

Section overview

What you value – finding the essence

Every teacher has valuable skills and experience they bring to their teaching. It is important to ask ourselves **what we believe** each learning area is for. If we can identify **why we teach** what we teach, we can tailor our Learning Design to meet our goals. In this section teachers and leaders work together to identify what they really value for their students' learning and to find this **essence** in the different learning areas.



Workshop overviews



1 Sound bites 45 minutes

A series of short video clips in which shoppers in the mall, teachers and young people talk about what they think each of the learning areas of English, history, mathematics and science are for. These act as stimuli to provoke discussion about participants' views on the essence of each learning area. The group then develops shared meaning which will be revisited in the following three workshops.

Stimulate thinking and discussion to develop shared meaning about the essence of each learning area.



2 Wordle explorer 45 minutes

Explore the Australian Curriculum through Wordles generated for each learning area to find where our values are expressed. A visually engaging tool which highlights the most frequent key words in each component of the learning areas.

Supports exploration of the Australian Curriculum to find where the essence is most strongly emphasised in each learning area.



3 Learning area explorer 45 minutes

An activity designed to help us find our values in the text of the Australian Curriculum learning areas. Participants draw on their shared meaning about the essence of each learning area to examine the components of the Australian Curriculum to determine where the essence is most strongly emphasised.

Explore the Australian Curriculum to find where the essence of each learning area is most strongly emphasised.



4 Talking heads 45 minutes

A video series of disciplinary experts discussing the valued learning in their learning area of the Australian Curriculum. These video clips stimulate participant discussion about the essence and whether the expert opinions have caused them to think differently.

Listen to learning area experts, some of whom played prominent roles in shaping Australian Curriculum learning areas.

Background

Understanding the essence of each learning area and how it relates to what we value for student learning is essential.

It helps us to clarify why we teach this learning area, why it is important for our lives and how it fits with the bigger strategic intent as described in the Australian Curriculum.

These workshops support participants to find the essence for each learning area. They focus on the four implemented learning areas in the Australian Curriculum – English, history, mathematics and science.

It is suggested that participants begin by considering for themselves what it is they value most about particular learning areas in order to discover the essence. This will clarify their thinking, better equipping them to design intentional learning for their students.

To understand the essence of a learning area, participants could ask themselves:

- What is the learning area for? (This is different to asking what the learning area is about)
- What makes the learning area unique and different to other learning areas?
- What is at the heart of the learning area?
- How does the learning area help us to make sense of the world?

