

WLA Pre-Screening Tool



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WLA Pre-Screening Tool funded by
the Governments of Alberta and Ontario

Alberta



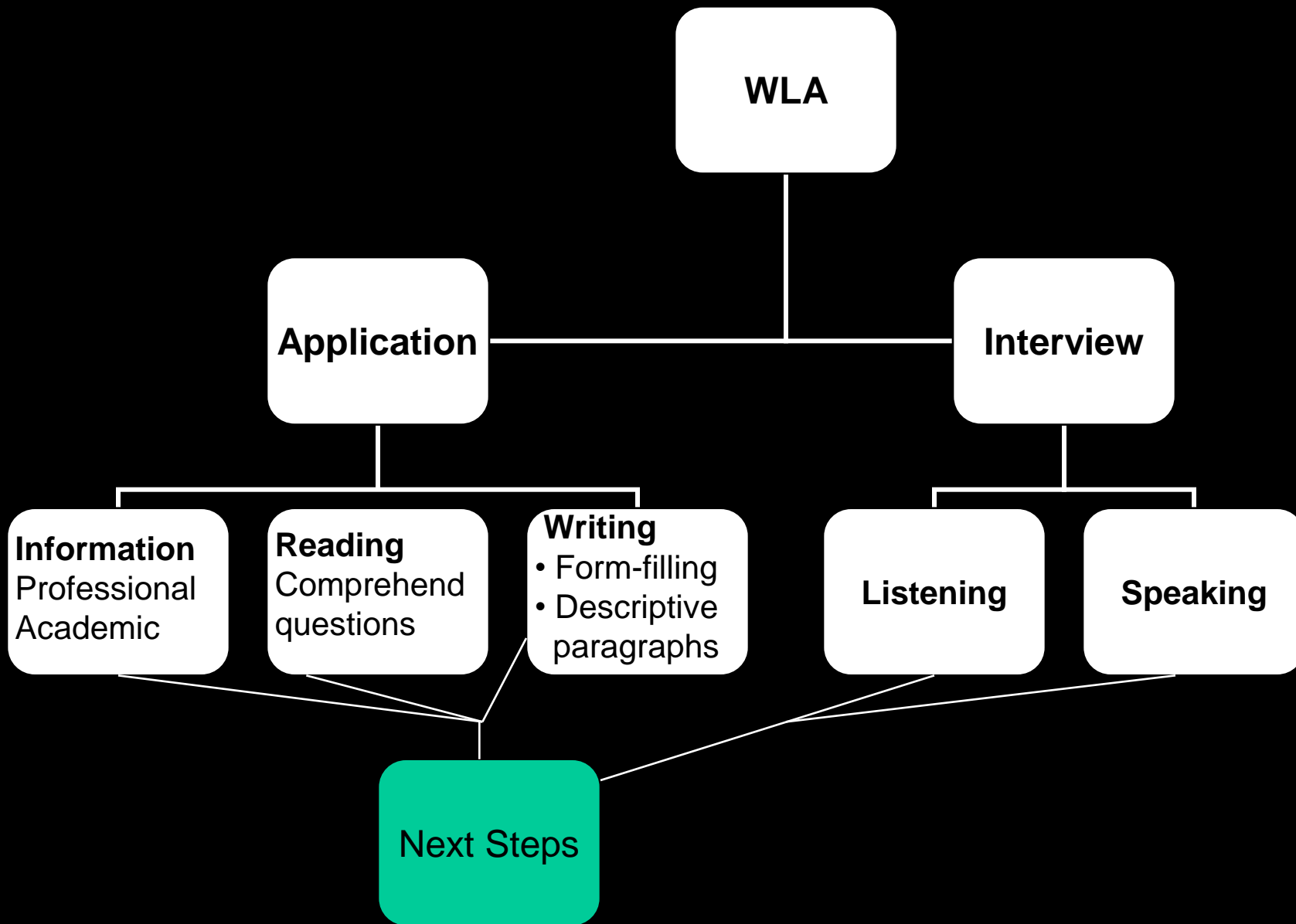
Objectives

1. Provide background history on the WLA Pre-Screening Tool
2. Show what the tool is, its purpose and the pathways it may lead to
3. Outline who is currently using the tool and future possibilities for the tool



What is the Workplace Language Assessment (WLA) Test?

- The WLA Test is not currently available as a pathway for Internationally Trained Individuals (ITIs).
- It will be for ITIs seeking entry into workplace-related training opportunities, language training or employment.
- It is intended for use with ITIs who have some post-secondary education and some work experience (not necessarily in Canada).
- Other higher level tests such as CANTEST, TOEIC, IELTS, CELPIP and CAEL are in use.



The WLA Pre-Screening Tool

- Is a resource for referring ITIs whose first language is not English to next steps or pathways*.
- Career Bridge developed the English Language Assessment for Work (ELAW). It needed substantial revision to be valid so the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks developed the WLA Pre-Screening Tool.

*Pathways for learners may include:

- Full language assessment
- Bridge-to-Work programs
- Post-secondary education
- Support to pass accreditation tests

Key Features of the WLA Pre-Screening Tool

- It is not a language test.
- It allows ITIs to demonstrate writing, reading, listening and speaking skills.
- It takes 30 minutes to administer.
- It provides a general language range based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks.

WLA Pre-Screening Tool

Description

1. Screening Form for reading and writing (background information writing sample)
2. Screening Interview for listening and speaking:
 - Administered Tasks - 30 minutes to complete
 - i. 20-minute writing task
 - ii. 10-minute interview
3. Analysis - 2 Checklists
4. Feedback

Why is a WLA Pre-Screening Tool Necessary?

- The Canadian workplace is becoming increasingly dependent on immigrants.
- Increasing numbers of skilled immigrants are seeking training and employment opportunities.
- 39% of newcomers to Ontario between 2003-2005 spoke neither English nor French.
- Language skills are considered key to successful training and labour-market integration.

Ontario's Newcomers: A Profile (2006)

- Canada/Ontario net labour force is increasingly dependant on immigrants (almost 100% by 2011).
- In 2006, 125,919 immigrants settled in Ontario; this represents 50% of all immigrants to Canada (251,511).
- 70% of these immigrants aged 18-64 intend to work.
- 13.8% are in regulated professions and trades.
- 50% of working age immigrants have post-secondary education.
- Over 50% of newcomers to Ontario were born in India, the People's Republic of China, Pakistan, the Philippines, the United States and Iran.
- The majority of immigrants to Ontario were in the Economic class.
- Within the Economic Class there were 54,511 Skilled Workers (and their family members).

Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA)

- The first COIA was signed in November 2005.
- The bi-lateral Agreement outlines federal and provincial roles and responsibilities in immigration and integration.
- It also provides additional federal funding of \$920m over five years for settlement and language training services for newcomers to Ontario (Funds do not transfer to the province).
- Ontario collaborated with Citizenship and Immigration Canada on the plan; it is now completed and posted on the internet. Ontario is now working on implementing the plan.

What are the Canadian Language Benchmarks?

National Standard of English as a Second Language that:

- Describe communicative proficiency in English as a Second Language as benchmarks or reference points.
- Cover four skill areas: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and use real life language tasks to measure language skills.
- There are 12 benchmarks.

They do the following:

- Facilitate appropriate placement of ITIs in training programs.
- Allow ITIs to see how their language skills measure up to employment and training requirements.
- Support curriculum development and language instruction for employment.
- Provide a common language to discuss, report and track learner progress.

Why CLB+/-6?

CLB +/-6 is the generally accepted entry-level into bridge to work programs or professional employment.

Stage I (CLB 1-4)

Basic Proficiency			
1	2	3	4

Sample speaking task that an ITI should be able to perform at Stage I:
Talk about your occupation and work experience.

Stage II (CLB 5-8)

Intermediate Proficiency			
5	6	7	8

Sample speaking task that an ITI should be able to perform at Stage II:

- Compare learning English in Canada with learning English in your native country.

Stage III (CLB 9-12)

Advanced Proficiency			
9	10	11	12

Sample speaking task that an ITI should be able to perform at Stage II:

- Deliver a formal presentation on detailed topics related to previous work experience or potential employment goals including how to solve problems that arose or might arise.

Bridging CLB and Essential Skills

<http://www.itsessential.ca>

- What are Essential Skills?
- How do Benchmarks and Essential Skills link together?
- CCLB has developed a Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) profile checklist.

The WLA Pre-Screening Tool-the model

- Why and when to use the tool
- Conditions of administration
 - Quiet space for writing
 - Private space for interview
 - Clearly copied forms
 - Only administered by trained staff
 - What happens with the assessment?
 - Proper storage of forms including the training manual

Administration Procedures

- Describe the purpose of the tool to the ITI.
- Ask the ITI to complete the WLA Pre-Screening Form.
- Provide adequate space and time.
- Conduct the WLA Pre-Screening Interview.
- Review the completed form using the checklist and review the interview using the interview checklist.
- Complete the WLA Pre-Screening report form.
- Provide feedback and determine next steps.

WLA Pre-Screening Tool Form

The final section of this form requires the ITI to provide a written introduction to their work experience.

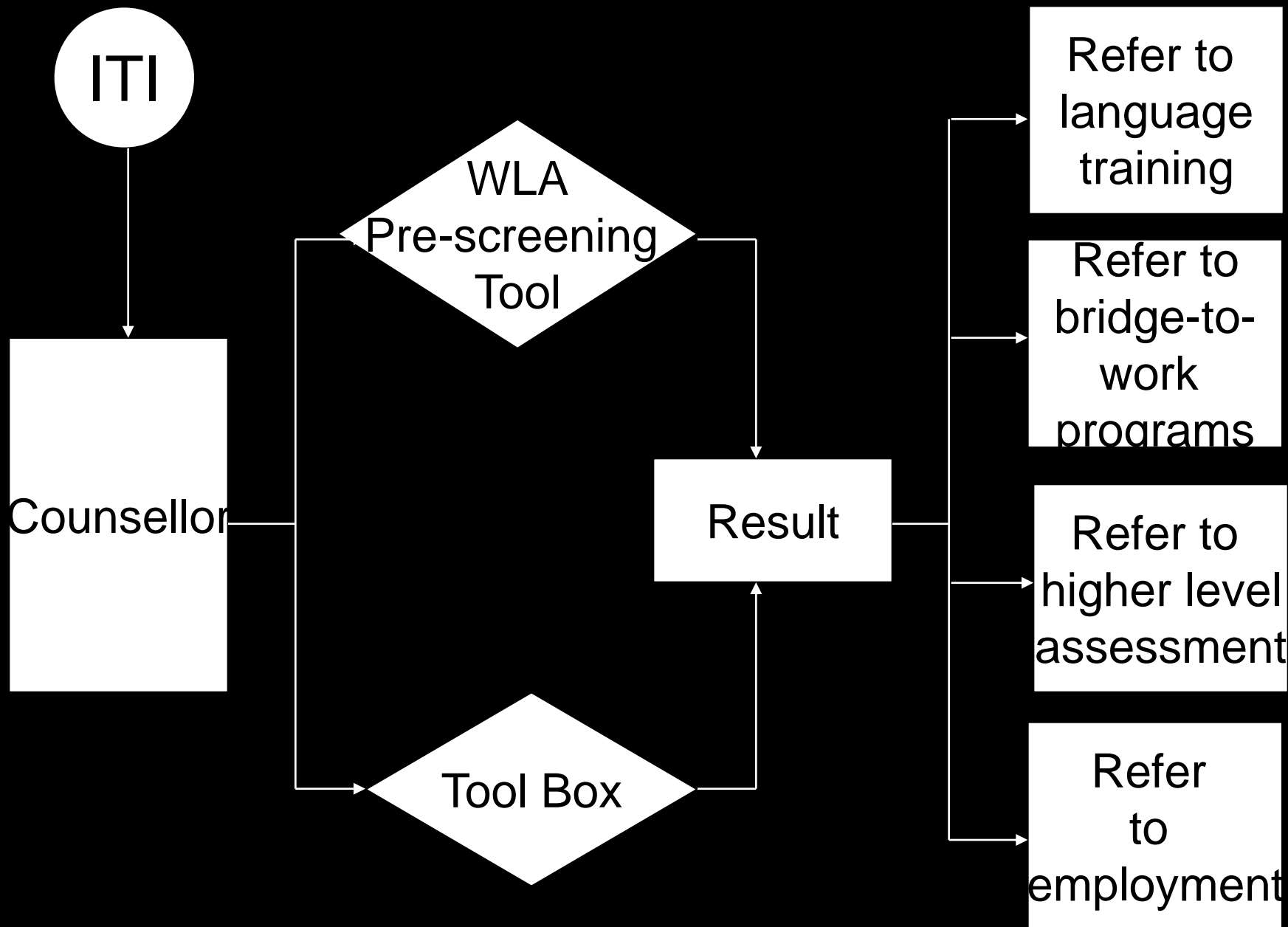
- What should you look for in this section?
(Relevancy, Flow, Vocabulary, Comprehensibility, Development)
- What would characterize an appropriate employment directed response?

WLA Pre-Screening Tool Interview

- Are the answers relevant?
- Does the conversation flow comfortably?
- Does the ITI have the words to say what he/she means?
- Is the conversation easy to follow ?
- Is it structured and are the arguments developed?

Using the Checklists

- ITIs generally should meet at least three of the criteria in each of the speaking and listening checklists to be considered ready for next steps that require higher levels of English.
- Use the information gathered from the checklists to inform decisions on training, employment or further language assessment.



Assisting the ITI to make the right choice

- Ontario and the federal government offer programs for ITIs and other newcomers ranging from basic language to higher levels of language training, including occupation-specific language training and higher-level test preparation.
- For additional information visit
www.ontarioimmigration.ca
www.settlement.org
- Contact local school boards for course information.

Language Training in Ontario: What Does it Look Like Today?

Programs: Provincial

Adult Non-credit ESL/FSL/CL

Specialized Language Training Pilot
Projects

Adult Credit ESL

Bridging Programs

English Language Learners (K-12)

Programs: Federal

Language Instruction for
Newcomers (LINC)

Enhanced Language Training
(ELT)

Delivering Agencies

Community Organizations

Colleges/Universities

Private Institutions

TV Ontario

School Boards both K-12 and Adult non-credit and credit

Summary

- The WLA Pre-Screening Tool is to help a counsellor understand an ITI's language proficiency.
- It is short, easy to use and is referenced to the CLB.
- It may be used along with the many other tools and resources ITIs have available.