Literacy overview

Primary school

School Improvement

Government of South Australia
Department for Education
http://tiny.cc/Guidebooks

Overview

These Literacy and Numeracy guidebooks have been developed to provide direction and support to schools at different stages on their improvement journey. The guidebooks support school improvement planning processes by providing leaders with a limited menu of evidence-informed Literacy and Numeracy practices aimed at improving learner growth and achievement.

Contents

External Links 2

Purpose and context 3

1. Build foundations:
   key ideas to build foundations 4

2. Shift gear:
   key ideas to shift gear 6

3. Stretch:
   key ideas to stretch 8

4. Maintain momentum:
   key ideas to maintain momentum 10

5. Inspire:
   key ideas to inspire 12

External links

1 **Australian Curriculum**
https://tiny.cc/AustCurric

2 **Teaching for Effective Learning framework**
http://tiny.cc/TfELFramework

3 **Australian Curriculum: English**
https://tiny.cc/ACenglish

4 **Australian Curriculum: Mathematics**
https://tiny.cc/ACmaths

5 **Best Advice papers: Literacy and numeracy**
http://tiny.cc/BestAdviceNumLit

6 **Literacy and Numeracy First**
http://tiny.cc/LitNumFirst

7 **Big Six Components of Reading**
http://tiny.cc/BestAdviceLit

8 **Vocabulary**
http://tiny.cc/vocabulary

9 **Literacy Learning Continuum**
http://tiny.cc/LitLearnCont

10 **National Literacy Learning Progression**
http://tiny.cc/LitLearnProgression

11 **Language and Literacy Levels Across the Australian Curriculum: EALD**
http://tiny.cc/LangLitACEALD

12 **Professional Learning Communities**
http://tiny.cc/PLCs

13 **Formative assessment**
http://tiny.cc/FormAssess

14 **Comprehension**
http://tiny.cc/ReadComp

15 **Oral language**
http://tiny.cc/OralLang

16 **Learning Design**
http://tiny.cc/LearningDesign

17 **Metacognition and self-regulated learning**
http://tiny.cc/EEFmetacognition

Purpose and context

The Literacy and Numeracy guidebooks have been developed to provide direction and support to schools at different stages on their improvement journey. The guidebooks will support school improvement planning processes, providing leaders with a limited menu of evidence-informed, differentiated literacy and numeracy practices aimed at improving learner growth and achievement.

The Australian Curriculum[1] provides the content and standards for learning programs and the Teaching for Effective Learning framework[2] provides directions for pedagogy.

Literacy and numeracy are foundational aspects of learning. Every student's successful progress through school depends on their literacy and numeracy skills. Accordingly, they are essential aspects of every program of learning from the early years onwards, both through the content of English[3] and Mathematics[4] and through a focus on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

The Department's Best Advice papers[5] in literacy and numeracy describe recommended practices for all students.

Literacy and Numeracy First[6] provides strategies to accelerate the learning of different cohorts of students in primary schools. These strategies are also relevant to secondary schools.

The advice in these sets of resources should continue to inform the development of a school's literacy and numeracy program.

In particular, the Literacy and Numeracy First high-impact strategies should underpin all literacy and numeracy teaching. These are:

- targeted differentiated teaching
- clear learning intentions
- logical and intentional sequencing of the learning
- explicit teaching
- ongoing feedback.

The Guidebooks recommend even more differentiated advice – evidence-based literacy and numeracy strategies that have been tailored to schools' stage of improvement.

These strategies are not intended to represent the entire literacy and numeracy program in a school. However, these are strategies that should be prioritised by the school; these are the 'must-haves'. These are the strategies that evidence tells us *will* drive improved learning and achievement.

1. Build foundations:
key ideas to build foundations

Actions for leaders

Focus	Strategies
Leaders establish a base for leading literacy improvement and prioritise improvement strategies in the site improvement plan	Audit classroom literacy practices and develop priorities to support the development of teachers' classroom practice. Ensure classroom teachers engage fully with the three strands of Australian Curriculum: English[3] – language, literacy and literature. Identify students for whom intervention is urgent and put strategies in place to target and address their learning needs according to diagnostic data.

Actions for teachers

Across the whole-school, teachers work collaboratively to develop oral language practices, and routine, timetabled reading and writing programs in the context of the Australian Curriculum. Teachers work to know and understand the strengths and needs of the learners, paying attention to home language and literacy experiences, literacy data sets and tailor learning programs to meet specific learner needs.

Focus	Strategies
ORAL LANGUAGE **Establish a foundation of oral language for learning**	Teachers intentionally plan for oral language development, scaffolding the language required to access the curriculum.
READING **Establish a reading program**	Teachers explicitly teach the Big Six Components of Reading[7], including a strong program of synthetic phonics. Teachers prioritise a daily, timetabled reading program to integrate the big six components of reading across the year levels.
WRITING **Establish routines for writing**	Teachers incorporate daily writing activities to enable learners to practise and build automaticity. Teachers explicitly teach at least two extended written texts per term to develop text, grammar and vocabulary[8] knowledge.

2. Shift gear:
key ideas to shift gear

Actions for leaders

At this stage it is assumed that the school has established literacy practices which include intentional oral language activities, a timetabled reading program integrating the Big Six Components of Reading[7] and daily writing, including responding to independent reading.

Focus	Strategies
Leaders strengthen the capacity of staff to tailor approaches	Interrogate all available data and support teachers to interpret literacy data and set learning goals using the Australian Curriculum Literacy Learning Continuum[9], National Literacy Learning Progression[10], NAPLAN and PAT–R assessment criteria, and for EALD students, the Language and Literacy Levels Across the Australian Curriculum: EALD[11]. Establish literacy Professional Learning Communities[12] where teachers are supported to design learning based on learner needs. Ensure teachers are able to use formative assessment[13] to engage students and support their progress.

Actions for teachers

Across the whole-school, teachers plan collaboratively to meet learners' specific literacy and language needs. Teachers support learners to set individual learning goals in reading and writing and they use formative assessment practices to keep learners on track.

Focus	Strategies
ORAL LANGUAGE **Strengthen approaches to oral language for learning**	Teachers use specific strategies to extend student talk, incorporating learning area vocabulary. Teach students to collaborate as a means to develop oral language.
READING **Strengthen and tailor the reading program through differentiation**	Teachers develop individual reading goals for students based on decoding, fluency and comprehension.
WRITING **Strengthen writing practices**	Teachers incorporate daily writing activities including responding to reading. Teachers develop their knowledge of language to enable differentiated language instruction when teaching writing across the curriculum areas.

3. Stretch:
key ideas to stretch

Actions for leaders

At this stage, the school has established literacy practices which include intentional oral language activities, a timetabled reading program integrating the Big Six Components of Reading[7] and daily writing including responding to independent reading. In addition, teachers have a sound knowledge of language which enables differentiated instruction when teaching writing across the curriculum areas. The school culture ensures all students are motivated to learn by designing learning which includes processes and resources that are respectful, inclusive and relevant to culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Focus	Strategies
Leaders prioritise professional conversations to strengthen whole-school approaches to literacy learning	Conduct classroom observations to measure the balance of teacher and student talk and find opportunities to extend students' learning talk. Strengthen a shared understanding of the impact of applied reading comprehension[14] strategies. Ensure a whole-school approach to integrating oral language[15], reading and writing to deepen literacy learning.

Actions for teachers

Whole-school agreements inform oral language development, guide improvements in reading instruction and effective writing instruction.

Focus	Strategies
ORAL LANGUAGE **Design whole-school approaches to inform oral language development**	Teachers collaborate to ensure classroom interactions effectively engage students in talk about learning.
READING **Design whole-school approaches to improvements in reading instruction**	Teachers design reading instruction that explicitly teaches all elements of reading comprehension that effective readers use.
WRITING **Design whole-school approaches to build effective writing instruction**	Teachers use a teaching and learning cycle, incorporating dialogic talk and reading activities to build content prior to writing.

4. Maintain momentum: key ideas to maintain momentum

Actions for leaders

At this stage, the school has established literacy practices which include the integration of oral language, reading and writing programs across the whole-school. Teachers explicitly teach the Big Six Components of Reading[7] within a timetabled reading program including the teaching and monitoring of comprehension. A carefully sequenced teaching and learning cycle is used to explicitly teach literacy and includes a balance of teacher and student talk. All students are motivated to learn due to careful learning design that includes processes and resources that are respectful, inclusive and relevant to culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Focus	Strategies
Leaders use data from classroom observations to develop professional learning priorities	Use data from observations of student and teacher talk to inform professional learning that enables teachers to 'vacate the floor'. Establish Professional Learning Communities[12] to inquire into effective teaching practices that inform reading comprehension[14] strategies before, during and after reading. Ensure all teachers have a sound knowledge of the key genres of schooling at word, sentence and text level to inform and guide assessment in writing.

Actions for teachers

Teachers deepen oral language interactions and apply them in reading activities to build comprehension. Teachers support students to understand how writing develops so students can work towards specific goals.

Focus	Strategies
ORAL LANGUAGE **Deepen expert interactions to build learning area knowledge and understanding**	Teachers intentionally select strategies that enable students to provide extended responses and ask questions of each other.
READING **Deepen expertise in the close reading of texts using comprehension strategies**	Teachers strengthen the design of the reading program through embedded activities that build comprehension and incorporate dialogic teaching strategies around literature and factual texts.
WRITING **Deepen strategies in formative assessment which support students to write effectively according to success criteria**	Teachers provide models of various stages of success in writing to enable self-assessment and personal goal setting. Teachers support students to engage in peer assessment so that they can help each other reach writing goals.

5. Inspire:
key ideas to inspire

Actions for leaders

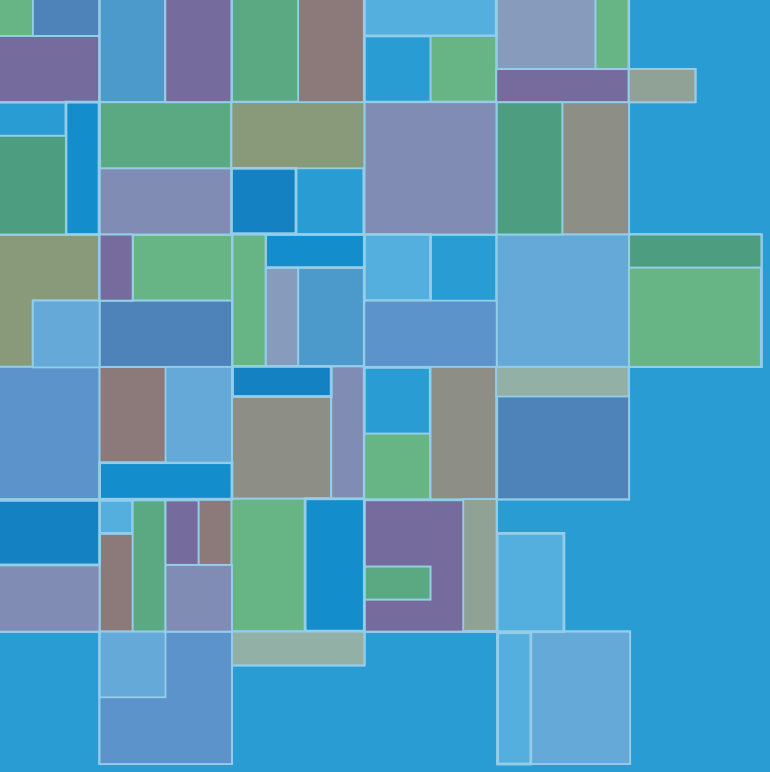
At this stage, the site has established literacy practices including a carefully sequenced teaching and learning cycle with a balance of teacher and student talk to explicitly teach literacy across the learning areas. All students are motivated to learn due to tailored learning design[16] which includes processes and resources that are respectful, inclusive and relevant to culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Teachers are aware of the importance of metacognitive strategies[17] and are leading students to a greater awareness of themselves as learners who are developing independence and responsibility for their own learning goals.

Focus	Strategies
Leaders work with staff to develop agreements about shared metalanguage for literacy practices	Develop a metatalk with staff to identify and extend the interaction practices in the classroom. Lead professional learning on metacognition and self-regulation to enable explicit teaching and fostering of strategies. Ensure the metalanguage for 'talk about texts' is used consistently and visible across the whole-school.

Actions for teachers

Teachers engage students in discussion about their learning through formative assessment[13] practices, using metalanguage to discuss common patterns of classroom interactions, reading processes and texts. Teachers explicitly teach students metacognitive strategies[17] to enable self-regulation, reflection of learning and development of learning goals.

Focus	Strategies
ORAL LANGUAGE **Foster a deep understanding of how the different types of talk and interaction develop learning area knowledge**	Shared 'metatalk' (a metalanguage for talk and interaction) is used to identify and extend the purposes for oral language across the whole-school.
READING **Foster critical and metacognitive awareness in reading for the construction of knowledge**	Teachers enable students to monitor their own extensive responses to rich literature and factual texts, orally, in journals, and through writing tasks.
WRITING **Foster conscious language choices as students write for specific purposes and audiences**	Teachers enable students to explain and justify the textual and linguistic choices they have made in their writing. Teachers and students reflect on learning goals, identifying and evaluating the processes used for writing.



Government of South Australia
Department for Education