

ESL STUDENTS: TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH OUTSIDE OF CLASS

Like learning to play a musical instrument, your English can only improve with practice! There are many things you can do and resources you can use to practice reading, speaking, listening and writing in English. Language learning doesn't stop when you leave the classroom!

PRACTICE READING IN ENGLISH:

- If you **ONLY** read your course materials, you will never develop a full and rich understanding of English. Without a deeper understanding of English, you will not totally understand your course materials. Make certain you find time to read many different types of material in English: articles, magazines, comics, social media, novels, newspapers...
- When you read, try to guess the unknown words from context. Do **NOT** stop to look up words in a dictionary; simply guess. If you miss a word, you will still understand the general topic. Over time you will begin to understand more and more words

PRACTICE LISTENING TO ENGLISH:

- Listen to the news on the radio, or on line. Try to listen without visual support. Read corresponding newspaper articles to better develop your understanding of the topic
- Watch English TV shows, particularly talk shows, game shows, and sitcoms. These will give you experience with conversational styles and simple idioms
- Watch the local news on TV. Try to understand some of the local issues.
- Watch pod casts and Ted Talks. These are usually very well presented and very interesting

PRACTICE SPEAKING ENGLISH:

- When listening to shows, news, or movies, try to repeat any of the words or sentences you find interesting out loud; try to copy the intonation of the words and the pronunciation of the sounds
- Make study groups with people who do not speak your first language
- Try to find a roommate who cannot speak your first language
- Join Toast Masters
- Come to "Talk n' Learn" or "Talk Times" in H 440 or H-662 (See Concordia's website for details)
- Join some Concordia clubs - not just ones involving your own culture
- Volunteer your time to help others a few hours a week: contact the LIVE Centre, Concordia's volunteer centre, H-608-1, to find places where you can volunteer (this is also **EXCELLENT** to help you build your CV)
- Record yourself speaking English, listen, and work on your pronunciation

PRACTICE WRITING IN ENGLISH:

- Practice "free writing" in order to improve your fluency: simply write about any topic in English for 10 minutes per day. Do not stop to read what you are writing, do not correct any errors; simply write. You will notice that you will be able to write more and more over time.