

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 comprehend a range of spoken, written, and multimodal texts on familiar topics, including home life, friends and classroom activities. They use Italian to communicate and to interact, for example, to exchange greetings and to address people, using appropriate language and pronunciation, and often formulaic expressions. They ask and respond to simple questions, by selecting between alternatives provided, by using short spoken responses which may consist of incomplete or partial Italian phrases and structures, or by using a key word to convey a whole idea. They talk about self, family, people, places, routine, school life and their own interests and preferences, for example, Com'è la tua casa? La mia casa è grande, Ci sono due camere da letto e due bagni. Mi piace la mia camera da letto. They use short sentences, reorganising known language to fit personal responses, for example, Giochi domani?Sì/no/Forse. Students understand short written texts, using visual cues, prediction and questioning to decipher meaning. They recall key ideas and events, recognise meanings, and respond meaningfully. Students create written texts of a few sentences using familiar language and structures.

Students demonstrate an understanding of the fact that language is used differently in different situations and contexts. They know the importance of using appropriate language when interacting in Italian, including informal/formal language, and the use of titles and gestures. They vary their responses and statements by choosing adjectives and adverbs, and by combining sentences. They demonstrate understanding of basic Italian grammatical rules, such as the fact that nouns have masculine or feminine gender and singular and plural forms, and that nouns, adjectives and articles need to agree. They identify similarities and differences in the patterns of Italian language compared to English and other familiar languages. They create texts that show understanding of how ideas are connected and how images support the meaning of texts. They make connections to personal experience when describing characters, events or cultural practices and behaviours encountered in texts. They identify cultural differences in ways of communicating and describe similarities and differences between their own and other cultures.

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 the Italian class. They are developing literacy capabilities in English, such as writing in the Roman alphabet, which assists to some degree in learning Italian. They benefit from varied, activity-based learning that builds on their interests and capabilities and makes connections with other areas of learning.

Italian language learning and use

The development of oral proficiency requires rich language input in different modes and from different sources. Children develop active listening skills and respond through action-related talk. They strengthen their comprehension skills, using contextual and grammatical cues as well as phonic and non-verbal cues. The language they encounter is authentic, with modification when necessary, involving familiar vocabulary and simple structures. Children are supported to use the language themselves in familiar contexts and situations, such as exchanging simple ideas and information, negotiating predictable activities and interactions, and participating in shared tasks, performance and play. They continue to build vocabulary which can be adapted for different purposes, and to control simple grammatical forms to communicate in familiar contexts.

Contexts of interaction

The contexts in which learners interact in using and learning Italian are primarily local: the classroom, school, home and community, with some access to wider communities of Italian speakers and resources through virtual and digital technologies.

Texts and resources

Children develop literacy skills and textual knowledge through supported interaction with a range of spoken, written, visual and multimodal texts. Imaginative and interactive texts (such as picture books, stories, puppet plays, songs and games) engage the expressive and cultural dimensions of language. Procedural, informational and descriptive texts (such as negotiated classroom rules, planned activities, and family and class profiles) encourage students to use language to 'get things done'.

Features of Italian language use

Students experiment with pronunciation and intonation in Italian, noticing similarities and differences with other familiar languages. They focus on structures and grammatical rules such as those relating to the use of possessive pronouns, prepositions and negation. They extend their knowledge of definite and indefinite articles, and of gender and singular/plural forms.

As they encounter Italian language and culture they make comparisons with their own language(s) and culture(s) and consider their own ways of communicating. This leads to exploring concepts of commonality and difference, and of identity, and to thinking about what it means to speak more than one language.

Level of support

Children's grammatical knowledge and accuracy in spoken and written Italian are developed both through form-focused activities and through opportunities to apply this knowledge in meaningful task activity, as they build their communicative skills, confidence and fluency. Teachers provide models and examples; introduce language, concepts and resources needed to manage and complete tasks; make time for experimentation and drafting; and provide support for self-monitoring and reflection.

The role of English

The use of English, when appropriate, provides support opportunities for discussion and exploration of ideas which help children to build a conceptual frame and metalanguage for talking about language and culture, and about their experiences as learners moving between languages and cultures.

Year 3 and 4 Content Descriptions

Communicating		Understanding
<p>Socialising Interact and socialise with the teacher and peers to exchange personal information and describe people, places, things and everyday routines relating to self, school and home. [Key concepts: routine, home; Key processes: describing, interacting, responding]</p> <p>Participate in collaborative action in class experiences and activities. [Key concepts: occasion, community; Key processes: describing, inviting]</p> <p>Participate in everyday transactions to obtain goods. [Key concepts: need, desire; Key processes: deciding, negotiating]</p> <p>Participate in everyday classroom activities by asking permission, requesting help, asking how to say or write something, asking for repetition, praising or complimenting. [Key concepts: collaboration, school life; Key processes: negotiating, discussing, connecting]</p> <p>Informing Obtain and process factual information about people, routines, responsibilities and interests. [Key concepts: routine, events, time; Key processes: identifying, recording, categorising, selecting]</p> <p>Give factual information about people, objects, places and events in texts supported by graphics or illustrations. [Key concepts: information, fact; Key processes: describing, presenting]</p>	<p>Creating Listen to, view and read a range of imaginative texts for children, and discuss messages and impressions. [Key concepts: story, drama, message; Key processes: viewing, reading, predicting, describing, discussing; Key text types: narrative, song, poetry]</p> <p>Create short, simple imaginative texts for different audiences. [Key concepts: character, narrative; Key processes: interacting, creating]</p> <p>Translating Translate texts to compare meanings and share understandings about aspects of Italian language and culture that are different from English. [Key concepts: translation, comparison; Key processes: translating, explaining]</p> <p>Create simple bilingual texts. [Key concepts: meaning, equivalence; Key processes: comparing, explaining]</p> <p>Reflecting Compare experiences, noticing how these are influenced by language and culture and how readily they may be expressed in Italian. [Key concept: assumption; Key process: comparing]</p> <p>Express aspects of own identity reflected in various group and community memberships, including their developing bilingual identity. [Key concept: membership; Key process: representing]</p>	<p>Systems of Language Experiment with pronunciation and intonation and use rules of spelling.</p> <p>Use key grammatical structures to form simple sentences, including the use of possessive pronouns, prepositions, definite and indefinite articles, and gender and singular/plural forms.</p> <p>Recognise how grammatical structures are used to form simple texts.</p> <p>Language variation and change Understand that language use varies according to the participants' age, gender and relationship, and the context of use.</p> <p>Understand that languages change with use over time.</p> <p>Understand that Italian is spoken in a variety of forms within and outside of Italy.</p> <p>Role of language and culture Compare and reflect on different cultural practices and the ways in which language use reflects culture-specific ideas.</p>