

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 7 and 8 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 8, students use written and spoken Spanish for classroom interactions, to carry out transactions and to exchange views and experiences with peers and others in a range of contexts. They use rehearsed and spontaneous language to give and follow instructions and engage in discussions, such as expressing or rejecting points of view (for example, ¿Estás de acuerdo?, verdadero/falso, ¿qué te parece?, ¿cuándo?, ¿cómo?, ¿por qué?). They apply appropriate pronunciation and rhythm in spoken Spanish to a range of sentence types (for example, ¿Nos vamos?, ¡Nos vamos!, Pasó por aquí/Paso por aquí), and use interrogative and imperative moods (for example, ¿Has comido? ¡Abre la puerta!). They locate, summarise and analyse information and ideas on topics of interest from a range of texts, and communicate information, different perspectives and their own opinions such as a mí me parece..., using different modes of presentation. They describe their responses to different imaginative texts by expressing opinions (for example, en mi opinión, personalmente yo prefiero, estoy de acuerdo), stating preferences (for example, después de pensarlo, yo..., prefiero más bien...es buena/mala idea), and comparing ways in which people, places and experiences are represented (for example, mejor que... peor que...más... menos). They draw on past experiences or future possibilities to create imaginative texts using regular (for example, caminar, beber, vivir) and irregular verbs (for example, estar, tener, ir) in a range of tenses including present (vivo), present perfect (he vivido), preterite (viví), imperfect (vivía) and future (viviré). They use descriptive vocabulary, such as numbers, adjectives (for example, generoso, simpático, listo, amistoso, azul, rosa, café) and adverbs (for example, generalmente, raramente, nunca), to extend and elaborate their texts. They use cohesive devices such as y, o, porque, cuando, por eso, pero, puesto que, debido a, y, pues, para and prepositions such as antes del atardecer, dentro de la casa in own language production to create cohesion. Students translate texts on familiar topics and produce texts in Spanish and English, comparing their different versions and considering possible explanations for variations. When participating in intercultural experiences they identify similarities and differences in language use and cultural expression. They identify significant people, places, events and influences in their lives and explain why these are important to their own sense of identity.

Students know that in Spanish there are words that are spelled and pronounced the same but that have different meanings, such as pila (pile or battery), and that a word often takes on a different meaning when an accent is added, for example, papá ('father') and papa ('potato'), and the definite article el and pronoun él ('he' or 'him'). They use metalanguage to explain features of language, texts and grammar and to identify how text structures and language features vary between different types of texts. Students explain how elements of communication such as gestures, facial expressions or the use of silence vary according to context, situation and relationships. They identify how Spanish both influences and is influenced by other languages and is spoken in a variety of forms in communities around the world. They explain why meanings and reactions vary according to the cultural assumptions that people bring to intercultural experiences and interactions.

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 7 and 8 Level Description

The nature of the learners

These years represent a transition to secondary school. Students in this sequence are continuing to study Spanish, bringing with them an established capability to interact in different situations, to engage with a variety of texts, and to communicate with some assistance about their immediate world and that of Spain and other Spanish-speaking communities. They have experience in analysing the major features of the language system and in reflecting on the nature of intercultural exchanges in which they are involved.

Spanish language learning and use

Spanish is used for classroom interactions and transactions, for creating and maintaining a class dynamic, for explaining and practising language forms, and for developing cultural understanding. Learners work both collaboratively and independently in Spanish, exploring a variety of texts (such as online forums, songs/raps, debates and role-plays) with particular reference to their current social, cultural and communicative interests. They share language knowledge and resources in small groups to plan, problem-solve, monitor and reflect. They use modelled and rehearsed language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and increasingly generate original language. They make cross-curricular connections and explore intercultural perspectives and experiences. They plan, draft and present imaginative, informative and persuasive texts; design interactive events and collaborative tasks; and participate in discussions and games. They use vocabulary and grammar with increasing accuracy, drafting and editing to improve structure and clarify meaning.

Contexts of interaction

The primary context for learning and using Spanish remains the language classroom; however, there may be increasing opportunities for interaction with peers in a range of Spanish-speaking communities through the use of technologies and social networks, partner-school arrangements and community connections. Learners have access to additional Spanish-language resources through websites, social media and radio streaming.

Texts and resources

Learners work with a variety of texts specifically designed for learning Spanish in schools, such as textbooks, videos, readers and online resources. They also access materials created for Spanish-speaking communities, such as films (subtitled), websites, magazines and advertisements, providing opportunities to make connections between texts and cultural contexts, perspectives and experiences.

Features of Spanish language use

Learners expand their range of vocabulary beyond their immediate world and familiar experiences. They make clearer distinctions between stress and intonation patterns to increase fluency and enhance expression. They develop broader grammatical knowledge, using present, past and future tenses of regular and irregular verbs to describe and sequence events. They recognise and apply characteristic features of additional types of texts. Learners develop an awareness of the diversity of languages and cultures in the Spanish-speaking world. They analyse more critically and imaginatively the relationship between language and culture, identifying cultural references in texts and considering how language reflects and influences perspectives and values. They make comparisons between their own language(s) and Spanish, and reflect on the complexities involved in moving between languages and cultural systems. They monitor and reflect on their own intercultural experience and capability as language learners, and identify their own personal and community practices that reflect cultural influences.

Level of support

Opportunities to review and consolidate prior learning are balanced against provision of engaging and relevant new experiences and connections. Learners are supported to develop increasing autonomy as language learners and users, and to self-monitor and adjust language in response to their experiences in different contexts.

The role of English

While Spanish is used in more extended and elaborated ways for classroom interactions and routines, task participation and structured discussion, English is used for more complex elements of instruction and for more substantive discussion, analysis and reflection. Learners continue to develop a metalanguage for thinking and talking about language, culture and identity and the experience of learning and using Spanish.

Year 7 and 8 Content Descriptions

Communicating

Socialising

Participate in a range of spoken, written and online interactions, for example, exchanging views and experiences, apologising, thanking, inviting or congratulating.
[Key concepts: relationship, experience, milestone, community; Key processes: experiencing, responding, connecting]

Engage in collaborative tasks, activities and experiences that involve negotiation, making arrangements, problem-solving and transacting.
[Key concepts: event, experience; Key processes: negotiating, transacting, inviting]

Engage in class activities and discussions through asking and responding to open-ended questions, and expressing or rejecting points of view.
[Key concepts: values, negotiation, classroom culture; Key processes: inviting, eliciting, explaining]

Informing

Analyse and summarise key ideas and information from a variety of texts on a range of topics.
[Key concepts: data, event; Key processes: researching, analysing, summarising]

Organise and present information and ideas on different topics, issues or events, comparing perspectives and experiences.
[Key concepts: perspective, youth issues; Key processes: reporting, managing information]

Creating

Respond to a variety of imaginative texts by expressing opinions and comparing the ways in which people, places and experiences are represented.
[Key concepts: fact, fiction, humour; Key processes: comparing, responding, expressing]

Create texts about imagined characters, contexts and experiences to engage and entertain others.
[Key concepts: amusement, entertainment; Key processes: describing, expressing feelings, entertaining]

Translating

Translate and interpret a range of texts, compare own version with others' and discuss reasons for any variations.
[Key concepts: equivalence, culture; Key processes: translating, interpreting, comparing]

Produce short bilingual texts such as digital stories, comics and blogs, and discuss how language reflects culture.
[Key concept: interpretation; Key processes: comparing, explaining, experimenting]

Reflecting

Reflect on intercultural communication, commenting on perceived similarities and differences in language used and on aspects of culture.
[Key concepts: similarity, difference, assumption; Key processes: monitoring, reflecting, questioning]

Identify significant people, places, events and influences in own and others' lives and explain why they are important to their sense of identity.
[Key concepts: biography, community; Key processes: analysing, reflecting]

Understanding

Systems of Language

Develop more consistent control of the rhythms and intonation of spoken Spanish and of the features of the writing system.
[Key concepts: pitch, stress, rhythm, intonation; Key process: noticing emphasis]

Understand and control grammatical structures such as different forms of the past tense, regular and irregular verbs, interrogative and imperative moods, and conjunctions in a range of familiar types of texts.
[Key concepts: parts of speech, tense, mood; Key processes: analysing, categorising, distinguishing]

Analyse the structure and organisation of a range of texts, particularly those related to social and informative media, for example, blogs, advertisements and text messages.
[Key concepts: register, comparison; Key process: analysing]

Language variation and change

Examine how elements of communication, including gestures, facial expressions and use of silence, vary according to context, situation and relationships across languages and cultures.
[Key concepts: body language, personal space, status; Key processes: observing, comparing, analysing]

Understand the dynamic nature of languages.
[Key concepts: change, influence, evolution, globalisation; Key processes: observing, reflecting, explaining]

Investigate the nature and extent of Spanish language use in both Australian and global contexts.
[Key concepts: community, arts, cuisine; Key processes: researching, analysing, classifying]

Role of language and culture

Reflect on how cultural values and ideas are embedded in language and influence intercultural interactions and experiences.
[Key concepts: interpretation, cultural expression; Key processes: reflecting, comparing, analysing]