

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.

Foundation to Year 2 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 2, students use Italian to communicate with their teacher and peers through action-related talk and play. They demonstrate comprehension by responding both verbally and non-verbally. They imitate simple words and phrases. They respond to familiar games and routines such as questions about self and family (for example, Come ti chiami? Dove abiti?), and choose among options, for example, in response to questions such as Vuoi il gelato o la caramella? They produce learnt sounds and formulaic expressions (for example, È bello! Non mi piace), or partial phrases, often providing only part of the required response in Italian or using a key word to convey a whole idea. They experiment with and approximate Italian pronunciation, for example, producing vowel sounds and 'c' and 'ch' pronunciation with some accuracy. They differentiate between statements and questions according to intonation. They make meaning using paralinguistic and contextual support such as pictures, gestures and props. They write descriptions, lists, labels and captions, using familiar words and phrases selected from modelled language, for example, rearranging sentence patterns such as Ho sei anni. Sono bravo. Il gelato è buono.

Students know that Italian is the national language of Italy. They identify the 21 letters of the Italian alphabet. They know that simple sentences follow a pattern, and that nouns require an article and are gendered either masculine or feminine. They demonstrate understanding of the different ways of addressing friends, family and teachers/other adults. They identify patterns in Italian words and phrases and make comparisons between Italian and English. They know that languages borrow words from each other and provide examples of Italian words and expressions that are used in various English-speaking contexts. They identify similarities and differences in the cultural practices of Italians and Australians. They understand that they have their own language(s) and culture(s), and that they are also learners of Italian language and culture.

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.

Foundation to Year 2 Level Description

The nature of the learners

Children enter the early years of schooling with established communication skills in one or more languages and varying degrees of early literacy capability. For young students, learning typically focuses on their immediate world of family, home, school, friends and neighbourhood. They are learning how to socialise with new people, share with others, and participate in structured routines and activities at school. Typically they have little to no experience of Italian language and culture.

Italian language learning and use

Students use Italian for social interactions such as greetings, asking and answering simple questions, responding to instructions, singing songs, and taking turns in games and simple shared tasks. The focus is on listening to the sounds, shapes and patterns of Italian through activities such as rhymes, songs, clapping and action games. Repetition and recycling help children to identify frequently used words and simple phrases, and to recognise the purpose and intention of simple texts. They identify and use Italian non-verbal communication strategies and experiment with formulaic expressions and one or two-word responses to prompts and cues. Through creative play and action-related talk, children begin to notice that language can behave differently in different situations and that Italian speakers communicate in some ways that are different from their own. Students are encouraged to notice that they are part of a connected world which includes many languages and cultures, and they begin to become aware of themselves as communicators in particular cultural contexts and communities.

Contexts of interaction

Children interact with each other and the teacher, with some access to wider school and community members. Virtual and digital resources provide access to additional Italian language and cultural experiences, connecting learners' social worlds with those of Italian-speaking children.

Texts and resources

The transition from spoken to written language is scaffolded through shared exploration of simple texts and language features. Children progress from supported comprehension and a small number of high-frequency and personally significant sight words and phrases to more elaborated simple texts which include a context, purpose and audience. They use grapho-phonetic, grammatical, cultural and contextual cues to comprehend texts and communicative interactions. Writing skills progress from labelling and copying words, to writing simple texts using familiar vocabulary, and language structures and features. Written texts that students experience include children's stories, big books, descriptions, recounts and labels.

Features of Italian language use

Students focus on the sounds of the alphabet, in particular the vowel sounds, and 'c' (*ciao*) and 'ch' (*Chi?*), and on intonation patterns and the use of accents. Students are also introduced to nouns and pronouns. They learn simple sentence structure using subject-verb-object order as well as how to form questions. They explore the idea of masculine and feminine gender, how to use singular and plural forms, the negative form *non* and the placement of adjectives.

Level of support

Students' learning is highly experiential and activity-related, and is supported by the use of concrete materials and resources, visual supports, gestures and body language. Scaffolding includes modelling, monitoring and moderating by the teacher; provision of multiple and varied sources of input; opportunities for revisiting, recycling and reviewing; and continuous cues, feedback and encouragement.

The role of English

Children are encouraged to use Italian whenever possible. They use English to talk about differences and similarities they notice between Italian, English and other known; about how they feel when they hear or use Italian; and about how they view different languages and the people who speak them. English is used by both the teacher and learners for talking about the language and about learning, and for noticing, questioning and explaining.

Foundation to Year 2 Content Descriptions

Communicating		Understanding
<p>Socialising Interact with the teacher and peers to greet, to introduce themselves, and to name and describe favourite things, friends, family members and special talents, through action-related talk and play. [Key concepts: self, family, friendship; Key processes: participating, playing, observing]</p> <p>Participate in shared action with peers and teacher, contributing ideas through key words, images, movement and song. [Key concept: exchange; Key processes: sharing, deciding together]</p> <p>Participate in real or simulated transactions using simple language and gestures in activities and games involving buying and selling. [Key concept: exchange; Key processes: exchanging, describing]</p> <p>Participate in classroom routines, games, instructions and shared activities. [Key concepts: routine, play, sharing, reward; Key process: expressing preferences]</p> <p>Informing Locate specific items of information in texts using early literacy skills. [Key concepts: text, observation, number, meaning; Key processes: noticing, decoding, selecting]</p> <p>Give factual information about known people, everyday objects, family celebrations and personal experiences. [Key concepts: self, ownership/possession, celebration; Key process: conveying information]</p>	<p>Creating Participate in shared reading/viewing of short imaginative texts and respond by drawing, miming, performing and other forms of expression. [Key concepts: story, imagination, response, character; Key processes: participating, responding, predicting, performing; Key text type: narrative/story]</p> <p>Create stories and perform imaginary experiences. [Key concepts: performance, expression; Key processes: miming, performing]</p> <p>Translating Share with others what they can express in Italian, and explain how meanings are similar or different. [Key concepts: code, translation; Key processes: comparing, explaining]</p> <p>Create a personal or shared record of 'interesting' words in Italian. [Key concepts: similarity, difference; Key process: comparing]</p> <p>Reflecting Begin noticing what is 'new' or 'interesting' in Italian language and culture and recognising similarities and differences between Italian and Australian cultural practices and related language use. [Key concepts: self, other, respect; Key processes: noticing, identifying]</p> <p>Identify and describe aspects of self in relation to others. [Key concepts: family, self, identity; Key processes: connecting, relating, observing]</p>	<p>Systems of Language Reproduce the sounds of the Italian language.</p> <p>Notice and use some aspects of the Italian language system, including gender forms, simple sentence structures and the placement of adjectives.</p> <p>Understand that language is organised as texts.</p> <p>Language variation and change Recognise that different words are used in Italian to address and greet different people according to relationship, setting and time of the day.</p> <p>Recognise that Italian and English borrow words from each other.</p> <p>Understand that Italian is one of many community languages spoken in Australia including Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, Asian languages and world languages.</p> <p>Role of language and culture Notice and reflect (mainly in English) on different cultural practices and the specific ways of using language in different cultures.</p>