**

Create Content

Text **posts**
Comments
Importing media – photos, videos, sound
Linking to other pages, posts and sites

Audio

Functions and **history** as a medium of mass communication and how it has evolved (radio to podcasting)

Discuss possible **uses** and recording (broadcasting, radio, podcasts, music, storytelling, oral history, poetry, interviews or lectures)

Select a relevant **topic**, **theme** and **medium** with a defined purpose

Develop a **script** or **playlist**

Basic **functions** of audio recording equipment

Uploading audio

Importing clips

Basic **editing** techniques with appropriate software
◇ add filters, effects, other sound clips, fades, etc…
◇ Saving options and types of audio file formats: .aif, .aifc, .aiff .asf, .au, .mp2, .mp3, .mpa, .snd, .wav, and .wma
◇ Saving and exporting to a CD or uploading/ publishing to the web