

Joan Acosta

Joan Acosta is an experienced writer and editor. She is well known as an advocate for the use of clear language and design, and is committed to making materials more accessible to readers at all levels.

Key skills and abilities

Writing and editing

- writing in clear language
- producing original content
- adapting existing material
- editing materials for print and web

Visual communication and design

- developing appropriate design and layout for clear language materials
- working with artists to develop clear illustrations and graphics

Desktop publishing

- desktop publishing using QuarkXPress

Clear Language and Design workshops

- developing and delivering clear language and design workshops to organizations and community groups

Experience

Writing and editing experience

- Editor, *The Westcoast Reader*, a newspaper to help adults in British Columbia improve their reading skills, Capilano University, 1981 to 2009
- Author of two ESL textbooks: *Coast-to-Coast Reader* (Douglas & McIntyre) and *Canada Coast to Coast* (ITP Nelson)
- Editor and writer of numerous publications designed for both English as a second language (ESL) and adult literacy audiences

Recent publications

Publications

Newcomers' Guide to Resources and Services in British Columbia, a guide in easy-to-read English for newly arrived immigrants to British Columbia, Government of British Columbia, 1995 and updated editions to 2012.

Best of The Reader, an online series of 14 e-books based on some of the best stories from the last 27 years of *The Westcoast Reader*, 2010.

A Guide to Benefits and Services for Seniors, a publication in easy-to-read English with translated versions, Legal Services Society of B.C., 2002.

Learning about the Law, a book and accompanying teachers' guide explaining B.C.'s legal system in easy-to-read English, People's Law School, 1989 with nine subsequent editions.

Teaching experience

Instructor

- English as a second language (ESL) instructor, Capilano University, 1979 to 1996

Education

Bachelor of Arts, TESL Certificate

- University of California, Berkeley: BA
- San Francisco State University: TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) Certificate

Professional certificates

Teaching Certificates

- Professional Teaching Certificate, Province of Ontario
- Professional Teaching Certificate, State of California

Recent awards

Awards and honours

- Faculty Emerita, Capilano University, 2010
- Council of the Federation Literacy Award, 2007
- Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Award, 2003
- Life Member, TESL Canada (Teachers of English as a Second Language), 2002
- Joan Acosta/Westcoast Reader Award, established in 2001 by Capilano University's ESL Department and awarded annually to a beginning-level ESL student
- Order of British Columbia, 1994
- Lifetime Contributor, BC TEAL (Teachers of English as an Additional Language), 1992
- Award of Excellence, Women in the Media, Association of Canadian Journalists, 1991
- Appointed by the Attorney General of British Columbia to the Board of Directors of the Plain Language Institute of BC, 1989-1993
- Innovations in Teaching Award, Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 1988