

Literacy at EPPS

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Quotes from the Australian Curriculum - Literacy

In the Australian Curriculum, students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions **to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating** in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students in listening to, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts, and **using and modifying language** for different purposes in a range of contexts.

Success in any learning area depends on being able **to use the significant, identifiable and distinctive literacy that is important for learning and representative of the content of that learning area.**

The definition of literacy in the Australian Curriculum is informed by **a social view of language** that considers **how language works to construct meaning in different social and cultural contexts.**

The social view of language enables insights into **differences between 'spoken-like' and 'written-like' language,** and the **increasing complexity of language as students progress through school.**

Our practices at EPPS are guided by this social view of Literacy, the Australian Curriculum including the organising elements of the Literacy Capability, Language and Literacy Levels, and our beliefs and strategies gained by personal and school based Professional Learning and Reading, from a range of sources including Carmel Crevola, Deslea Konza, Stephen Graham, THRASS, Sheena Cameron, Alison Davis, Beverly Derewianka, Anne Bayetto, 'Literacy for Learning' and Bronwyn Custance.

Morning Reading occurs for the first half an hour of school in each classroom on at least four mornings per week. The structure is guided by the documents in the 'English Agreements Folder' which is updated at the beginning of each year.

Initially R-2 classes use the JP Morning Reading Program and 3-7 classes the R5 reading program. Year 2 students are transitioned to the R5 process in the second half of the year with a focus on the reflection, responding and rapping stages of R5.

All teachers have copies of the **English Agreements** which inform them of the data collection and classroom expectations based on that data, in English. Data collected about student achievement in **the Big 6 – Oral Language, Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Fluency and Reading Comprehension and in Writing.** This data is used to inform the 'Teaching and Learning Cycle' for classroom Literacy programs.

Oral Language programs focus on the 4 teaching foci – expressing ideas thoughts and opinions; listening and responding; questioning, challenging and clarifying and justifying an opinion **as well as teaching the structure, sentence and word grammar needed for the different text types.**

The Phonological Awareness and Phonic Hierarchy, and **Jolly Phonics/ Jolly Grammar Tricky** word lists are used to monitor student progress and guide the classroom **Phonological Awareness** and **Spelling** programs. The THRASS/**Jolly Phonics** methodology of choosing appropriate graphemes for phonemes is explicitly taught to students, as well as developing their ability to use auditory, visual, morphemic and etymological knowledge with their spelling choices. **The use of an Inquiry Based approach in spelling is to be used in all classrooms that results in students being able to develop spelling generalisations to make correct grapheme choices when spelling words in their writing.** Classroom programs target the development of **Vocabulary** to support student oral language, reading and writing. **This is also targeted when introducing a range of word grammar. e.g. developing technical language, increasing the complexity of noun groups with a wider variation in descriptors and classifiers and widening the range of processes (verbs) used in oral and written language. It should also include curriculum based terminology.**

Students increase their sight words using the **Jolly Phonics/ Jolly Grammar Tricky** word lists to develop their **Fluency,** **as well as daily practice in blending words.** Fluency levels are monitored against school benchmarks and strategies like rereading known texts, activities from the 'Florida Center for Reading Research' and Reader's Theatre are used to support their fluency development.

Students are taught to use the **Reading Comprehension** strategies – predicting, visualising, questioning, inferring, making connections, summarising and synthesising using a metacognitive approach, resulting in their ability to recognise which strategies support them to comprehend the text and how it does this. **They are taught to use Meaning, Structure and Visual sources of information to decode unknown words.**

At all times, students need to be able to verbalise which parts of, or words in the text, support them to think in a particular way about the text or provide them with the information that they require. They need to be aware that texts are written for different purposes and that authors use different language devices to achieve these purposes. The following resource will support them with determining the purpose of texts.

Text Purpose

To entertain	To inform	To persuade
<p>Narrating <i>Let me tell you a story!</i></p> <p>Narrative</p>	<p>Describing and Classifying <i>What is it and what's it like?</i></p> <p>Report</p>	<p>Arguing and challenging <i>So what do you think?</i></p> <p>Argument (Exposition) Discussion</p>
	<p>Recounting <i>What happened?</i></p> <p>Recount</p>	<p>Reacting Critically and Analysing <i>So what do you think of it?</i></p> <p>Response</p>
	<p>Instructing <i>Do this!</i></p> <p>Protocol/ Procedure</p>	
	<p>Explaining <i>How/why does/did that happen?</i></p> <p>Explanation</p>	

All students need to regularly read aloud to their teacher, and teachers need to use a range of questioning including transitivity analysis, to ensure that students are comprehending the texts they are reading. Particular attention needs to be paid to ensure that students are accurately gaining meaning from complex sentences and higher tier vocabulary.

Classroom structures need to occur that allow for 'individualised' reading instruction.

The **R5** reading time is a time when students practise the skills that have been explicitly taught to the whole class, small groups or **individually**. It allows an opportunity for teachers to assess how individual students comprehend texts and provides time for individualised intervention.

Group Reading, for want of a better title, is what we do in the Early Years of schooling, to support beginning readers with their early strategy/**comprehension** development.

Guided Reading starts when students are able to read emergent reading books, usually past Level 5. Instead of using the round robin reading approach after the initial orientation 'book talk', students read independently and the teacher hears each child read part of the book, providing individual instruction as needed. **Teacher/student questioning provides an integral part of this process and this questioning needs to be aimed at each student's individual needs.**

Reciprocal Reading is a small-group procedure to help improve the comprehension and critical thinking of fluent readers. It involves four explicit strategies for reading comprehension: formulating questions, clarifying ideas, predicting and summarising. The teacher initially leads the group, explaining and modelling the strategies to show how the reader actively constructs meaning. The students gradually take over more and more of the responsibility by taking turns to

lead the group and generate discussion as the group members jointly examine and interpret a text. This process needs to be monitored to ensure that the discussion is substantive, extending to deep knowledge and understanding.

In **Literature Circles** the students generate the discussion, which is based on their own interpretations of the text. Small groups of students read the same book independently, examining the text from a particular comprehension strategy perspective – a questioner, inferrer, connector, predictor, summariser, visualiser or synthesiser. They then share their personal responses and interpretations with others in the group. This process needs to be monitored to ensure that the discussion is substantive, extending to deep knowledge and understanding.

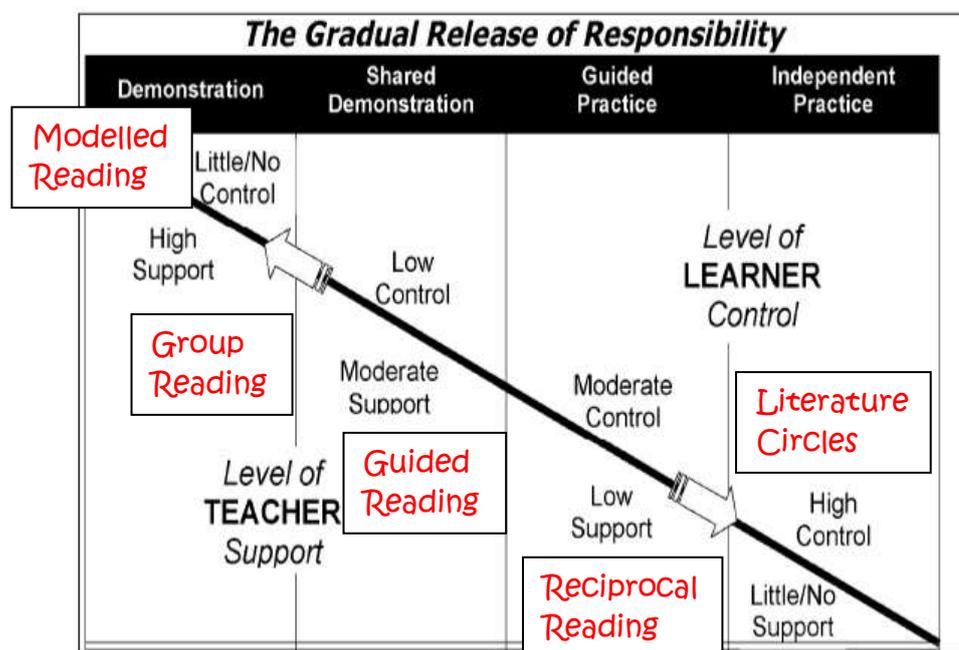


Figure 3: Gradual release of responsibility (Pearson, P. David, Gallagher, CM. 1983)

The **Gradual Release of Responsibility** model should be used to introduce new learning and students need to be aware of the model, where their tasks fit and the purpose of the activity, as they move through to the independent practice stage. They also need to be aware of their responsibilities at each stage of the process.

Our **Genre Map** comprehensively details the teaching that needs to occur for each text type at each year level, including the text and grammar knowledge. It includes reference to texts that need to be composed in History, Science, Geography, The Arts, Economics and Business, Civics and Citizenship and Health and Physical Education. Teachers need to plan to introduce text types in an order that is supportive of student learning and enables integration into other Curriculum Areas.

Literacy needs to be explicitly taught using a **Teaching and Learning Cycle** which gradually releases the responsibility from the teacher to the student. It should involve the stages of: Setting the Context, Modelling and Deconstruction, Joint Construction and Individual Construction. Micro scaffolding through mini-cycles may occur at any stage of this process.

All teachers need to teach the **Literacy skills** needed to be successful in **all curriculum areas**. As stated in the Literacy Capability, "...while much of the explicit teaching of literacy occurs in the English learning area, it is strengthened, made specific and extended in other learning areas as students engage in a range of learning activities with significant literacy demands."

Literacy teaching needs to be **differentiated** for all. Except when identified, all students should have access to quality teaching that enables them to achieve the required standard for their year level. It is the scaffolding that we provide that supports this to happen. Our classrooms should have **3 waves**.

They are as follows:

Wave 1: High-quality inclusive teaching supported by effective whole-school policies.

Wave 2: Wave 1 plus intervention designed to increase rates of progress and put children back on course to meet or exceed national expectations

Wave 3: Wave 1 plus increasingly personalised intervention to maximise progress and minimise gaps in achievement

Common Language – Grammar has ‘traditional’ **classes** and ‘functional’ labels. The advantage of the ‘functional label’ is that it identifies the role that **language plays** in the text, e.g. is it a participant, process or circumstance. **However students need to be exposed to both throughout their schooling.** It is important that they know the **class** as well as its function e.g. a verb is a process. The glossary of the Australian Curriculum- English can be referred to, for terms that are used in that document.

It is vital that they have the ‘metalinguage’ to talk about language and the way they can manipulate it.

Students also need to be aware of the Register Continuum, where they are operating and the desired placement for the text they are composing.

Our **Cross Age Tutor program** matches R-3 classes with a Year 3-7 class. This program allows the younger student to be ‘tutored’ by the older student, whilst supporting the older student to further clarify their understanding of the Comprehension Strategy that is being focussed on. It also allows for the development of positive relationships between younger and older students.

Currently we focus on a new strategy each term; Predicting, Making Connections, Visualising and Questioning. A prompt card is provided for the tutor, and they receive training each term. Support material is sent home to Junior Primary Parents to provide consistency between school and ‘at-home’ reading.

Recommended texts

