



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**

Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide

Practice example

Curriculum statement

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Disclaimer

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Introduction to examples

Collected here are examples of teachers' work. These are drawn from teacher practice and are included here to exemplify aspects of teaching, learning and assessing languages, as discussed in the *Guide*. Teachers were invited to share their planning and programming documents and members of the project team worked with them to further develop aspects of their work.

Programs

The collection of programs includes primary, middle and senior secondary long- and short-term programs. These contain annotations designed to point out specific points of interest for you to consider in your reading of them. At the end of each program you will find a commentary that describes how the program exemplifies selected sections of the *Guide*.

A selection of teachers' work

This is a selection of programs and parts of programs, plans for classroom teaching, planned assessment tasks, descriptions of the teaching and learning contexts, investigations and evaluations of practice, and reflections on current practices. It shows teachers engaged in professional thinking, planning, reassessing, and evaluating what they teach, how they teach and who they teach.

About the examples

- These examples of teachers' planning, practice and reflection are provided for you to examine, consider and perhaps use in expanding your own understanding of language teaching and learning. We know that teachers learn best from other teachers and so we encourage you to look across the set of examples in all languages rather than just the language(s) you teach.
- The examples of teachers' work included here belong to individual teachers and are taught in a particular context which means that you will not find models that you can instantly adopt and teach. Rather, you will find ideas about teaching and learning that you can use by adapting and reworking them to produce programs, classroom teaching, learning and assessment practices that you can use in your own context.
- The examples of teachers' work are not included here because they constitute 'best practice' or are exemplars of definitive programs for languages teaching and learning. You will find some outstanding approaches to planning and teaching that advance our understanding of how to make languages teaching and learning a rich and effective learning experience for students. You will also find teachers' honest reflections and evaluations of their pedagogies, questioning what they do and rethinking what they will do.
- The examples of teachers' work may include some pedagogies of which you may be critical. However, you will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work with students, language teaching and language learning.

Example Advocacy

Language Any language

Level Primary

The following is an example of an advocacy statement on languages education for a primary school context based on national, state and community frameworks for language teaching and learning.

Programming and planning

Planning language programs
Long-term and short-term planning
Planning for conceptual learning
The place of context in planning programs
Scoping and sequencing of learning
Planning interactions
Personalising learning experience

This languages curriculum statement sets out the value of learning a language to the learner, in terms of social, cultural and cognitive understanding and development. It promotes an approach to language teaching and learning based on national, state and community frameworks. It explains the organisation of language learning that will direct program development.

Primary school

Languages curriculum statement

School statement on languages education

In the primary school we believe it is important that provision is made for all children to have the opportunity to develop their own potential to the full in all learning areas, including Languages. The most compelling reason for learning another language resides in the intellectual enrichment of the individual learner. As well as developing an awareness of their own linguistic and cultural identity they will also reach a better understanding of their own life experience, the world, Australia's place in it and the diverse linguistic and cultural communities within and beyond Australia. Learning an additional language can help lay the foundation for children's future engagement with other people and communities at a local, national and international level. We believe that learning another language is a valuable learning experience.

Rationale for Languages in the school curriculum

The benefits of learning another language include:

- **Communicative benefits:** improved communication skills and improved linguistic and cultural flexibility, including the ability to interact with others, access information and share their own meaning with others, across cultures.
- **Intercultural benefits:** an enhanced sense of one's own linguistic and cultural identity and an improved understanding of different 'ways of being' including the ability to engage with others across linguistic and cultural 'boundaries'.
- **Literacy benefits:** enhanced overall literacy, including an understanding of the structure and functions of language, both one's first language and second language(s).
- **Cognitive benefits:** enhanced intellectual and educational enrichment, including new ways of thinking and using knowledge.
- **Social benefits:** enhanced ability to engage with others, within and across languages and cultures.

The Languages curriculum

The Languages curriculum will reflect contemporary approaches to language teaching and learning through the application of intercultural language teaching and learning, as described in *The Report on Intercultural Learning* (2004). This report views language, culture, communication and learning as interdependent and integrated in a single educative approach to language learning and use.

The five principles of intercultural language learning are: social interaction, active construction, making connections, reflection and responsibility. These are consistent with contemporary learning theories which view learning as social and dialogic, as well as being a cognitive process; it has a primary focus on the implicit nature of the learning activities and interactions students engage in, rather than the content to be covered.

An intercultural orientation views communication as a social practice in context, in which learners engage with language and reflect on the challenge of interpreting and making meaning in interactions with others, across cultures. An intercultural approach views language as a dynamic resource for communicating with others, and is thus more than the knowledge of linguistic forms and rules or sequences of vocabulary and grammar. An intercultural orientation views culture as an expression of the contemporary values, practices and beliefs of diverse communities, shared and communicated through language, rather than a static view of culture as the iconic products, places and cultural events of a another country or community. An intercultural orientation to language learning focuses on classroom interactions in which learners notice, compare and reflect on the nature and uses of learners' own language(s) and culture(s), through the study of another language.

In South Australia the Languages curriculum is organised around the three strands of the SACSA Framework for Languages: Communication, Understanding Language and Understanding Culture. Through the study of an additional language at primary school students develop the capability to communicate effectively using various combinations of the skills of listening, reading, and responding to texts, as well as speaking and writing in the target language through the Communication strand. Through the Understanding Language strand students develop an understanding of the nature of language through analysis of its structure in the context of purposeful use; they see how language works as a vehicle for increasing communicative potential in both first and target languages. Students develop an understanding of the interdependence of language and culture, and the cultural principles and practices that influence communication in their own and other languages through the Understanding Culture strand. While all three strands are integrated in language use, at times a particular focus on one strand will be required for explicit teaching and learning purposes.

Domains of language use

The Languages curriculum is designed around three broad domains of language use:

- Interpretive domain - the interpretation of language use in context
- Creative domain - active construction of their own meanings in the language
- Interactive domain - direct engagement with the language in interactions with others

In the 'interpretive domain', the aim is to expose learners to the language in context, to explore the types of texts and the purposes and contexts of use, through subject matter which is relevant, meaningful and interesting to learners at this level. It provides the opportunity for interaction and reflection on the nature of language in use, and the exploration of cultural meanings in text, in the target language and in the learner's own language(s), by comparison. Exposure to texts also provides the opportunity for learners to respond productively, to apply the content or perspectives from these texts for their own purposes, to express their interpretation or appreciation of texts, and reflect on the nature of language use in context across cultures.

In the 'creative domain', the aim is to encourage the production of meaningful learner talk and text, as appropriate to their stage of linguistic and cognitive development and interests. This provides the opportunity for interaction and reflection on the nature of their own speech and action in communication with others, and on the personal, cultural meanings they express as they share their own ideas and opinions for their own purposes in the target language.

In the 'interactive domain', the aim is to engage learners in direct communication with other users of the language, both face-to-face and online; to share meanings and negotiate understandings in supported and purposeful contexts as appropriate to their stage of linguistic and cognitive development and interests. This provides the opportunity for learners to apply their learning and experience meaningful communication with others.

The Languages curriculum and its content will be planned and delivered through these three domains, and assessed and reported with reference to local standards for languages in these years of schooling. Long-term programs outlining the content, scope and sequence of intended learning and use of language will be developed to encompass the Early Years (R-2), and the Primary Years (Years 3 & 4, and 5 & 6).