

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 written and spoken Spanish for classroom interactions, to carry out transactions and to share information about personal interests, relate experiences and express feelings. They use modelled sentence structures to ask and respond to questions (for example, ¿quién?/¿quiénes?, ¿por qué? ¿por dónde? sí, por supuesto), seek clarification (for example, ¿Ella dice que apaguemos la computadora?) and give advice (for example, No debes comer tantos dulces). When interacting, students use appropriate pronunciation of Spanish-specific sounds such as ci/ca and ga/gi, and intonation patterns. They gather information relating to language and culture and present it in different formats. They describe characters, experiences and ideas encountered in texts, and create short imaginative texts using structured models and descriptive and expressive vocabulary (divertido, alto, gordo, grande). They use regular and common irregular verbs in present tense (for example, estudio español, voy a mi casa), simple past tense (for example, Ayer comí helado, Fueron a la cafetería) and near future (for example, Voy a ir a la playa, Vamos a comer frutas). Students use pronouns (for example, él/ella nosotros/as ellos/ellas, usted/ustedes/ vosotros/as), prepositions (for example, debajo de, por, al lado de, cerca de), adverbs (for example, muy, poco, bien, mal, lentamente), agreement of nouns and adjectives (for example, gente simpática, juegos divertidos), and adverbs to mark time (for example, hoy, ayer, mañana, ya, todavía) and place (for example, dentro de, encima de, a la izquierda, a la derecha). They apply rules of punctuation such as question and exclamation marks (for example, ¿cuándo?, ¡cuidado!) and accents (for example, sofá, árbol, música). They translate and interpret short texts, identifying aspects of the Spanish language and culture that are similar or different to their own and create bilingual texts for the classroom and school community. They describe their own experiences of using Spanish and identify ways in which learning and using Spanish' may impact on their own identity.

Students know that Spanish has its own rules for pronunciation and grammar and that language use must be adjusted to suit different contexts, situations and relationships (for example, ¡Hasta pronto Doña Clara! ¡Adiós chicos!). They use metalanguage to explain basic features of language, texts and grammar, making connections with English terms they are familiar with such as 'verb', 'adverb', 'noun' and 'agreement'. Students identify Spanish as a global language and describe the distribution of communities of Spanish speakers in different countries and regions. They identify ways that languages change through contact with other languages and due to new technologies, and give examples of Spanish words used in English (for example, 'patio', 'chocolate') and words used in Spanish that are borrowed from other languages (for example, chofer, carné, tenis, golf, corner, kiwi, parking, gol, tiquet, chao). They reflect on the language they use at home, at school and in the community and identify how young Spanish speakers would use language in the same contexts.

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 5 and 6 Level Description

The nature of the learners

At this level, students are widening their social networks, experiences and communication repertoires in both their first language and Spanish. They continue to need guidance and participate in structured, collaborative tasks that both recycle and extend language. Students are gaining greater independence and becoming more conscious of their peers and social context. They are gaining greater awareness of the world around them, and noticing additional similarities and differences between Spanish language and culture and their own.

Spanish language learning and use

Learners use Spanish with peers and the teacher for a widening range of purposes: exchanging information, expressing ideas and feelings, performing, and responding to experiences and resources from the Spanish-speaking world. Learners' ability to communicate is developing in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity. As they draw on a growing range of vocabulary resources and grammatical structures, their pronunciation, intonation and phrasing steadily improve and they use an increasing range of body language, such as hand gestures, used by Spanish speakers. Shared tasks provide a context for purposeful language experience and experimentation. Focused attention on language structures and systems, literacy skills development and exploration of cultural elements of communication are conducted at least in part in Spanish. Learners use digital media and social networks to support their learning in increasingly independent ways, such as exchanging resources and information with one another, with young people of the same age in Spanish-speaking communities, and with students in other settings who are also learning Spanish. In doing this, they may access music and media resources, maintain blogs and web pages, and use online forums.

Oracy development at this level includes active listening to input from different sources (including different varieties of Spanish) and extending conversational and interactional skills. This involves initiating and sustaining conversations, turn-taking, 'reading' language for cultural and contextual meaning, building on others' contributions, making appropriate responses and adjustments, and engaging in debate and discussion. Individual and group oral presentation and performance skills are developed through researching and organising information, and structuring and rehearsing presentations. Literacy development involves more independent interaction with a wider range of texts. Learners draw on their growing grammatical and lexical resources to compose and comprehend more complex language. They use a range of cues and decoding strategies to assist comprehension and to make connections between ideas and language within and between texts. They write more accurately and fluently for a wider range of purposes and audiences.

Contexts of interaction

Learners use Spanish with one another and with the teacher for an increasing range of purposes. They have some access to Spanish speakers and cultural experiences in wider contexts and communities through the use of ICT. At this level, language development and use are typically incorporated into collaborative and interactive tasks, games and learning activities. Learners begin to use more Spanish spontaneously when interacting with one another.

Texts and resources

Learners engage with a growing range of spoken and written texts, including published texts such as readers, songs and computer games, as well as teacher-generated resources such as language games, exercises and presentations. In addition, learners have some access to Spanish language and culture through texts created for young people in Spanish-speaking communities, such as websites, stories, music clips, cartoons and television programs.

Features of Spanish language use

Learners use an increasing range of vocabulary, become more confident in terms of pronunciation and continue to build grammatical and textual knowledge. They apply phonic knowledge to unfamiliar language and notice the relationship between accents and stress or intonation. They use present, past and near future tenses to describe or locate actions. They use comparative forms and apply rules of agreement between subjects and verbs and between nouns and adjectives. They use appropriate verb forms and intonation patterns to exclaim, make a statement or ask a question. They develop a metalanguage to describe patterns, rules and variations in language structures. As they use Spanish to interact in different situations, learners develop an understanding of how language and culture influence each other. They recognise how language reflects cultural values and experiences and how grammatical forms and vocabulary choices affect the meaning that is made. This offers the opportunity for reflection on their own ways of communicating and using language, and also on personal and community identities, stereotypes and perspectives. Learners begin to experience and reflect on the challenges involved in moving between languages and different ways of making meaning.

Level of support

While learners work more independently at this level, ongoing support is incorporated into task activity. Systematic feedback and review assist the interactive process of learning. Support includes provision of models, stimulus materials, scaffolded opportunities for reflection, and resources such as word charts, vocabulary lists, dictionaries and electronic reference materials. Learning tasks and activities take account of both learners' current level of Spanish capability and their more general cognitive and social levels of development.

The role of English

While the use of Spanish in the classroom increases at this level, the use of English for discussion, reflection and explanation ensures the continued development of learners' knowledge base and intercultural capability.

Year 5 and 6 Content Descriptions

Communicating		Understanding
Socialising Interact using descriptive and expressive language to share interests, special celebrations and leisure activities, and to express feelings, state preferences and give opinions. [Key concepts: friendship, leisure, interests; Key processes: expressing, sharing, comparing] Collaborate with peers to plan and conduct different elements of shared tasks, transactions or activities. [Key concept: cooperation; Key processes: planning, participating, making, transacting] Interact in class activities and routines by asking and responding to questions, asking for clarification and making suggestions. [Key concepts: routine, responsibility; Key processes: participating, sharing, taking turns]	Creating Share and compare understandings and opinions about ideas encountered in imaginative Spanish-language texts such as works of art, fables, performances and television programs. [Key concepts: plot, idea, moral; Key processes: adapting, comparing, responding] Produce a variety of texts such as scripted performances, raps and digital stories using imaginary characters, places, ideas and events. [Key concepts: imagination, drama; Key processes: performing, representing] Translating Translate simple texts that provide comparisons between cultural aspects of meaning-making in Spanish and English and note how language cannot always be directly translated. [Key concept: meaning; Key processes: translating, comparing, explaining] Create own bilingual texts and learning resources, such as displays, posters, word banks and glossaries for the classroom/school environment. [Key concepts: translation, explanation; Key processes: identifying, selecting, modifying]	Systems of Language Attend to the pronunciation of sounds and intonation patterns used in social interactions and apply writing conventions such as question and exclamation marks. [Key concepts: auditory discrimination, stress, intonation, punctuation; Key processes: listening, reading, recognising] Understand and use grammatical elements such as tenses, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs and noun-adjective agreements to construct simple texts for different purposes. [Key concepts: grammatical rules, patterns and irregularities; Key processes: applying rules, understanding, vocabulary building] Identify how different Spanish texts such as comics, cartoons, magazines or emails use language in ways that create different effects. [Key concepts: genre, structure, audience; Key processes: noticing, explaining]
Informing Listen to, view and read texts in order to identify aspects of life in Spanish-speaking contexts and communities. [Key concepts: lifestyle, diversity; Key processes: collating, connecting, comparing] Present information about aspects of language and culture in the Spanish-speaking world for specific audiences, using diagrams, charts, timelines and guided reports. [Key concepts: lifestyle, people, places; Key processes: organising, informing]	Reflecting Compare ways of communicating in particular Australian and Spanish-speaking contexts. [Key concepts: diversity, reaction; Key processes: observing, considering, reflecting,] Discuss how it feels to interact in a different language, what they understand by 'identity', and whether learning Spanish has any effect on their sense of self. [Key concept: intracultural understanding; Key processes: identifying, describing]	Language variation and change Recognise that language use varies according to the contexts of situation and culture. [Key concepts: levels of formality, language, identity, variation; Key processes: observing, comparing] Understand that the Spanish language constantly changes due to contact with other languages and the impact of new technologies. [Key concepts: language contact, digital media; Key processes: observing, identifying, classifying] Recognise that the Spanish language has different forms, roles and functions in different contexts and communities. [Key concepts: diversity, language origins; Key processes: mapping, comparing, discussing]
		Role of language and culture Reflect on own language use at home, at school and in the community, considering how this may be interpreted by young Spanish speakers. [Key concepts: norms, standpoints; Key processes: observing, reflecting, comparing]