



Victorian Essential Learning Standards

Discipline-based Learning Strand

ENGLISH

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This edition incorporates minor amendments to the domain introductions and learning focus statements to indicate their relationship with the National Statements of Learning.

Discipline-based Learning

The domains within the Discipline-based Learning strand form a body of knowledge with associated ways of seeing the world and distinct methods of exploring, imagining and constructing that world.

Broadly in line with academic literature and consistent with practice in many schools, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards identify the Arts, the Humanities, English and Languages Other Than English, Mathematics and Science as the disciplines for the curriculum over the stages of learning from Prep to Year 10.

Within the Discipline-based Learning strand the learning domains are:

- The Arts
- English
- The Humanities – Economics
- The Humanities – Geography
- The Humanities – History
- Languages Other Than English (LOTE)
- Mathematics
- Science

Students who develop a deep understanding of the concepts contained in the discipline-based domains are able to apply their knowledge in many different ways. The degree to which they are able to transfer their knowledge depends largely on the degree to which students have achieved mastery over Physical, Personal and Social and Interdisciplinary learning.

Research suggests that students develop deeper understanding of discipline-based concepts when they are encouraged to reflect on their learning, take personal responsibility for it and relate it to their own world. These approaches are explicitly defined in the Physical, Personal and Social Learning domains such as physical education and personal learning.

Students are better able to develop, demonstrate and use discipline-based knowledge and skills when they are able to employ interdisciplinary knowledge, skills and behaviours described in the domains of Communication; Design, Creativity and Technology; Information and Communications Technology; and Thinking Processes.

English

Introduction

In the English domain, texts and language constitute the central and essential concepts. The concept of texts focuses equally on creating and analysing texts, understanding and interpreting texts, and moving beyond interpretation to reflection and critical analysis. The concept of language includes the use of language and the development of linguistic competence, and the development of knowledge about language.

Students learn to appreciate, enjoy and use language and develop a sense of its richness and its power to evoke feelings, to form and convey ideas, to inform, to discuss, to persuade, to entertain and to argue.

The English domain is centred on the conscious and deliberate study of language in the variety of texts and contexts in which it is spoken, read, viewed and written. It is concerned with a wide range of written and spoken texts in print and electronic forms including literary texts such as novels, short stories, poetry, plays and non-fiction; film and other multimodal texts; media texts; information, commercial and workplace texts; everyday texts; and personal writing.

The study of English involves students in reading, viewing, listening to, writing, creating, comparing, researching and talking about a range of text types from the simple to the complex, from texts dealing with concrete and straightforward information to those dealing with increasingly complex and abstract issues and ideas. English teachers encourage students to explore the meaning of texts and how meaning is conveyed. They introduce critical approaches to the ideas and thinking contained in texts and support students in the development of critical understanding about the ways writers and speakers control language to influence their listeners, readers and viewers.

Students develop an understanding of the way purpose, audience and situation influence the structures and features of language and learn to apply their knowledge in their reading, writing, viewing, speaking and listening. They come to understand that different kinds of texts are appropriate for different occasions and learn to appreciate the variety of English usage in different times and places. They also learn about the ways language shapes and reflects attitudes in different times and places. Students are provided with opportunities to use language effectively in a range of contexts from informal to formal.

Students learn terminology or metalinguage to describe and discuss particular structures and features of language produced in a variety of contexts. They learn to control language by applying their understanding of the grammatical structures of Standard Australian English, by learning to spell accurately and use punctuation effectively, as well as by imitating good writers and speakers.

Understanding texts and recognising how language works within them is necessary for success at school and beyond for an active, informed and fulfilling life in modern Australian society and the global community. By understanding and working with texts, students acquire the knowledge, skills and personal qualities that enable them to read, view and listen critically and to think, speak and write clearly and confidently.

Structure of the domain

The English domain is organised into six sections, one for each level of achievement from Level 1 to Level 6. Each level includes a learning focus statement and a set of standards organised by dimension. A glossary is included which provides definitions of or additional information about underlined terms (see page 28).

Learning focus

Learning focus statements are written for each level. These outline the learning that students need to focus on if they are to progress in the domain and achieve the standards at the levels where they apply. They suggest appropriate learning experiences from which teachers can draw to develop relevant teaching and learning activities.

Standards

Standards define what students should know and be able to do at different levels and are written for each dimension. In English, standards for assessing and reporting on student achievement apply from Level 1.

Dimensions

Standards in the English domain are organised in three dimensions:

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and listening.

The learning in these dimensions is interrelated. For example, speaking and listening contribute to the development of students' reading responses. Writing contributes to communication about texts read or viewed and to reflection and learning. To help support student progress in all three dimensions, learning contexts are diverse and include situations that are informal, formal, planned and spontaneous.

Reading

The *Reading* dimension involves students understanding, interpreting, critically analysing, reflecting upon, and enjoying written and visual, print and non-print texts. It encompasses reading and viewing a wide range of texts and media, including literary texts such as novels, short stories, poetry and plays as well as popular fiction and non-fiction works, newspapers and magazines, illustrations, posters and charts, film and television and the texts associated with information and communications technology. Reading involves active engagement with texts and the development of knowledge about the relationship between them and the contexts in which they are created. It also involves the development of knowledge about a range of strategies for reading.

Writing

The *Writing* dimension involves students in the active process of conceiving, planning, composing, editing and publishing a range of texts including writing for print and electronic media and performance. Writing involves using appropriate language for particular purposes or occasions, both formal and informal, to express and represent ideas, issues, arguments, events, experience, character, emotion and information and to reflect on such ideas. It involves the development of knowledge about strategies for writing and the conventions of Standard Australian English. Students develop a metalanguage to discuss language conventions and use.

Speaking and listening

This dimension refers to the various formal and informal ways oral language is used to convey and receive meaning. It involves the development and demonstration of knowledge about the appropriate oral language for particular audiences and occasions, including body language and voice. It also involves the development of active-listening strategies and an understanding of the conventions of different spoken texts including everyday communication, group discussion, formal presentations and speeches, storytelling and negotiating.

Learners of English as a Second Language

Many students in Victorian schools learn English as a Second Language (ESL). They are of all ages and at all stages of learning English and have varying educational backgrounds in their first languages. While the broad objectives of English programs will ultimately be the same for all students, those learning English as a Second Language need time, support and exposure to English before being expected to reach the standards described in the English domain, and will come to this achievement via a range of pathways.

Standards have been developed to assist teachers to devise effective learning and assessment programs for ESL students. The document includes an overview of the broad stages of English language development with learning focus statements and standards for each stage.

National Statements of Learning

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) incorporate the opportunities to learn covered in the national [Statements of Learning](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/the_statements_of_learning,11893.html) (www.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/the_statements_of_learning,11893.html). The Statements of Learning describe essential skills, knowledge, understandings and capacities that all young Australians should have the opportunity to learn by the end of Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in English, Mathematics, Science, Civics and Citizenship and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The Statements of Learning were developed as a means of achieving greater national consistency in curriculum outcomes across the eight Australian states and territories. It was proposed that they be used by state and territory departments or curriculum authorities (their primary audience) to guide the future development of relevant curriculum documents. They were agreed to by all states and territories in August 2006.

During 2007, the VCAA prepared a detailed map to show how the Statements of Learning are addressed and incorporated in the VELs. In the majority of cases, the VELs learning focus statements incorporate the Statements of Learning. Some Statements of Learning are covered in more than one domain. In some cases, VELs learning focus statements have been elaborated to address elements of the Statements of Learning not previously specified. These elaborations are noted at the end of each learning focus statement.

National Literacy Benchmarks

National Literacy Benchmarks are used for reporting achievement in three aspects of literacy – reading, writing and spelling – at Years 3, 5 and 7. The benchmarks define nationally agreed minimum acceptable standards for literacy at these years.

Full details of the National Literacy Benchmarks are available in *Literacy Benchmarks Years 3, 5 and 7, Writing, Spelling and Reading*, Curriculum Corporation, 2000 at <www.curriculum.edu.au/projects/numbench.php>.

The benchmarks describe minimum standards. For this reason, the Year 3 benchmarks relate to Level 2 English standards, the Year 5 benchmarks relate to Level 3 English standards and the Year 7 benchmarks relate to Level 4 English standards. Links to the literacy benchmarks are located in the English standards.

Level 1

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of Level 1 standards in English, they draw on a range of experiences and skills with texts and language used at home and in the community when speaking, listening, reading and writing to establish a foundation for English learning in the school context.

Students learn to read simple, predictable texts that have familiar content. Texts at this level have simple sentences and predominantly oral language patterns, and include repetition of phrases and illustrations that represent the main ideas such as picture books. Students learn that print text maintains a constant message, and they use title, illustrations and knowledge of a text topic to predict meaning in texts.

They explore the purpose, formation and conventions of print and develop a working understanding of how sounds are represented alphabetically. To make meaning they use context and information about words, letters, combinations of letters and the sounds associated with them. They expand their vocabulary and use illustrations to extend meaning. With support they select their own reading material from a small range of familiar texts.

Students begin to compose simple texts about personally significant topics for their own purposes and audiences. When writing words and simple sentences they draw on their knowledge of the alphabet and its relationship with the sound system, conventional letters, groups of letters and some simple punctuation such as full stops and capital letters to communicate meaning. They begin to recognise that writing is used to convey ideas, feelings and information, and they discuss the purposes of their writing and the sources of their ideas. They learn to form letters correctly and to use a range of writing implements.

Students regularly make brief presentations on a specified topic to small groups or the whole class, learning to speak at an appropriate volume and pace for listeners' needs. They practise sequencing main events and ideas coherently and self-correct by rephrasing when meaning is not clear. They contribute ideas during class and group discussion, and follow simple instructions. They learn to retell what they have heard and ask and answer simple questions for information and clarification.

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

Students learn and practise the skills of being attentive listeners in formal and informal classroom situations. They listen and respond to a range of simple texts, including books read aloud, audio tapes and films, and to brief spoken texts that deal with familiar ideas and information. Students begin to adjust their speaking and listening to suit context, purpose and audience in order to communicate meaning and to understand others. When sharing and responding to ideas and information in print, visual and electronic texts, students make connections with their own experiences and ideas.

Standards

Reading

At Level 1, students match print and spoken text in their immediate environment. They recognise how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some sound–letter relationships. They read aloud simple print and electronic texts that include some frequently used words and predominantly oral language structures. They read from left to right with return sweep, and from top to bottom. They use title, illustrations and knowledge of a text topic to predict meaning. They use context and information about words, letters, combinations of letters and the sounds associated with them to make meaning, and use illustrations to extend meaning.

Writing

At Level 1, students write personal recounts and simple texts about familiar topics to convey ideas or messages. In their writing, they use conventional letters, groups of letters, and simple punctuation such as full stops and capital letters. Students are aware of the sound system and the relationships between letters and sounds in words when spelling. They form letters correctly, and use a range of writing implements and software.

Speaking and listening

At Level 1, students use spoken language appropriately in a variety of classroom contexts. They ask and answer simple questions for information and clarification, contribute relevant ideas during class or group discussion, and follow simple instructions.

They listen to and produce brief spoken texts that deal with familiar ideas and information. They sequence main events and ideas coherently in speech, and speak at an appropriate volume and pace for listeners' needs. They self-correct by rephrasing a statement or question when meaning is not clear.

Level 2

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of Level 2 standards in English, they extend their knowledge of how language is used in a range of written and spoken texts. With teacher support and through the sharing of texts, students develop a consciousness of texts – how they are constructed and the purposes they fulfil.

Students work towards independence in reading short texts with familiar ideas and information, some illustrations, predictable structures, uncomplicated sentences, a variety of tenses and a small amount of unfamiliar vocabulary. These include imaginative texts such as stories and poems, everyday texts and informative texts in print and electronic form. They develop strategies for reading texts, for example predicting meanings using semantic, syntactic and graphophonic cues. They learn to self-correct when reading aloud. They read and retell ideas in sequence using unfamiliar vocabulary and phrases from the text. They comment and act upon information.

Students engage in individual, small group and teacher-directed activities in which they read a variety of texts and explore the wide range of purposes, contexts and audiences for which texts are produced. They learn to recognise that texts are constructed by authors, and distinguish between texts that represent real and imaginary experience. Through class discussions they consider the opinions and viewpoints of others and become aware that there are different interpretations of texts. They begin to connect the themes and ideas in texts to their own knowledge and experience.

Students write short texts that include several related ideas in sequence, and, where relevant, combine writing with drawing or computer graphics. They experiment with more complex grammatical features, such as ways of linking ideas in sentences using pronouns, conjunctions and adverbial phrases indicating time and place. They begin to spell frequently used words accurately (for example, come, going, like), most words of one syllable with regular spelling (for example, sharp, thick, star), and some two-syllable words with regular spelling (for example, sunny, playing). They learn to use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. They learn strategies for planning, composing, revising and editing their writing. They begin to expand their vocabulary and use resources such as dictionaries and spell-checking software. They experiment with written and electronic publishing options. When handwriting, they practise correct letter formation.

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

In planned and spontaneous activities, students explore the structures and features of language in spoken texts. They become increasingly aware of how and why their own speaking needs to be varied to suit different situations and audiences. Students focus on organising their ideas to make themselves understood and, with guidance, develop strategies to improve oral presentations, for example, by varying volume and pace.

Students practise the skills of being attentive listeners in a wider range of contexts. They listen to spoken texts that deal with familiar ideas and information, recall some of the main ideas and information presented, and use questions to clarify meaning. They listen to and interpret texts such as serialised readings or films.

National Statements of Learning

This learning focus statement, in conjunction with aspects of the Communication Level 2 learning focus statement, incorporates aspects of the Year 3 National Statement of Learning for English.

Standards

Reading

At Level 2, students read independently and respond to short imaginative and informative texts with familiar ideas and information, predictable structures, and a small amount of unfamiliar vocabulary. They match sounds accurately to a range of letters, letter clusters and patterns, and work out the meaning of unfamiliar phrases and words in context. They locate directly stated information, retell ideas in sequence using vocabulary and phrases from the text, and interpret labelled diagrams. They predict plausible endings for stories and infer characters' feelings. They self-correct when reading aloud and describe strategies used to gain meaning. They identify that texts are constructed by authors, and distinguish between texts that represent real and imaginary experience.

Writing

At Level 2, students write short sequenced texts that include some related ideas about familiar topics. They write texts that convey ideas and information to known audiences. They select content, form and vocabulary depending on the purpose for writing, and describe the purpose and audience for their own and others' writing. They use appropriate structures to achieve some organisation of the subject matter. They link ideas in a variety of ways using pronouns, conjunctions and adverbial phrases indicating time and place. They accurately spell frequently used words, and make use of known spelling patterns to make plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. They use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. They reread their own writing and use a range of editing resources to revise and clarify meaning. They write upper- and lower-case letters legibly with consistent size, slope and spacing.

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

Speaking and listening

At Level 2, students listen to and produce spoken texts that deal with familiar ideas and information. They demonstrate, usually in informal situations, that they are able to speak clearly using simple utterances and basic vocabulary. They organise spoken texts using simple features to signal beginnings and endings. They vary volume and intonation patterns to add emphasis. They contribute to group activities by making relevant comments and asking clarifying questions to facilitate communication. After listening to short live or recorded presentations, they recall some of the main ideas and information presented. They listen to others and respond appropriately to what has been said.

Year 3 National Literacy Benchmarks

The benchmarks describe minimum standards. For this reason, the Year 3 benchmarks relate to Level 2 English standards. Links to the literacy benchmarks are located at <www.curriculum.edu.au/projects/numbench.php>.

Level 3

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of Level 3 standards in English, they speak, listen, read and write with some critical awareness, using a growing variety of text types and show some appreciation of the role of formal discourses in English.

Students read an increasing range of texts including imaginative texts such as chapter books, junior novels and poems, as well as informative texts, in print and electronic form. Texts typically have varied sentence patterns, written language structures and some specialised topic-related or literary vocabulary, and ideas and information extending beyond students' immediate experience. Students use a range of strategies to interpret the main ideas and purpose of texts – for example, interpreting figurative language or linking information from headings – and explore characters' qualities, motives and actions. Through discussion, students develop their understanding of why interpretations of a text may vary, and how the choice of subject matter is influenced by context, the author's purpose, and the intended audience. They read more critically and learn about the use of some simple symbolic meanings and stereotypes in texts.

Students develop confidence in writing a range of imaginative and informative texts, including simple narratives and descriptions, and texts that explain, inform and express a point of view. They draw on their knowledge of texts and language and learn to use a variety of sentences in appropriate grammatical order, using suitable vocabulary for the subject matter including nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, and punctuating appropriately to support meaning including exclamation marks and quotation marks. They learn to spell most one- and two-syllable words with regular spelling patterns (for example, growing, found, might), frequently used words which have less regular spelling patterns (for example, because, there, friends), and some other words of more than one syllable (for example, yesterday, afternoon, money). They make plausible attempts at spelling new and more difficult words. They experiment with combining verbal and visual elements to enhance the texts they produce.

Students develop strategies for writing to assist in planning and organising ideas prior to writing, and adapt their writing to suit their audience and purpose. They learn to use a range of resources, including information and communications technology, to revise written work and check spelling.

Students recognise that speaking and listening provide opportunities to exchange information, to share and explore ideas, and to express opinions and listen to the opinions of others. They participate in discussions, conversations and presentations in small and large groups, learning to vary their speaking

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

and listening to suit the context, purpose and audience. In spontaneous, planned and rehearsed situations they learn how to project their voice adequately for an audience and to use appropriate spoken language features such as sequence and past tense when recounting an event. When speaking, they recognise the need to rephrase statements to clarify meaning and information.

Students develop skills in listening attentively during class and group discussions, and to factual spoken texts such as audio, film and invited presentations. They practise identifying the topic, retelling information accurately, asking clarifying questions, volunteering information and justifying opinions.

National Statements of Learning

This learning focus statement, in conjunction with aspects of the Communication Level 3 learning focus statement, incorporates aspects of the Year 3 National Statement of Learning for English.

Standards

Reading

At Level 3 students read and respond to an increasing range of imaginative and informative texts with some unfamiliar ideas and information, vocabulary and textual features. They interpret the main ideas and purpose of texts. They make inferences from imaginative texts about plot and setting and about characters' qualities, motives and actions. They infer meaning from material presented in informative texts. They identify how language is used to represent information, characters, people, places and events in different ways including identification of some simple symbolic meanings and stereotypes. They use several strategies to locate, select and record key information from texts.

Writing

At Level 3, students write texts containing several logically ordered paragraphs that express opinions and include ideas and information about familiar topics. They write narratives which include characters, setting and plot. They order information and sequence events using some detail or illustrative evidence, and they express a point of view providing some information and supporting detail. They combine verbal and visual elements in the texts they produce. They meet the needs of audiences by including appropriate background information.

They write a variety of simple and compound sentences and use verb tenses correctly. They use punctuation to support meaning, including exclamation marks and quotation marks, and accurately use full stops, commas and question marks. They use vocabulary appropriate to context and spell most one- and two-syllable words with regular spelling patterns, and frequently used words which have less regular spelling patterns. They use sound and visual patterns when attempting to spell unfamiliar words.

Speaking and listening

At Level 3, students vary their speaking and listening for a small range of contexts, purposes and audiences. They project their voice adequately for an audience, use appropriate spoken language features, and modify spoken texts to clarify meaning and information.

They listen attentively to spoken texts, including factual texts, and identify the topic, retell information accurately, ask clarifying questions, volunteer information and justify opinions.

Year 5 National Literacy Benchmarks

The benchmarks describe minimum standards. For this reason, the Year 5 benchmarks relate to Level 3 English standards. Links to the literacy benchmarks are located at www.curriculum.edu.au/projects/numbench.php.

Level 4

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of Level 4 standards in English, they consolidate and build on their foundational learning in English related to texts and language.

Students compose, comprehend and respond to an expanding range of texts in print and audiovisual and electronic forms that contain increasingly unfamiliar concepts, themes, information and issues. With guidance, they reflect on reading, viewing, writing, speaking and listening in ways that develop considered and critical approaches to a range of texts. These include extended literary texts such as novels, short stories, poetry and non-fiction; everyday texts; and media texts including newspapers, film and websites.

Students explore the relationship between the purpose and audience of texts and their structures and features, for example: sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, figurative language and organising structures in print texts; features of visual texts; and sound effects, characterisation and camera angles used in film. They develop their knowledge of how texts are constructed for particular purposes, and examine and challenge generalisations and simplistic portrayals of people and social and cultural issues. They learn how to draw evidence from texts to support their points of view. They experiment with several strategies when interpreting texts containing some unfamiliar ideas and information, for example, reading on, using diagrams, and differentiating between statements of fact or opinion.

Students write texts for a range of purposes that demonstrate their developing understanding of the way imagery, characterisation, dialogue, point of view, plot and setting contribute to the meaning of written and multimodal texts. They use this reflection, and their developing knowledge of the generic structures of different types of texts (such as narratives, reports and arguments), as the basis for composing an increasing range of written and spoken texts. Students become more systematic in their use of strategies for writing (including note-making, using models, planning, editing and proofreading) and make decisions about appropriate structures and features of language in texts for different purposes and audiences. They develop terminology or metalanguage to talk about and describe particular structures and features of language. They develop a multi-strategy approach to spelling, applying morphemic knowledge and an understanding of visual and phonic patterns, and select vocabulary for precise meaning.

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

Students engage in exploratory talk to share and clarify their ideas, to formulate simple arguments and to seek the opinions of others. They participate in oral interactions for different purposes, including entertaining, informing and influencing others. Students learn to sustain a point of view, and provide succinct accounts of personal experiences or events.

They experiment with spoken language features such as pace, pitch and pronunciation to enhance meaning as they plan, rehearse and reflect on their presentations. They build their capacity to combine verbal and visual elements in texts to communicate ideas and information by using, for example, presentation software or overheads.

When listening, students practise identifying the main idea and supporting details of spoken texts and summarising them for others. They begin to identify opinions offered by others, propose other viewpoints, and extend ideas in a constructive manner.

National Statements of Learning

This learning focus statement, in conjunction with aspects of the Communication Level 4 learning focus statement, incorporates aspects of the Year 5 National Statement of Learning for English.

Standards

Reading

At Level 4, students read, interpret and respond to a wide range of literary, everyday and media texts in print and in multimodal formats. They analyse these texts and support interpretations with evidence drawn from the text. They describe how texts are constructed for particular purposes, and identify how sociocultural values, attitudes and beliefs are presented in texts. They analyse imagery, characterisation, dialogue, point of view, plot and setting. They use strategies such as reading on, using contextual cues, and drawing on knowledge of text organisation when interpreting texts containing unfamiliar ideas and information.

Writing

At Level 4, students produce, in print and electronic forms, a variety of texts for different purposes using structures and features of language appropriate to the purpose, audience and context of the writing. They begin to use simple figurative language and visual images. They use a range of vocabulary, a variety of sentence structures, and use punctuation accurately, including apostrophes. They identify and use different parts of speech, including nouns, pronouns, adverbs, comparative adverbs and adjectives, and use appropriate prepositions and conjunctions. They use a range of approaches to spelling, applying morphemic knowledge and an understanding of visual and phonic patterns. They employ a variety of strategies for writing, including note-making, using models, planning, editing and proofreading.

Speaking and listening

At Level 4, students plan, rehearse and make presentations for different purposes. They sustain a point of view and provide succinct accounts of personal experiences or events. They adjust their speaking to take account of context, purpose and audience, and vary tone, volume and pace of speech to create or emphasise meaning.

When listening to spoken texts, they identify the main idea and supporting details and summarise them for others. They identify opinions offered by others, propose other relevant viewpoints and extend ideas in a constructive manner.

Year 7 National Literacy Benchmarks

The benchmarks describe minimum standards. For this reason, the Year 7 benchmarks relate to Level 4 English standards. Links to the literacy benchmarks are located at <www.curriculum.edu.au/projects/numbench.php>.

Level 5

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of Level 5 standards in English, they consolidate and expand their knowledge and understanding of a range of texts and appreciate how to use formal language to construct texts for school purposes, and for purposes relevant to their lives beyond school.

Students begin to respond in more detached and critical ways to a wide range of print, visual, electronic and multimodal texts that explore familiar and more challenging themes and issues. They include literary texts such as novels, short stories, plays and poetry, and informative and persuasive texts including everyday texts and media texts. Students discuss texts analytically and develop confidence in the use of metalinguage to describe and discuss particular structures and features of language. They explore the power of language and the ways it can influence roles and relationships and represent ideas, information and concepts. They learn that texts can be created for multiple purposes.

Students read and interpret texts that present some challenging issues. They compare texts that explore similar themes and ideas, and recognise that writers can express views and values other than their own. They develop a critical understanding about the ways that writers and producers of texts try to position readers to accept particular views of people, characters, events, ideas and information. They discuss the ways in which persuasive texts present opinions and evidence, justify positions and persuade.

Students learn to use formal language to construct spoken and written texts for a range of purposes and audiences. They extend their knowledge of the structure of a variety of text forms (such as narratives, transactions, reports, procedures, explanations and persuasive texts) and practise writing expressively and in detail about challenging ideas and information. They continue to adjust their writing in response to purpose, context, and audience needs. They improve the accuracy and readability of their writing through the use of appropriate spelling and punctuation, and the control of tenses, subject-verb agreement and noun-pronoun agreement. They continue to develop their planning, drafting, editing and proofreading skills, using computer technology to organise, format, revise and present their texts.

Students work cooperatively in discussion groups, using talk to explore and analyse challenging themes and issues. They develop their skills in identifying main issues in a topic, providing supporting detail and evidence for opinions, asking relevant clarifying questions and building on the ideas of others. They apply their knowledge of spoken texts and oral language to experiment with

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

techniques to influence audiences, including vocabulary, rhythm, intonation, timing, pausing, body language and facial expression. They examine how situational and sociocultural factors affect audience responses and the impact of different text and sentence structures on readers and viewers. They explore ways of using multimodal texts to enhance visual and verbal communication.

National Statements of Learning

This learning focus statement, in conjunction with aspects of the Communication Level 5 learning focus statement, incorporates aspects of the Year 7 National Statement of Learning for English.

Standards

Reading

At Level 5, students read and view imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that explore ideas and information related to challenging themes and issues. They identify the themes and issues explored in these texts, and provide supporting evidence to justify their interpretations. They produce personal responses, for example, interpretive pieces and character profiles. They infer meanings and messages in texts, analyse how social values or attitudes are conveyed, compare the presentation of information and ideas in different texts, and identify cause and effect in informative texts.

Writing

At Level 5, students produce, in print and electronic forms, texts for a variety of purposes, including speculating, hypothesising, persuading and reflecting. They write extended narratives or scripts with attention to characterisation, consistency of viewpoint and development of a resolution. They write arguments that state and justify a personal viewpoint; reports incorporating challenging themes and issues; personal reflections on, or evaluations of, texts presenting challenging themes and issues. Students improve the accuracy and readability of their writing, developing confidence in the identification and use of grammatical conventions and features of language and in their use of figurative language. They use a range of punctuation accurately to support meaning, including the use of ellipses, dashes, colons and semi-colons. They control tenses, and subject–verb and noun–pronoun agreement. They accurately identify and use different parts of speech. They edit their writing for clarity, coherence and consistency of style, and proofread and correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

Speaking and listening

At Level 5, students express creative and analytical responses to texts, themes and issues. They identify main issues in a topic and provide supporting detail and evidence for opinions. They critically evaluate the spoken language of others and select, prepare and present spoken texts for specific audiences and purposes. They use a variety of multimodal texts to support individual presentations in which they inform or persuade an audience.

When listening to others, students ask clarifying questions and build on the ideas of others. They identify key ideas and take notes. They show an awareness of the influence of audience on the construction and presentation of spoken texts, and of how situational and sociocultural factors affect audience responses.

Level 6

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of Level 6 standards in English, they produce, study and respond critically to spoken, written, and visual texts created for a wide range of audiences and purposes. Their focus is on a close examination of the critical and sociocultural dimensions of language, and they learn to be critical and independent users of texts and language appropriate to situations in school, in their daily lives and in the workplace.

Students read and respond to a range of classic, contemporary and popular texts, including literary texts such as novels, short stories, plays and poetry; informative and persuasive texts including everyday texts; media texts and workplace texts. They develop a critical understanding of the contemporary mass media and the difference between different media texts, such as current affairs, news articles, features, editorials, documentaries and reviews. They explore and interpret different perspectives on complex issues, analysing how different texts are likely to be interpreted by different groups. They develop a critical understanding of the contextual factors involved in the construction and interpretation of texts, including the role of audience in shaping meaning. They extend their use of metalinguage to encompass explicit discussion of the style and tone of a text.

Students use writing to explore different perspectives on complex and challenging issues. They develop their skills in writing appropriately and effectively in a range of text types for a variety of purposes and audiences. They practise writing expressively about thoughts, feelings, opinions and ideas, and constructing considered arguments to persuade others to share a point of view. Through an increasing use and control of complex linguistic structures and features, students develop their skills in conveying meaning and meeting the demands of purpose, context and audience.

Students listen to and are provided with opportunities to produce a range of spoken texts in a variety of formal and informal situations characterised by complexity of purpose, and subject matter. They critically examine the variety of ways in which spoken language influences audiences and, in their own presentations, experiment with a range of persuasive techniques.

In spoken, written and multimodal texts students apply their skills to planning and developing formal arguments about complex issues, and use evidence systematically to justify points of view and develop logical conclusions. They make increasingly effective use of a range of word-processing and editing software to produce texts that incorporate digital still images, digital audio and video, and print.

Definitions of underlined terms are provided in the Glossary (page 28)

National Statements of Learning

This learning focus statement, in conjunction with aspects of the Communication Level 6 learning focus statement, incorporates aspects of the Year 9 National Statement of Learning for English.

Standards

Reading

At Level 6, students read, view, analyse, critique, reflect on and discuss contemporary and classical imaginative texts that explore personal, social, cultural and political issues of significance to their own lives. They also read, view, analyse and discuss a wide range of informative and persuasive texts and identify the multiple purposes for which texts are created. They explain how texts are shaped by the time, place and cultural setting in which they are created. They compare and contrast the typical features of particular texts and synthesise information from different texts to draw conclusions.

Writing

At Level 6, students write sustained and cohesive narratives that experiment with different techniques and show attention to chronology, characterisation, consistent point of view and development of a resolution. They write persuasive texts dealing with complex ideas and issues and control the linguistic structures and features that support the presentation of different perspectives on complex themes and issues. They select subject matter and begin to use a range of language techniques to try to position readers to accept particular views of people, characters, events, ideas and information. They compose a range of other texts, such as feature articles, webpages and workplace texts. They plan and deliver presentations, sequencing and organising complex ideas. They write accurately punctuated, grammatically sound and complex sentences with embedded clauses and phrases. They are able to maximise the effects of rhythm and tone, and write with developing fluency. They proofread and edit their own writing for accuracy, consistency and clarity.

Speaking and listening

At Level 6, students analyse critically the relationship between texts, contexts, speakers and listeners in a range of situations. When engaged in discussion, they compare ideas, build on others' ideas, provide and justify other points of view, and reach conclusions that take account of aspects of an issue. In their presentations, they make effective use of the structures and features of spoken language to deal with complex subject matter in a range of situations.

They draw on a range of strategies to listen to and present spoken texts, including note-taking, combining spoken and visual texts, and presenting complex issues or information imaginatively to interest an audience.

Glossary

everyday texts

Everyday texts include spoken, print and non-print texts that are part of daily life. They include, for example, classified advertisements, personal letters, telephone conversations, messages, instructions, labels, electronic mail and web pages. Everyday texts also include newsletters, notices, signs and timetables associated with the specialised demands of schooling. In general terms, the English curriculum gradually shifts in emphasis from simple everyday texts used in the home and school for personal, informal purposes towards more formal and complex everyday texts used in the home and the wider community.

graphophonic cue

A graphophonic cue is information based on sound–letter relationships used by readers while decoding and comprehending texts.

literary texts

Literature, which is fundamental to the English curriculum, uses language to represent, re-create, shape and explore human experience. Literary texts can be based on fiction or fact and includes written and spoken texts. Examples include picture storybooks, traditional stories, speeches, novels, short stories, plays, poetry, translated works, non-print texts and non-fiction works such as biographies. Through reading, writing, listening to and talking about literature, students extend their understanding of the world and of themselves, and they see how cultural beliefs and values are formed.

media texts

Media texts include spoken, print, graphic and electronic communications with a public audience. They often involve numerous people in their construction and are usually shaped by the technology used in their production. The media texts studied in English are found in newspapers, magazines, and on television, video, film, radio, computer software and the Internet.

metalanguage

A metalanguage is a language used to discuss language conventions and use, for example, the terms and definitions used in the various grammars to describe the functions of words in sentences and the terms used to describe and categorise structural features of different kinds of texts.

morphemic knowledge

Morphemic knowledge is knowledge about the components, patterns or shapes within words. Readers use morphemic knowledge to understand words when reading, to spell words when writing and to understand and pronounce words when speaking and listening by recognising formations of semantic (meaning) components of words.

multimodal texts/formats

In English, the modes of language are reading (including viewing), writing (including composing electronic texts), speaking and listening. Multimodal texts are those that combine, for example, print text, visual images and spoken word as in film or computer presentation media.

semantic cue

A semantic cue is information related to the context, type or orientation of a text used by readers while decoding and comprehending texts.

strategies for reading

Strategies for reading include:

- techniques such as reading the cover and contents page when selecting texts
- predicting, checking, confirming and self-correcting using knowledge of a topic
- browsing, skimming and scanning for key words and content
- using computer technology to locate and explore information.

strategies for writing

Strategies for writing include:

- planning, composing, recording, editing and publishing
- using word-processing and graphics programs to create, edit and publish texts
- phonic, visual and morphemic strategies for attempting to spell unfamiliar words
- consulting resources such as a dictionary and thesaurus.

structures and features of language

Structures of language refer to characteristics of the overall ordering and organisation of texts. Features of language refer to the grammar of speech and of writing. Throughout the years of schooling, students need to develop abilities to use the following structures and features of written and spoken language:

- print elements, such as letters, words, spelling, paragraphs, punctuation, layout and presentation

- textual and grammatical aspects of language, such as sentence structure and vocabulary
- patterns of text structure and organisation of various kinds of texts, including narrative, exposition, verse, narrative voice and point of view
- intonation, rhythm, pace, pitch, volume and pauses in spoken language
- non-verbal elements of communication, such as facial expression, body movement, proximity and gestures, and the graphic elements of texts, such as the impact of illustrations on the meaning of a text.

syntactic cue

A syntactic cue is information based on typical sentence patterns or structures used by readers while decoding and comprehending texts.

texts

Texts studied in English include a range of written and spoken texts, from informal to formal, in print, electronic and multimodal formats. They may include speeches or conversations, novels, storybooks, newspaper articles, transactional texts such as letters, invitations or interviews, as well as reports, posters, performances of plays or films, and advertisements. Texts also include the communications composed on, or transmitted by, computers or other technological tools. Teachers draw material from:

- literary texts
- everyday texts
- media texts
- workplace texts.

As these categories are interrelated, some texts may belong to more than one category.

workplace texts

Workplace texts include spoken, print and electronic forms of communication commonly encountered in enterprises across a wide range of industries, including business letters, resumes, memoranda, short reports, formal and informal minutes. Practice in interpreting and producing such texts is a valuable part of students' preparation for the world of work and further training.

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