

# Sound bites

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The intent of this workshop is to stimulate thinking and discussion to develop shared meaning about the essence of each learning area.

In this workshop participants watch video clips in which the general public, students and teachers were asked what they think each learning area is for. These different conceptions provide stimuli which engage and provoke thinking and discussion so that the group develops shared understanding on what they believe the learning area is for. This shared understanding becomes the essence of the learning area, and will need to be retained for display in future workshops.

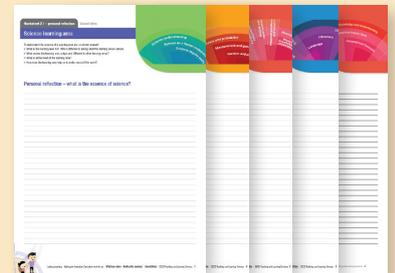
- The focus is on what the learning area is for (not what it is about).
- The video clips contain a range of views and opinions. They are intended to be provocative and promote rich discussion.
- This learning process is designed to create opportunities for challenging and engaging discussion, which ultimately will affirm and consolidate participants' thinking.
- As a leader of learning, be mindful of the role that emotions play when there is uncertainty in learning.

## Workshop printing

Print out copies of *Sound bites* agenda (one per table).



Print out copies of *Worksheet 2.1 – personal reflection* (one per participant).



## Organisation

### Time allocation

45 minutes

### Materials required

- Audio visual equipment
- Means of recording and sharing responses – markers and whiteboard, large cardboard/paper, or online applications

### Resources required

- *Sound bites* workshop agenda (one per table)
- *Sound bites* video clips (5)
  - English (2:20min)
  - geography (2:18min)
  - history (2:22min)
  - maths (2:10min)
  - science (2:18min)
  - medley of all learning areas (3:55min)
- *Worksheet 2.1 – personal reflection* (one per participant)

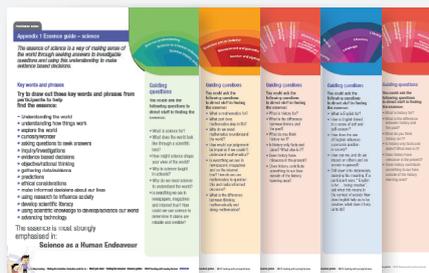
### Workshop checklist

- Check audio visual equipment.
- Consider how participants are grouped to allow for conversations.
- Consider how you will structure the workshop – whether all participants focus on all learning areas, or whether groups focus on one learning area each.

### Notes for facilitator



Facilitation notes



Essence guides



## Sound bites

## Facilitation notes

Description	Time
<p><b>1   Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand out <i>Worksheet 2.1 – personal reflection</i> (one per participant).</li> <li>Hand out <i>Sound bites workshop agenda</i> (one per table).</li> <li>Share the learning intentions of this workshop.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opening statement</b>  <i>The intention of this workshop is to look closely at the learning areas and together develop shared meaning of what one or each of the learning areas are for. This shared meaning will become the essence of that learning area which will support us in our thinking and learning throughout this resource. Today we will be reflecting on our own values about what the learning areas are for. We will reflect on what is at the heart of English, geography, history, mathematics and science.</i></p>	5 minutes
<p><b>2   Engagement process</b></p> <p><b>Supporting statement</b>  <i>We are going to watch video clips in which the general public, students and teachers are asked what they think each learning area is for. These different conceptions stimulate thinking about what you believe the learning area is for. I would like you to consider whether you agree or disagree with what is said by those interviewed.</i>  <i>What is your response to the question “What is (English, geography, history, mathematics and science) for?”</i>  <i>While you are watching, record your personal reflection on the Worksheet 2.1 – personal reflection.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play the <i>Sound bites</i> learning area clip(s).</li> <li>Ask participants to individually reflect using <i>Worksheet 2.1 – personal reflection</i>.</li> </ul>	7 minutes
<p><b>3   Learning process</b></p> <p>If participants are struggling to define the essence, further support materials are provided. See <i>Essence guides [appendix 1]</i>.</p> <p><b>a</b> Pair share: in pairs, give participants five minutes to share their written responses on their worksheet. Participants may modify or add to their personal responses.</p> <p><b>b</b> Pairs share with another pair: give participants five minutes to share reflections. Ask that they continue to record thoughts on the worksheet, and circle the responses where they have shared agreement.</p> <p><b>c</b> Group discussion: come together as a group and record responses based on small group agreements and understandings.</p> <p><b>d</b> Reach shared meaning: identify similarities and differences about what the learning area is for. Using a Venn diagram to collate responses may be helpful.  <i>We will now refer to this shared meaning of what each learning area is for as the ‘essence’ of that learning area.</i>            Prompting questions:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Are we seeing any similarities and differences in our responses?</i></li> <li><i>Can we come to a shared agreement of the essence?</i></li> </ul> </p> <p><b>e</b> Record a statement that captures the group’s shared meaning. Ask participants to finish the following sentence.  <b>The essence of [English, geography, history, mathematics or science] is...</b></p> <p><b>f</b> Record this essence statement of the learning area for the next workshop and display it for all to see.</p>	25 minutes
<p><b>4   Commitment to action</b></p> <p>Tell the participants that before the next workshop they need to canvas the views of students, families and friends to find out what they believe the learning area is for.</p> <p>They will choose three responses and record these on an A4 sheet to display as a Gallery walk at the beginning of the next workshop.</p>	3 minutes
<p><b>5   Summary of learning</b></p> <p>The essence of a learning area comes from our own values. What part of the learning process affirmed/challenged your thinking on this?</p>	5 minutes





## Appendix 1 Essence guide – geography

*The essence of geography is a way of thinking that enables us to view the world geographically. It enables us to explain the past, understand the present and empowers us to prepare for and influence the future of our world.*

*Geography helps us to understand the interconnections between places and people, both locally and globally, and asks us to explore the interactions humans have with these environments in order to inform decisions and plan for a sustainable future.*

### Key words and phrases

**Try to draw out these key words and phrases from participants to help find the essence:**

- why places are where they are
- place and its relationship with identity and belonging
- interconnections and interdependencies
- spatial awareness and location
- world views, multiple perspectives and contestability
- intercultural understanding and empathy
- social and cultural diversity
- the dynamic nature of change
- possible and preferred futures
- issues of human and physical sustainability
- active citizenship
- the world at a range of scales (personal/local/global)
- on balance decision making
- people and the environment

The essence is most strongly emphasised in:

**The geographical concepts**  
*space, place, interconnection, sustainability, change, environment, scale.*

Geographical Knowledge and Understanding  
 Geographical Inquiry Skills  
 Geographical Concepts

### Guiding questions

**You could ask the following questions to direct staff in finding the essence:**

- What is geography for?
- What do you think geography isn't?
- How does geography help you develop a view of the world?
- How has the nature of geography changed over time to utilise technology and meet the needs of society?
- Is geographical inquiry different to historical or scientific inquiry?
- Does geography contribute something to our lives beyond the geography learning area?





## Appendix 1 Essence guide – science

*The essence of science is a way of making sense of the world through seeking answers to investigable questions and using this understanding to make evidence based decisions.*

### Key words and phrases

**Try to draw out these key words and phrases from participants to help find the essence:**

- understanding the world
- understanding how things work
- exploring the world
- asking questions to seek answers
- making evidence based decisions
- thinking objectively/rationally
- gathering data/evidence
- predicting
- making ethical considerations
- making informed decisions about our lives
- using research to influence society
- developing scientific literacy
- using scientific knowledge to develop/advance our world
- advancing technology
- curiosity/wonder
- inquiring/investigating

The essence is most strongly emphasised in:  
**Science as a Human Endeavour.**

Science understanding  
 Science as a human endeavour  
 Science inquiry skills

### Guiding questions

**You could ask the following questions to direct staff in finding the essence:**

- What is science for?
- What does the world look like through a scientific lens?
- How might science shape your view of the world?
- Why is science taught in schools?
- Why do we need science to understand the world?
- Is everything we see in newspapers, magazines and on the internet true? How could we use science to determine if claims are reliable and credible?





## Appendix 1 Essence guide – history

*The essence of history is a way of thinking that empowers us to make sense of the world we live in through a deep understanding of the human experience.*

### Key words and phrases

**Try to draw out these key words and phrases from participants to help find the essence:**

- seeing different perspectives
- understanding the present
- interrogating the past and the present
- informing decisions for the future
- learning from the past.
- story telling
- how we got here and why
- intercultural understanding
- identity and belonging
- a way of thinking
- the human experience of the world

The essence is most strongly emphasised in **the historical concepts:**

- *perspectives*
- *empathy*
- *significance*
- *continuity and change*
- *cause and effect*
- *evidence*
- *contestability*



### Guiding questions

**You could ask the following questions to direct staff in finding the essence:**

- What is history for?
- What is the difference between history and the past?
- What do you think history isn't?
- Is history only facts and dates? What else is it?
- Does history have relevance in the present?
- Does history contribute something to our lives beyond the history learning area?





## Appendix 1 Essence guide – English

*The essence of English enables us to communicate confidently and creatively in order to develop and express our identity as we develop relationships personally, locally and globally.*

### Key words and phrases

**Try to draw out these key words and phrases from participants to help find the essence:**

- communication
- empowerment
- identity
- creativity
- effective relationships
- power to inform
- power to engage
- power to persuade
- responsively switching modes
- adapting to audience, context and purpose

The essence is most strongly emphasised in:

- **Literature Content Descriptions**
- **Year Level Descriptions**
- **Achievement Standards**



### Guiding questions

**You could ask the following questions to direct staff in finding the essence:**

- What is English for?
- How is English linked to a sense of self and self-esteem?
- How does the use of English influence a person's position in society?
- How can we, and do we impact on others and on society in general?
- Drill down into statements, querying the meaning. If a participant says, "English is for... being creative", ask what this means in the context of society. How does English help us to be creative; what does it help us to do?





## Appendix 1 Essence guide – mathematics

*The essence of mathematics is a way of thinking that empowers us to view the world mathematically. It empowers us to solve problems in different contexts through the development and communication of logical thoughts and actions.*

### Key words and phrases

**Try to draw out these key words and phrases from participants to help find the essence:**

- mathematically minded
- problem solving
- analytical skills
- statistical analysis
- modelling skills
- logical thinking
- data analysis
- quantifying
- developing new approaches

The essence is most strongly emphasised in **the Proficiencies:**

- ***Problem Solving***
- ***Reasoning***
- ***Fluency***
- ***Understanding***

Statistics and probability  
Measurement and geometry  
Number and algebra

### Guiding questions

**You could ask the following questions to direct staff in finding the essence:**

- What is mathematics for?
- What part does mathematics play in life?
- Why do we need mathematics to understand the world?
- How would our judgement be impaired if we couldn't understand mathematics?
- Is everything we see in newspapers, magazines and on the internet true? How do we use mathematics to question this and make informed decisions?
- What is the difference between thinking mathematically and doing mathematics?

