



Victorian Essential Learning Standards

Sample Unit

Zines

Level 6: Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning, The Arts, English, Information and Communications Technology, Thinking Processes

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Introduction

In *Zines*, students discuss, investigate and evaluate popular print and online media and publish their own work. Building on their interests, students develop skills in researching, gathering information, and writing and presenting different kinds of texts and images through the publishing process.

Students use information and communications technology, including the Internet, for researching and for publishing their own work online or in 'hard copy' publications.

This unit provides opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement against the standards in Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning, English, the Arts, Information and Communications Technology and Thinking Processes. The focus of assessment will depend on whether this unit is taught as a Media unit, an English unit or a combination of both.

Learning focus

This unit addresses learning focus statements from all three strands. These include:

Physical, Personal and Social Learning

Interpersonal Development

- work in teams to complete complex and self-managed tasks and reflect on effectiveness of teams in achieving agreed goals

Personal Learning

- reflect on learning and evaluate achievement of goals

Discipline-based Learning

The Arts

- develop critical understanding of the contemporary mass media and the difference between media text types
- work with arts disciplines and forms, to experiment with imaginative and innovative ways of using techniques, processes and conventions

English

- write appropriately and effectively in a range of text types for a variety of purposes and audiences
- develop critical understanding of the contemporary mass media and the difference between media text types



Interdisciplinary learning

Information and Communications Technology

- use a range of word-processing and editing software to publish zines that incorporate visual images and print text
- develop conventions for accessing, storing and presenting information to create information products set in real world contexts
- apply ethical considerations related to copyright in the gathering and publication of material for zines

Thinking Processes

- participate in activities in which they are required to make informed and responsible choices
- discuss and compare methods of evaluating material.

Victorian Essential Learning Standards

Zines can be used to assess a range of Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

The table below is an example of how this unit might be used to assess some Level 6 standards.

Strand	Domain	Dimension	Key elements of standards Students:
Physical, Personal and Social Learning	Interpersonal Development	Working in teams	...work collaboratively, negotiate roles and delegate tasks... ...record their reflections on the effectiveness of learning in a team... ...develop and implement strategies for improving their contributions to achieving team goals.
	Personal Learning	The individual learner	...determine, monitor and modify learning improvement goals, taking into account current and future learning needs.
		Managing personal learning	...allocate appropriate time and identify and utilise appropriate resources to manage competing priorities and complete tasks, including learner-directed projects, within set timeframes.



Discipline-based Learning	The Arts	Creating and making	<p>...vary the content, structure and form of their arts works to suit a range of purposes, contexts, audiences and/or the conventions of a specific style, and demonstrate technical competence in the use of skills, techniques and processes.</p> <p>...effectively use a range of traditional and contemporary media, equipment and technologies.</p>
	English	Reading	<p>...identify the multiple purposes for which texts are created.</p> <p>...compare and contrast the typical features of particular texts and synthesise information from different texts to draw conclusions.</p>
		Writing	<p>...select subject matter and begin to use a range of language techniques to try to position readers...</p> <p>...compose a range of other texts, such as feature articles, webpages and workplace texts.</p> <p>...proofread and edit their own writing for accuracy, consistency and clarity.</p>
		Speaking and listening	<p>...compare ideas, build on others' ideas, provide and justify other points of view, and reach conclusions that take account of aspects of an issue.</p>
Interdisciplinary Learning	Information and Communications Technology	ICT for creating	<p>...apply criteria to evaluate the extent to which their information products meet user needs and comply with intellectual property laws. (Level 5)</p> <p>...appraise different strategies for organising and managing resources involved in problem solving and creating information products.</p>
	Thinking Processes	Reasoning, processing and inquiry	<p>...discriminate in the way they use a variety of sources.</p>

For further advice see the [Assessment](#) section (page 9).



Teaching and learning activities

Zines (pronounced zeens) are a home-made form of magazine with a wide following among young people.

Refer to [Unit resources](#) (see page 10) for useful websites and information about desktop publishing and web-writing (authoring) software and other student and teacher support materials, including sample ‘special interest’ magazines.

The focus of introductory activities is commercial ‘special interest’ magazines. Conventional magazines provide models of content and style that can be rejected or adapted critically, for example, by parodying content and/or deliberately breaking with design and language conventions.

Prior learning

Depending on the scope of the publishing project, *Zines* requires proficiency in ICT applications such as web writing and desktop publishing.

If students are skilled in reflecting on and evaluating their personal learning, this unit can be used to assess a particular personal learning skill, for example, goal setting. Students will need to be alerted to this assessment focus at the start of the unit.

Activity 1: Magazine scene

Part 1: Getting started

Teachers inform students that they will be exploring magazines and in particular, their rebellious cousins, ‘Zines’ and that they will have the opportunity to design, write and publish their own zine.

As a whole class, students name as many magazines as they can and the teacher or student recorder lists the titles on the board.

Students organise the titles into categories. These could include, teen scene, music, fashion, home improvement, sport, hobbies.

Teachers distribute the survey [Things I like to see in a magazine](#) (see page 13) and students respond to the survey questions. Students reflect on the purpose of the survey. What information might it reveal? What information might it not provide (for example, price and quality are not addressed)?

Students discuss the notion of ‘target audiences’ (magazines appeal to different audiences. How do you know this?) and link magazine categories on the board to target audiences.

Students consider the kinds of articles (topic and style) they would expect to find in at least three of the magazines listed on the board. They choose magazines that appeal to different target audiences and make notes on magazine types (teen scene, fashion etc.) and target audience.



Part 2: Research and analysis

Students collect magazines that appeal to different audiences and bring them to class.

Working in pairs or small groups (see ‘Collaborative learning strategies’ in the *Teaching and learning resource*), students analyse at least two different kinds of magazine samples in relation to type, content, style and audience. The analysis could incorporate, for example:

- the category (type) of each magazine
- the likely audience for whom each magazine is produced
- the ways the magazine appeals to its audience
- the different kinds of content in the magazine (for example, feature articles, information, ‘how to’ guides, graphics) and rate each item in terms of its appeal to the likely audience
- features of the magazine that do not work very well
- any features of each sample that they would like to use in a magazine of their own.

Students reflect on qualitative differences between a subjective survey (Things I like to see in a magazine, see page 13) and the objective analysis just completed.

Activity 2: What’s a zine?

In this activity, students explore the features of zines and how they differ from magazines.

Teachers display samples of e-zines downloaded from websites such as the *Express Media* website. (See Unit resources, page 11).

In groups, students compare magazines and zines. They consider ways zines break with conventions of commercial publishing and why they might do this. For example, conventional magazine page layout is often sparse and uncluttered (using the KIS rule – Keep it Simple), whereas zines often break this rule.

Students explore how language is used in zines: Does the language effectively reach its audience? Why? They consider the breaking of grammatical conventions and the use of language that some people may find offensive.

Students write one or two sentences in response to discussion about each point in the list below:

- the differences between zines and magazines
- how zines came to be named
- a definition of ‘zines’
- for whom and by whom zines are created
- the subjects covered in zines
- how e-zines differ from print zines
- how available resources (such as computer software and printing facilities) determine the scope and look of zines.



Activity 3: Setting the zine

In this activity, students choose the focus and scope of their zine and plan their publishing project. They work in pairs or groups.

Teachers and students negotiate the scope and duration of the publishing project. They consider, for example, the following:

- using a variety of sources and text types, including graphics
- ways of recording evidence of planning and designing the zine
- ways of researching, developing and demonstrating deep understanding of the chosen theme
- effective use of available sources and publishing resources
- a publishing deadline
- negotiating and delegating tasks within the group.

Teachers lead discussion about acknowledgment and copyright in relation to sources.

Students work in pairs or small groups to discuss ideas for zine publications with the help of Picture the zine (see page 13) and select appropriate ICT software to develop a project plan that outlines tasks to be completed, resources needed and the timelines for completion. (Zine publishing planner is available on page 15 if students need help with the planning process.) If personal learning skills are being assessed, students need to be reminded of the focus of these and of any activities they need to complete, to prepare themselves for evaluation at the completion of the unit.

Groups report to the whole class on their proposed project in relation to:

- the title of their zine
- the audience for their zine
- zine theme (for example, tattoos, fantasy films, netball/soccer/Aussie rules, computer games, hip hop, a TV show)
- items to be included (for example, photographs, articles, photos, quiz, comic strip)
- copyright issues, if any
- the equipment required (for example, computers and printers)
- a timeline for publication showing important steps in the publication process.

Students finalise the concept and their project plan, incorporating feedback after their report to the class, before they proceed to the publishing phase.



Activity 4: Show us a zine

In this activity, students gather, write and arrange their material and publish a print or online zine.

In addition, teachers draw students' attention to the expectation that they develop and demonstrate knowledge about chosen themes or topics through researching and processing engaging and informed content.

Students complete a design mock-up of their work before assembling it in word-processing or desktop publishing format. In order to complete the work, students:

- finalise their zine concept
- gather resources such as graphics or articles for comment
- practise using software, if necessary
- design the zine
- write and edit articles
- create and place graphics
- assemble and publish the zine online or as a print product.

Activity 5: Zine launch

Students plan and organise a zine launch to suit the kinds of publications that have been produced.

Further assessment

Option:

- students write a feature article (around 300 to 400 words) for a conventional print magazine titled 'What's a zine?'
- students complete an evaluation of the personal learning skill focused on doing the activity.



Assessment

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards supports a combination of assessment practices:

- Assessment of learning (summative)
- Assessment for learning (formative)
- Assessment as learning (ongoing)

Further information on these can be found at:

<http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/blueprint/fs1/assessment.asp>

When assessing student achievement, assessment criteria can be developed from relevant standards and associated tasks or activities. The table below shows a range of assessment criteria, tools and strategies applicable to this unit. Teachers could choose to use some or all of these or use the unit to assess other standards.

Standards	Assessment criteria (Examples)	Evidence
Interpersonal Development <i>Working in teams</i>	Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify and use strengths of a team• set goals and meet timelines	Project plan (ICT)
Personal learning <i>The individual learner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify areas for improvement in their learning	Record of 'Zine publishing planner'
Personal learning <i>Managing personal learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• allocate appropriate time and resources and complete tasks within set timeframes	Record of 'Zine publishing planner'
The Arts <i>Creating and making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a zine that reflects attention to variation, style and effects of text and graphics• manipulate media elements to develop content for a zine	Assessment of layout, design and images
English <i>Reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• analyse the content, style and audience of two different magazines	Written analysis of features of magazines and zines (in individual student notes)
English <i>Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• write feature articles that successfully target audience as proposed in 'Picture the zine'• edit articles for accuracy, consistency and clarity	Assessment of articles for appropriate content (engaging and informative) and language



English <i>Speaking and listening</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• participate in pair and/or group discussion to develop ideas and clarify issues	Teacher observation of discussion
Information and Communications Technology <i>ICT for creating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• select appropriate software• develop project plan	Project plan should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• breakdown of tasks• assignment of tasks• resources• interim timelines
Information and Communications Technology <i>ICT for communicating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use language appropriate to the selected form of communication and demonstrate respect for cultural differences	
Thinking Processes <i>Reasoning, processing and inquiry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• discriminate between data sources	Analysis of value, quality, purpose and intent of subjective survey versus objective analysis.

See the *Assessment resource* for advice on developing rubrics.



Unit resources

Websites

At the time of publication the URLs (website addresses) cited were checked for accuracy and appropriateness of content. However, due to the transient nature of material placed on the Internet, their continuing accuracy cannot be verified. Teachers are strongly advised to prepare their own indexes of sites that are suitable and applicable to this unit of work, and to check these addresses prior to allowing student access.

WARNING: Magazine and zine websites

Students must have access to magazine and zine sites to complete this unit. However, online magazines, and e-zines are a broad category encompassing a range of publications some of which may not be suitable for the school student audience. It is most important that teachers research and carefully check each site before allowing student access. It is also important to keep in mind that electronic magazines and zines may change regularly and should be checked regularly.

Victorian Essential Learning Standards for information on Level 6 standards
<http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

Express Media
www.expressmedia.org.au

Express Media contains the online magazine Voiceworks and links to a number of sites dedicated to student writing.

Desktop publishing software

Word-processing software such as Microsoft Word may be used to insert text and graphics and layout pages. However, dedicated software such as Microsoft Publisher, Adobe InDesign and Quark XPress are specifically designed to enable users to 'assemble' text and images on pages.



Web-writing software

Web-writing software must be available if students intend to publish an intranet or Internet e-zine. Major websites and Internet service providers offer assistance in creating websites using their own templates. The disadvantage with these services is that files cannot be stored, edited and tested in a development server before 'going live'.

Web-writing software such as Macromedia Dreamweaver and Sausage Software's Hot Dog Professional and Hot Dog Page Wizz are accessible to beginners for entry-level web pages (see below).

Sausage Software

www.sausage.com

Provides web-writing templates, including Hot Dog Junior, designed for beginners.

Dreamweaver

www.macromedia.com/software

Web-writing software product from Macromedia.

Microsoft FrontPage

Site licences may be available in government schools.

Teacher materials

Teaching and learning resource

This document provides information about teaching and learning strategies referred to in the unit. It is available at <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/teaching.html>

Assessment resource

This document provides information about assessment strategies referred to in the unit. It is available at http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/assessment_resource.html

Student materials

[Things I like to see in a magazine](#) (page 12)

[Picture the zine](#) (page 13)

[Zine publishing planner](#) (page 15)

Using the student materials

The student and teachers support materials provided are designed to assist teachers in guiding the learning process. These are available to download and modify.

Things I like to see in a magazine



Student Materials

Think about the items below and rate each feature according to how important they are to you by ticking a box.

Items (content and 'look')	Very important	Important	Occasionally of interest	Not important
Fashion – clothes, shoes				
Film stars				
Travel stories and holiday ideas				
Hair tips, skin care				
Money and budgeting				
Sport				
Friendship stuff				
Film news and reviews				
True stories				
Personal opinion articles				
Pop stars – lives and loves				
Competitions, puzzles, games				
Food – cooking, eating out, dieting				
Fiction – short stories, poetry, serials				
Astrology – your stars				
Current affairs				
Comics				
Book reviews				
Personal advice columns				
Photographs				
Cartoons				
Headings, graphics and colour				
Other (please specify)				

Use this sheet to help you to plan the kind of zine you want to publish.

Theme

You might begin by deciding on your theme. What general topic will your zine be about? Sport? Music? Lifestyle? Fashion? Horror movies? A combination of interesting topics?

Purpose

What do you want to achieve in your zine? Make a statement about your aims, beginning with: 'My aim is to publish a zine that...'

Audience

It's important to decide who you want to appeal to in your zine. Who is your audience? Describe the kind of people you want to read your zine.

Title

The name of a publication can say a lot and make people pay attention. Can you think of a title that would suit your zine? (You could always put this off until you have tossed a few more ideas around.)

Content

Think about the content of your zine. What features will you have in your zine? Pictures? Articles? Cartoons? Information? Letters? Personal reflections? List the features here.

Sources

Where will your content come from? The Internet? Photos? Your own work (e.g. articles, drawings, photos)? Computer programs? Interviews? Newspapers? Brochures? List possible sources here.

Online or print?

What form will your zine take? For example, will it be published in print form or will it be an e-zine (published online)?

Design

You also need to think about design. What will your zine look like? Will it be in colour? Will it have lots of graphics? Do you want it to look formal and organised or more chaotic?

Equipment

Now that you have an idea of what you want your zine to look like, you can decide how you are going to produce that look. What equipment will you use to bring all the parts of your zine together into a single publication? For example, will you need: a computer/publishing software/a printer/a photocopier/paper/glue/other equipment? Make a list of the items you'll need.

Zine publishing planner



Student Materials

If you want to make sure you complete everything by the deadline, it helps to have a plan. This sheet provides you with a guide and checklist of things to do to put your zine together. Transfer the information on this sheet to plan your tasks, and show who is to be responsible for each of them. You can tick off items as they are completed.

Sample action planner and timeline

The important thing is to list all the jobs that need to be done and to make sure you have a date in the right hand column before you start – those dates are your timeline and they need to occur before the deadline!

Task	Who's responsible?	Date due	Date completed
Finalise the concept, theme, format and title			
Book computers			
Design the zine			
Gather written material			
Write articles			
Gather images			
Practise using publishing software			
Edit and proofread articles			
Assemble and publish (print) your zine			