Learning in your second language

Land acknowledgment

McGill is located on the unceded Indigenous lands of the Kanien’kehá:ka Nation, known as Tiohtià:ke/Montreal. The Kanien’kehá:ka, are one of the nations that make up the Haudenosaunee Confederacy on Turtle Island/North America. Our goal is to promote learning and generate allyship with local Indigenous communities, by honouring and respecting the many nations removed from, as well as those still connected to this land. Throughout the workshop, we encourage you to reflect on how colonial languages structure various economic, social, and political structures in Canada. If the land acknowledgment is new to you, we encourage you to learn more through resources like Native Land, McGill Indigenous Initiatives’ The Land and Peoples, and Indigenous Education Resources.

Session description and outcomes

This one-hour workshop will introduce you to some strategies for gaining confidence in English speaking environments. The facilitators will also outline tips you can employ to develop a higher understanding of the content in your courses.

By the end of this session, you will have had a chance to:

- Identify personal challenges with learning in a second language
- Demonstrate strategies that will be most helpful for your learning
- Develop networks for peer support

Working definitions

Social and affective strategies encompass interactions with yourself and/or other person/people to enhance and assist learning; for example, asking yourself or others questions, or peer tutoring.

Cognitive strategies help you as a learner to engage and work with subject materials yourself, which empowers you with the skills to complete tasks and understand material; for example, elaborating on a topic or taking effective notes.

Activities

This workshop will involve small group discussions, networking opportunities, an online word cloud exercise, and some reflection prompts in the chat.

Before attending the session, consider reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of your current learning strategies in English speaking environments.

Your next steps

Following the session, reflect on the following questions:

- What strategies will you implement to ease your challenges with learning in an English-speaking environment?
- How will you know if the strategy is working for you?
- Where will you look for a community of support at McGill?
Resources

The McGill Buddy Program can help you transition to life at McGill and in Montreal.

The McGill International Student Network (MISN) provides a community to help support the transition to McGill.

The McGill Writing Centre offers for credit courses for first year students whose first language is not English.

Register for SKILLS21, McGill’s workshop-based skills development program for undergraduate students.

Consult the learning resources created by Teaching and Learning Services, particularly this document on learning in your second language.

Explore Stay on Track, a peer-to-peer program that enhances undergraduate students’ learning and wellness skills. Learn more about the three pathways available: reminders, coaching sessions, and study groups.

Visit Learner Supports from Student Accessibility & Achievement.

References


Contact information

For any questions about the workshop material or other related information, visit www.mcgill.ca/tls/students