

Rationale

Through learning languages, students acquire:

- communication skills in the language being learnt
- an intercultural capability, and an understanding of the role of language and culture in communication
- a capability for reflection on language use and language learning.

Language learning provides the opportunity for students to engage with the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world and its peoples, to reflect on their understanding of experience in various aspects of social life, and on their own participation and ways of being in the world.

Learning languages broadens students' horizons in relation to the personal, social, cultural and employment opportunities that an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world presents. The interdependence of countries and communities means people in all spheres of life are required to negotiate experiences and meanings across languages and cultures. Despite its status as a world language, a capability in English only is no longer sufficient. A bilingual or plurilingual capability is the norm in most parts of the world.

Learning languages:

- extends the capability to communicate and extends literacy repertoires
- strengthens understanding of the nature of language, of culture, and of the processes of communication
- develops intercultural capability
- develops understanding of and respect for diversity and difference, and an openness to different experiences and perspectives
- develops understanding of how culture shapes worldviews and extends learners' understanding of themselves, their own heritage, values, culture and identity
- strengthens intellectual, analytical and reflective capabilities, and enhances creative and critical thinking.

Learning languages also contributes to strengthening the community's social, economic and international development capabilities. Language capabilities represent linguistic and cultural resources through which the community can engage socially, culturally and economically, in domains which include business, trade, science, law, education, tourism, diplomacy, international relations, health and communications.

Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages meets the needs and rights of young people to learn their own languages and recognises their significance in the language ecology of Australia. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning their own languages is crucial to overall learning and achievements, to developing a sense of identity and recognition and understanding of language, culture, Country and Place. For all students, learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages provides a distinctive means of understanding the country in which they live, including the relationship between land, the environment and people. The ongoing and necessary reclamation and revitalisation of these languages also contribute to reconciliation.

Year 5 and 6 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 6, students use spoken and written Chinese to maintain interactions with familiar and unfamiliar people across a growing range of situations (for example, 你星期几去汉语学校?, 你说...对吗?); to convey information, opinions and experiences (for example, 我喜欢踢澳式足球, 你呢?); and to access a range of print and digital media resources, such as 童书, 报纸, 画册, 科学书, 传单, 广告, 教材, 地图. They write characters, paying attention to shape, and stroke order and proportion. They transcribe spoken words and sentences in Pinyin and select simplified characters to match the sounds they hear. They use stress, tone and intonation to express emotion and opinion. They respond to and create a range of short informative, persuasive and imaginative texts for diverse audiences and purposes. They relate their own experiences to those presented in texts, for example, 《如果我是...》. They create sentences that include prepositions (给、跟、对) and possessives and attributive clauses with particle 的. They use a range of verbs, and use verb complements to describe the direction, result or potential of an action. They use conjunctions (for example, 可是、或者、因为、除了) to connect ideas and elaborate on or clarify opinions and actions. They explain how their developing bilingual ability supports their identities as users of Chinese and English.

Students explain the nature of Pinyin and apply it to their own speech. They categorise characters into groups based on meaning, appearance, pronunciation or function and apply this information to new characters. They compare the word order of Chinese sentences with that of English, and identify how their knowledge of English impacts on the way they express ideas in Chinese. They describe how the features of Chinese and English texts are used to convey meaning.

Aims

The Australian Curriculum: Languages aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure students:

- communicate in the target language
- understand language, culture, and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication
- understand themselves as communicators.

These three aims are interrelated and provide the basis for the two organising strands: Communicating and Understanding. The three aims are common to all languages

Key Ideas**Language and culture**

The interrelationship of language, culture and learning provides the foundation for the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

In the languages learning area the focus is on both language and culture, as students learn to communicate meaningfully across linguistic and cultural systems, and different contexts. This process involves reflection and analysis, as students move between the new language being learnt and their own existing language(s). It is a reciprocal and dynamic process which develops language use within intercultural dimensions of learning experiences. It is not a 'one plus one' relationship between two languages and cultures, where each language and culture stay separate and self-contained. Comparison and referencing between (at least) two languages and cultures build understanding of how languages 'work', how they relate to each other and how language and culture shape and reflect experience; that is, the experience of language using and language learning. The experience of being in two worlds at once involves noticing, questioning and developing awareness of how language and culture shape identity.

Structure

Learner background and time-on-task are two major variables that influence language learning and they provide the basis for the structure of the Australian Curriculum: Languages. These variables are addressed through the specification of content and the description of achievement standards according to pathways and learning sequences respectively.

Pathways

In the Australian Curriculum: Languages, pathways for second language learners, background language learners and first language learners have been developed as appropriate to cater for the dominant group(s) of students learning each specific language within the current Australian context. For the majority of languages, one curriculum pathway has been developed for Years F–10, catering for the dominant cohort of learners for that language in the current Australian context. For Chinese, pathways have been developed for three learner groups: first language learners, background language learners and second language learners.

The Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages includes three learner pathways:

- first language learner pathway
- revival language learner pathway
- second language learner pathway.

Sequences of learning

The design of the Australian Curriculum: Languages takes account of different entry points into language learning across Foundation – Year 10, which reflects current practice in languages.

For the second language learner pathway and the background language learner pathway, there are two learning sequences:

- Foundation–Year 10 sequence
- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

For the first language learner pathway, there is one learning sequence:

- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

Content and achievement standards are described initially in a three-year band for Foundation–Year 2 followed by two-year bands of learning: Years 3–4; Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10.

The Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is written in the bands Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–6 and Years 7–10. In the absence of pedagogical evidence across the country for all these languages, the broader band distinctions provide maximum local flexibility in curriculum development.

Content structure

The content of the Australian Curriculum: Languages is organised through two interrelated strands which realise the three aims. The two strands are:

- Communicating: using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning
- Understanding: analysing language and culture as a resource for interpreting and creating meaning.

The strands reflect three important aspects of language learning:

- 1) communication
- 2) analysis of aspects of language and culture
- 3) reflection that involves
 - reflection on the experience of communicating
 - reflection on comparative dimensions of the languages available in students' repertoires (for example, the first language in relation to second language and self in relation to others).

Year 5 and 6 Level Description**The nature of the learners**

Students use their bilingual and bicultural capabilities and understandings within the world of their own experience and imagination and draw on some topics from other learning areas. They are extending their knowledge of language structure and of texts.

Chinese language learning and use

Students are immersed in Chinese across speaking, listening, reading, writing and viewing; where practicable, activities may include those designed collaboratively with teachers in other learning areas to provide opportunities for translating or interpreting. Students speak and write in Chinese to express their own interests. They begin to appreciate how their own language use compares to modern standard forms in terms of pronunciation, tone and rhythm. They consciously use aspects of grammar in their language learning and employ a range of implicit and explicit models in response to teacher prompting. They consider audience, purpose, and appropriate language choices in their cultural and communicative practices.

Contexts of interaction

Students actively communicate in Chinese in classroom, school, home and community environments. They begin to interact with other language users via the online environment and other digital forums.

Texts and resources

Students engage with visual media, music, cartoons, stories, games and documentaries. They use multimedia for researching, exploration and collaboration. They create a range of short imaginative, informative and persuasive texts.

Features of Chinese language use

Students learn to analyse new characters encountered in texts, with a focus on mapping these character forms to their known spoken language. Students make comparisons between societies, social structures and belief systems and explore how these are conveyed through language. They discover and discuss diversity in cultural identity and experience. Students explore the Chinese past through texts such as fables and classical stories. Written language use includes reading and comparing Chinese and English children's literature.

Level of support

Correct Chinese language use continues to be modelled by the teacher to support students' oracy and literacy development. Texts often have Pinyin glossaries or include vocabulary lists to support learning.

The role of English

English is used to compare languages and explore complex ideas related to language, culture, learning and concepts from other learning areas.

Year 5 and 6 Content Descriptions**Communicating****Socialising**

Interact and socialise with peers and known adults, exchanging ideas and opinions about personal experiences and social activities.

[Key concepts: place, identity, community; Key processes: negotiating, transacting, arranging]

Take action, resolve issues, make shared decisions and organise shared experiences.

[Key concepts: place, identity; Key processes: interpreting, negotiating, selecting]

Informing

Locate and compare factual information from different sources about different communities and lifestyles.

[Key concept: lifestyle; Key processes: informing, selecting]

Plan and present key points of information to familiar audiences.

[Key concept: social action; Key processes: presenting, conveying]

Creating

Respond to popular stories and characters from Chinese folklore, sharing opinions on aspects of the storyline, characters and themes.

[Key concepts: significance, tradition; Key processes: comparing, responding, creating]

Create short narratives to express the experiences, thoughts and emotions of individuals in imagined contexts.

[Key concepts: character, emotion; Key processes: comparing, responding, creating]

Translating

Identify and account for the potential loss of subtle meanings from character components and individual characters in compounds when translating into English.

[Key concept: meaning; Key processes: translating, interpreting, negotiating meaning]

Create simple bilingual texts for different audiences, explaining features of the different versions and the impact of context.

[Key concepts: audience, context; Key processes: identifying, translating, interpreting, negotiating meaning]

Reflecting

Reflect on the benefits of learning Chinese and English in both Chinese and English interactions.

[Key concepts: place, biculturalism, identity; Key processes: observing, explaining, reflecting]

Understanding**Systems of Language**

Recognise the use of tone, intonation and stress of words to express emotion, opinion and attitude.

Recognise the contextual meanings of individual syllables or characters to assist comprehension and vocabulary development, and explain the form and function of components in individual characters, for example, 心, 想, 情, 闷.

Understand and use basic structures and features of Chinese grammar to enhance meaning and clarity of expression.

Recognise and apply conventions of personal texts and compare textual features of different texts.

Language variation and change

Differentiate key features and apply rules for expressing meanings in spoken and written modes in diverse contexts.

Explore the impact of English on everyday communication in Chinese and the impact of Chinese on English.

Role of language and culture

Explore particular cultural meanings conveyed in everyday interactions across languages.