

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 the teacher and peers in regular classroom routines and structured interactions. They understand and respond to instructions related to classroom organisation and activities, for example, ペア になって ください。大きい こ え で いて ください。 They use formulaic and rehearsed language to exchange information about their personal worlds and in familiar interactions such as praising or encouraging one another, for example, がんばって。 They use language spontaneously in simple familiar communicative exchanges, for example, やったー！ だいじょうぶ？。 They respond to simple questions using short spoken statements, for example, いつ ですか。なに が すき ですか。 They use counter classifiers in response to questions such as なん人にん、なん月がつ、なんじ、なんさい。 Students identify specific items of information, such as facts about or key characteristics of people, when listening to or viewing texts such as short stories, weather reports or video clips. They use cues such as context, visual images and familiar vocabulary to assist comprehension. They create short spoken informative and descriptive texts related to their personal world with the support of modelled language, scaffolded examples and resources such as word lists. They describe people and events using adjectives, time-related vocabulary and appropriate verb forms, such as ます、ましよう、ました and ません。 They read and write the 46 hiragana, including long vowels (for example, おとうさん、おおきい), voiced sounds (for example, かぞく、たべま す), and blended sounds as formulaic language (for example, きょう、でしよう), as well as high-frequency kanji such as 月、日、先生。 They apply word order (subject–object–verb) in simple sentences. They comprehend short written texts such as captions, labels, signs and stories that use familiar and repetitive language. They translate simple texts using classroom resources such as charts or word lists, noticing that some words and expressions do not translate easily. Students identify examples of cultural differences between ways of communicating in Japanese and in their own language(s).

Students identify both vowel and vowel–consonant sounds of hiragana, recognising that vowel sounds can be elongated and that this can change meaning. They identify ways in which rhythm is used to chunk phrases within a sentence. Students use the hiragana chart to support their reading and writing, recognising its systematic nature. They demonstrate awareness of the predictable nature of pronunciation. They know the role of particles, for example, は、を、と、も、に; the rules for simple verb tense conjugations; and how to create questions using the sentence-ending particle か。 They understand and use the rules and phonetic changes that apply to counter classifiers, for example, はっさい、ひとり、ふたり。 They identify language variations that occur according to the age and relationship of participants, and according to the situation, for example, なまえ/おなまえ、はし/おはし。 They demonstrate their understanding of the importance in Japanese of non-verbal communication such as the use of gestures, for example, bowing to replace words and to communicate meaning. Students identify ways in which Japanese language reflects ways of behaving and thinking.

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 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 Japanese class. They are further developing literacy capabilities in English, and while this highlights differences between writing in alphabetic and character-based languages, it also assists to some degree in learning Japanese. They benefit from varied, activity-based learning that builds on their interests and capabilities and makes connections with other areas of learning.

Japanese language learning and use

The development of oral proficiency at this stage continues to rely on rich language input in different modes. Learners listen and respond by actions to build active listening and comprehension skills. They participate in classroom routines and tasks and use some spontaneous language to describe feelings related to classroom activities. They participate in games and activities and engage with texts through teacher-generated questions and prompting. They give short presentations related to their personal worlds, including simple descriptions. With support they create labels, captions and short sentences. Language experience and input include authentic texts with some modification, familiar vocabulary and simple sentence structures. Children are supported to expand their use of the language in familiar interactions and situations, such as exchanging simple information and participating in shared tasks, performances and play. They continue to control simple grammatical forms and build vocabulary that can be adapted for different purposes. Students learn the use of diacritic marks to create voiced sounds. They learn to produce and pronounce characters with the support of flashcards, mnemonics, digital games and exercises. They read and write words written in hiragana and in high-frequency kanji with support and scaffolding. There is a combined focus on grammar, vocabulary building, pronunciation, and non-verbal and cultural dimensions of language use through purposeful communicative activities and experiences.

Contexts of interaction

The context in which learners interact is primarily the language classroom and the school environment, with some access to wider communities of Japanese speakers and resources through digital technology.

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 develop the expressive and cultural dimensions of language. To support the development of cultural knowledge, learners may have access to resources developed for Japanese children, such as storybooks, songs, television programs or interactive games.

Features of Japanese language use

Learners recognise the predictable nature of pronunciation in Japanese and apply their knowledge of sound–letter associations to spell new words. They recognise and use elements of grammar such as simple verb forms, adjectives, interrogatives and some particles to understand and create simple spoken and written texts. They use appropriate word order and sentence structures, including time, counter classifiers, and present, past and negative forms. Learning Japanese contributes to learners' general literacy development and to the process of making sense of their worlds that characterises this stage of their development. As they encounter elements of Japanese language they make comparisons with their own language(s) and culture(s) and consider their own ways of communicating.

Level of support

This stage of learning involves extensive support. Tasks are carefully scaffolded. Teachers provide models and examples; introduce language, concepts and resources needed to manage and complete the task; make time for experimentation, drafting and redrafting; and provide support for self-monitoring and reflection. Learners use the hiragana chart as a systematic framework to support reading and writing.

The role of English

Learners are supported to use Japanese as much as possible for classroom routines, social interaction, structured learning tasks and language experimentation and practice. English is used for discussion, explanation and reflection, enabling learners to develop a language (metalanguage) for sharing ideas about language and culture systems and experience. Using both Japanese and English in the classroom develops awareness of what it means to be bilingual.

Year 3 and 4 Content Descriptions

Communicating

Socialising

Interact with the teacher and peers to exchange information about self, family, friends and favourite things, and likes and dislikes, and to express praise, support and respect for others. [Key concepts: communication, information, self, family, respect; Key processes: introducing, interacting, describing]

Participate in guided tasks that involve following instructions and cooperating with peers, such as sports and craft activities.

[Key concepts: collaboration, participation, task, performance; Key processes: following instructions, rehearsing, performing, presenting]

Follow teacher instructions and directions by responding to questions and requests, and use simple questions and statements to ask permission and to show interest and appreciation.

[Key concepts: interaction, negotiation, response; Key processes: responding, requesting, rehearsing]

Informing

Locate and process specific points of information in familiar types of written, spoken, multimodal and digital texts associated with people, places and objects.

[Key concepts: information, research, data; Key processes: locating, collecting, classifying, recognising]

Present factual information relating to familiar home, community and cultural contexts, using graphic and digital support such as photos, tables, lists and charts.

[Key concepts: family, relationships, routines; Key processes: describing, explaining, annotating]

Creating

Participate in and respond to imaginative texts such as interactive stories and performances, for example by acting out responses or making simple statements to identify and compare favourite characters and elements.

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

Create and present imaginative texts for a range of audiences that use familiar expressions and modelled language and allow for exploration and enjoyment of language, cultural expression and performance.

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

Translating

Interpret and explain simple interactions in Japanese, noticing linguistic and cultural features.

[Key concepts: meaning, culture, translation, interpretation; Key processes: identifying, explaining, interpreting, comparing]

Create bilingual versions of familiar texts such as songs, conversations, picture dictionaries, captions for images and displays, or photo stories.

[Key concepts: bilingualism, expression, code-mixing; Key processes: translating, performing, creating, adapting]

Reflecting

Notice what is similar or different to own language and culture when interacting in Japanese in different contexts and situations.

[Key concepts: respect, culture, similarity and difference, communication; Key processes: identifying, explaining, experimenting, reflecting]

Notice how ways of communicating and behaving reflect identity and relationships.

[Key concepts: identity, community, family, culture; Key processes: selecting, creating, representing, comparing]

Understanding

Systems of Language

Understand that hiragana symbols can be combined to represent words.

[Key concepts: consonant, vowel, kana, foot, mora, rhythm, pronunciation; Key processes: recognising, differentiating, demonstrating]

Recognise the systematic order within the hiragana character set; commence hiragana script writing and recognise and write frequently used kanji.

[Key concepts: character, kana and kanji, stroke order, font; Key processes: recognising, tracing, reading, writing]

Understand and identify elements of basic grammar and sentence structure and interaction patterns. [Key concepts: verb conjugation, particles, word order, vocabulary, counter; Key processes: describing, indicating, identifying, questioning]

Recognise that texts such as stories, games and conversations have particular language features and textual conventions.

[Key concepts: text, genre, language features, mode; Key processes: comparing, analysing, recognising]

Language variation and change

Understand that language varies according to the age and relationship of those using it, and according to the situation in which it is being used.

[Key concepts: register, context, variation; Key processes: observing, recognising, reflecting]

Recognise that Japanese is the official language of Japan and one of the major languages of the Asia-Pacific region.

[Key concepts: language status, standard language, multilingualism; Key processes: recognising, comparing, classifying]

Role of language and culture

Understand that the ways people use language reflect where and how they live and what is important to them.

[Key concepts: cultural expression, values, respect, gestures; Key processes: observing, comparing, discussing, interpreting]