

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 3 and 4 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 4, students interact with teachers and each other through classroom routines, action-related talk and play. They exchange greetings and wishes, respond to familiar instructions and to questions such as Qu'est-ce que c'est? and Qu'est-ce que tu fais? They share simple ideas and information, express positive and negative feelings (for example, Je suis très contente; Je n'aime pas la pluie) and ask for help, clarification and permission. They interpret visual, non-verbal and contextual cues such as intonation, gestures and facial expressions to help make meaning. They make statements using the present tense and present + infinitive form about self, family and interests (for example, Je suis australien et italien; J'habite à Brisbane; Je vais partir demain). They approximate the sounds, rhythms and pitch of spoken French. They comprehend simple, spoken, written, visual and multimodal texts, using cues such as context, graphics, familiar vocabulary and language features. They use modelled sentence structures to compose short original texts such as descriptions, captions or simple narratives, using conjunctions such as et and mais, and prepositions such as sous, sur and devant. They use vocabulary related to familiar contexts and their personal worlds, and apply gender and number agreements in simple constructions (for example, une petite maison, les grands chiens).

Students know that French is a significant language spoken in many parts of the world, including Australia; that it is similar to English in some ways (for example, it has the same alphabet and basic sentence structure and many shared words) and different in other ways (such as in the use of titles, gestures, some new sounds such as r and u and gender forms). They know that languages change over time and influence each other. They identify French words used in English (such as menu, mousse) and English words used in French (such as le weekend, stop!). They demonstrate understanding of the fact that language may need to be adjusted to suit different situations and relationships (for example, formal and informal language, different text types). They explain how French has its own rules for pronunciation, non-verbal communication and grammar. They use terms such as verb, adjective and gender for talking about language and learning. Students identify ways in which languages are connected with cultures, and how the French language, like their own, reflects ways of behaving and thinking as well as ways of using language.

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).

Strands and sub-strands

A set of sub-strands has been identified within each strand, which reflects dimensions of language use and the related content to be taught and learned. The strands and sub-strands do not operate in isolation but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts. The relative contribution of each sub-strand differs for described languages, pathways and bands of learning. The sub-strands are further differentiated according to a set of 'threads' that support the internal organisation of content in each sub-strand. These 'threads' are designed to capture (1) range and variety in the scope of learning and (2) a means for expressing the progression of content across the learning sequences.

Year 3 and 4 Level Description

The nature of the learners

At this level, children are developing awareness of their social worlds and of their memberships of various groups including of the French class. They are developing literacy capabilities in English, such as writing in the Roman alphabet, and this assists to some degree in learning French. They benefit from varied, activity-based learning that builds on their interests and capabilities and makes connections with other areas of learning.

French language learning and use

A balance between language **knowledge** and language **use** is established. Activities that focus on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are integrated with purposeful, varied communicative activities. The development of oral proficiency at this stage continues to rely on rich language input. Learners engage in a lot of listening, developing active-listening and comprehension skills, using contextual, grammatical, phonic and non-verbal cues. The language they hear is authentic with modification, involving familiar vocabulary and simple structures. The balance between listening and speaking gradually shifts as learners are supported to use the language themselves in familiar contexts and situations. They exchange simple ideas and information, negotiate predictable activities and interactions, and participate in shared tasks, performance and play. They continue to build vocabulary that can be adapted for different purposes. They control simple grammatical forms with some accuracy to communicate in familiar contexts.

Contexts of interaction

The context in which students interact is primarily the language classroom and the school environment, with some sharing of their learning at home. They also have some access to wider communities of French speakers and resources through virtual and digital technology. The familiarity and routine dimension of the classroom context provide scaffolding and opportunities for language practice and experimentation.

Texts and resources

Learners develop literacy skills through interacting with a range of spoken, written, visual and multimodal texts. Imaginative and interactive texts such as picture books, stories, puppet play, songs and computer games introduce them to the expressive and cultural dimensions of French. Procedural, informative and descriptive texts, such as timetables, tuckshop orders or class profiles, show how language is used to organise, to describe and to 'get things done'. Learners may have access to resources developed for children in France, such as television programs, advertisements or web pages, as a way of developing cultural knowledge.

Features of French language use

Learning French contributes to the process of making sense of the children's worlds that characterises this stage of development. As they encounter French language and culture they understand that French and English have many similarities and also some interesting differences. They notice features of French communication such as the use of gestures, facial expressions, intonation patterns and polite forms of address. They make comparisons with their own ways of communicating. This leads them to think about **identity** and **difference** and about what it means to speak more than one language.

Level of support

This stage of learning involves extensive support. This is primarily provided by the teacher, who provides instruction, explanations, examples, repetition, reinforcement and feedback. Tasks and activities are carefully scaffolded and resourced. Time is allowed for experimentation, drafting and redrafting. Learners are supported to self-monitor and reflect on their learning.

The role of English

Learners are supported to use French as much as possible for classroom routines, social interactions, structured learning tasks, and language experimentation and practice. English is used for discussion, explanation and reflection, enabling learners to develop a language for sharing ideas about language and culture systems. It enables them to ask questions to support their learning and to reflect on the experience of moving between languages and cultures. Using both French and English in the classroom develops a sense of what it means to be bilingual.

Year 3 and 4 Content Descriptions

Communicating

Socialising

Participate in routine exchanges such as asking each other how they are, offering wishes and sharing information about aspects of their personal worlds.

[Key concepts: communication, politeness, friendship; Key processes: interacting, listening, questioning, responding]

Make statements, ask questions and collaborate in shared tasks such as science experiments, cooking or craft activities, building collections or swapping items.

[Key concepts: collaboration, creativity, discovery; Key processes: contributing, collecting, exchanging]

Follow the teacher's instructions and use simple questions, statements and gestures to support own learning, such as asking for help or permission or attracting attention.

[Key concepts: learning strategies, support; Key processes: requesting, clarifying, responding]

Informing

Locate specific points of information in different types of texts relating to social and natural worlds.

[Key concepts: community, family, friends, environment; Key processes: focused reading, information selection and organisation]

Present factual information about self, others, and home and school life, using graphic support such as photos, maps or charts.

[Key concepts: home, school, information; Key processes: selecting, presenting, comparing]

Creating

Participate in interactive stories and performances, acting out responses, identifying favourite elements, and making simple statements about characters or themes.

[Key concepts: response, action, expression; Key processes: participating, imagining, interpreting]

Create short imaginative texts that allow for exploration and enjoyment of language.

[Key concepts: fantasy, imagination; Key processes: experimenting, playing, creating, performing]

Translating

Translate high-frequency words and expressions in simple texts such as captions, story titles or recurring lines in a story, noticing which ones are difficult to interpret.

[Key concepts: translation, meaning, culture; Key processes: noticing, explaining, comparing]

Create bilingual versions of texts such as picture dictionaries, action games or captions for images.

[Key concepts: translation, meaning; Key processes: selecting, code-mixing, explaining]

Reflecting

Notice what looks or feels similar or different to own language and culture when interacting in French.

[Key concepts: communication, difference, respect; Key processes: noticing, comparing, reflecting]

Explore their own sense of identity, including elements such as family, friends and interests, and ways of using language with different people.

[Key concepts: identity, friends, groups; Key processes: noticing, describing, identifying]

Understanding

Systems of Language

Experiment with the pronunciation of vowel sounds, letter combinations and intonation patterns, and recognise and write high-frequency words and expressions in familiar contexts.

[Key concepts: pronunciation, accent, spelling, writing; Key processes: alphabetic recognition, discriminating sounds, recognising words]

Notice and apply elements of French grammar such as word order, gender and singular/plural forms, adverbs, pronouns and prepositions in simple spoken and written texts.

[Key concepts: sentence, gender, number; Key processes: recognising, applying, naming]

Notice differences between simple spoken, written and multimodal French texts used in familiar contexts, and compare with similar texts in English.

[Key concepts: mode, medium, language features; Key processes: noticing, comparing, describing, explaining]

Language variation and change

Understand that different ways of using French reflect different regions and countries, different relationships and different ways of making meaning.

[Key concepts: variation, register, tenor; Key processes: observing, explaining]

Understand that languages change over time and influence each other, and that French has influenced many languages, including English.

[Key concepts: influence, change, exchange; Key processes: identifying, classifying, interpreting]

Know that French is an important global language used by communities in many countries around the world and that it has connections with several other languages.

[Key concepts: global language, culture, identity, communication; Key processes: collecting data, mapping, grouping]

Role of language and culture

Notice differences between French, Australian and other cultures' practices and how these are reflected in language.

[Key concepts: culture as process and practice, beliefs, values; Key processes: identifying, describing, discussing]