

Aligning curriculum, pedagogies and assessment

An example of practice in Prep

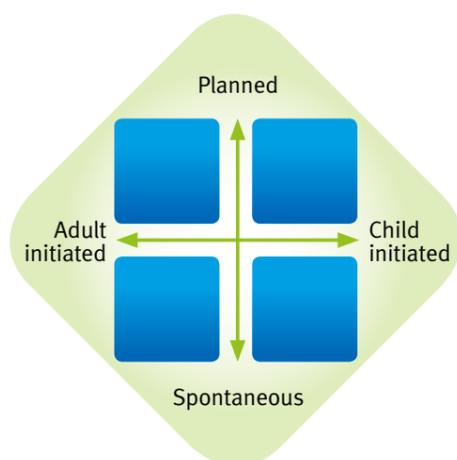
Inquiry learning - 'Using Book boxes'

Australian Curriculum - English

Sequencing teaching and learning

How do I teach it?

Achieving range and balance*



Approach

- Inquiry learning

Practices

- Pair inquiry
- Specific focus

Strategies

- Picture books as stimulus
- Toys as sequencing scaffolds
- Illustrations as sequencing scaffolds

Characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies*

- Active
- Agentic
- Collaborative
- Creative
- Explicit
- Language rich and dialogic
- Learner focused
- Narrative
- Playful
- Responsive
- Scaffolded

*See over for an explanation of approaches, practices and strategies, and the characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies evident in this Example of practice.

Our students

Working together to ensure that every day, in every classroom, every student is learning and achieving

This is an example of how one teacher incorporated **inquiry learning** when adapting C2C Unit 2 - English Year Prep (V3.0).

The teacher noted in her planning that, although they were able to sequence events in a personal recount, many of the children were having difficulty identifying some features of texts including events and characters, and retelling events from a text. In response to the question, 'What are the main events in a story?', the teacher decided to create *Book boxes* that would further support the children's retell skills, particularly in the area of sequencing.

The teacher chose texts that contained a very clear sequence of events throughout the story. Books chosen included *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins 1968), *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle 1969) and *Handa's Surprise* (Browne 1995).

Each book was placed in a box along with scaffolds to support sequencing of the story. The *Handa's Surprise Book box*, for example, contained a copy of the picture book, toy wooden fruit (as seen in the story), a woven basket and laminated illustrations (photocopied from the text), showing key events in the story.

Throughout the term, during outdoor learning time, the *Book boxes* were placed on a blanket with comfy cushions under a tree. The children were encouraged to choose a *Book box* with a friend. In pairs, the children engaged with the *Book boxes*, using the toys to scaffold the sequencing, reading the pictures, discussing the events and sequencing the laminated illustrations.

The teacher was mindful of the curriculum intent of the unit and chose this age-appropriate approach, its practices and strategies in response to some of the children requiring more opportunities to recall one or two events from a text, within the unit of work.

Assessment

What do my students already know? How well do they know it?

Assessment **for learning** - anecdotal notes/observations from the *Book box* inquiry learning, reading groups, PM Benchmark data

Assessment **as learning** - peer feedback, teacher feedback

Assessment **of learning** - Unit 2 - Year Prep (V3.0) Assessment task: Retell a story (Learning highlighted in this Example of practice relates to the Knowledge and understanding: Receptive strand of the assessment task)

Making judgments

How will I know how well my students have demonstrated the Achievement Standard?

C2C Unit 2 - English Year Prep (V3.0) - Assessment task: Retell a story Guide to making judgments

Knowledge and understanding (Receptive)

Applying (AP) - Explains personal connections to inferences drawn about characters or events in a familiar story.

Making Connections (MC) - Identifies differences and similarities between events and characters in a familiar story and own experiences.

Working With (WW) - Recalls one or two events from a text with a familiar topic. Identifies connections between a text and their personal experience.

Exploring (EX) - Recalls the main idea of a familiar story and talks about own experiences.

Becoming Aware (BA) - Listens to a story and talks about something they remember from the story.

(N.B. Reflects Knowledge and understanding: Receptive strand of the assessment task. The Knowledge and understanding: Productive and Constructing texts: Productive (spoken) strands were also undertaken within the context of the full assessment task, but are not reflected in the learning in this Example of practice).

Feedback

What do my students already know? What do my students need to learn next?

The teacher used anecdotal notes/observations from the *Book box* inquiry learning and reading groups, as well as PM Benchmark data to inform feedback.

The feedback provided the children with progress on their learning to date (*Reilly, you have told me all about what happened at the end of the story*), and gave specific information about what to do next (*Remember that when you*

retell a story, you need to include events that happen at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the story).

Informal, verbal feedback was given to the children as they engaged with the *Book boxes*, as appropriate to this inquiry learning. Feedback was more formalised during reading groups and took the written form of visual/written reading goals, which were negotiated with the children.



Curriculum intent

What do my students need to learn?

Australian Curriculum - English

Foundation (Prep) Year Level Description

The English curriculum is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy. Teaching and learning programs should balance and integrate all three strands. Together the three strands focus on developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. Learning in English builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years, and teachers will revisit, strengthen and develop these as needed.

In the Foundation year, students communicate with peers, teachers, known adults, and students from other classes.

Foundation (Prep) Year Content Descriptions (as applicable to this inquiry learning)

Language

- Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (ACELA1786)

Literature

- Identify some features of texts including events and characters, and retell events from a text (ACELT1578)
- Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images (ACELT1580)

Literacy

- Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently (ACELY1650)

Foundation (Prep) Year Achievement Standard

Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing)

By the end of the Foundation year, students use predicting and questioning strategies to make meaning from texts. They recall one or two events from texts with familiar topics. They understand that there are different types of texts and that these can have similar characteristics. They identify connections between texts and their personal experience.

Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating)

In informal group and whole class settings, students communicate clearly. They retell events and experiences with peers and known adults. They identify and use rhyme, and orally blend and segment sounds in words. When writing, students use familiar words and phrases and images to convey ideas. Their writing shows evidence of letter and sound knowledge, beginning writing behaviours and experimentation with capital letters and full stops. They correctly form known upper- and lower-case letters.

Characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies evident in this example of practice

By accessing the *Book boxes* in pairs, for inquiry into story sequencing, the children were able to collaborate and socially co-construct their knowledge of retell, particularly in the area of sequencing. Working together also fostered meaningful dialogue between the children, supporting their thinking, learning and engagement with texts. The use of toys and illustrations as scaffolds supported the comprehension of narratives through active processes. Engagement with the *Book boxes* was playful, encouraging the children to make connections to the texts through imagination and creativity, thus supporting new ways of thinking. New learning was scaffolded by encouraging active and social engagement with texts and supporting materials in the *Book boxes*.

Although only five of the characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies have been highlighted here, opportunities for each of the eleven characteristics to be embedded were evident.

Characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies

Creative

Inviting children to consider “What if?” They encourage investigation, inquiry and artistry to explore new possibilities and ways of thinking.

Narrative

Acknowledging the important role that personal, written, oral and digital stories play in all our lives. They support both the production and comprehension of narratives through active processes, especially play.

Active

Requiring physical and embodied engagement across all areas of learning. Whether this is indoors or outdoors, activity is essential in order to activate children’s full potential. Their focus, concentration, motivation and self-regulation are enhanced through moving, doing and interacting within a range of learning environments.

Explicit

Making conscious for both learner and educator the relationships between the learning purpose and processes employed and the skills and understanding these processes support.

Playful

Encouraging children to make connections through imagination and creativity to explore alternate worlds and ways of thinking. These worlds, not bounded by reality, offer the freedom children need to innovate and enact new possibilities.

Agentic

Ensuring that children have voice in their learning. Their ideas and interests initiate, support and extend learning possibilities in order to build on their real-world understandings and experiences.

Language rich and dialogic

Ensuring that learning occurs in environments where rich language is modelled and employed by both children and educators. Meaningful dialogues between children, as well as between children and educators, are created to support thinking, learning, engagement and imagination.

Responsive

Incorporating a willingness to be flexible, to ensure that learning is always child, context, content and discipline appropriate. To achieve this, educators will balance opportunities for structure and spontaneity, open-ended and specific tasks, and child-led and educator-led learning.

Collaborative

Being social and co-constructed. Children and educators work together to identify ways of learning and understanding through sustained shared thinking and action.

Learner focused

Recognising that all children learn in different ways and that learning is a highly individualised process. They also acknowledge differences in children’s physical, intellectual, cultural, social and personal experiences and perspectives.

Scaffolded

Including such actions as modelling, encouraging, questioning, adding challenges, and giving feedback, provide the support needed to extend children’s existing capabilities. Effective scaffolding by both educators and other children provides active structures to support new learning; it is then progressively withdrawn as learners gain increasing mastery.

Approach - Inquiry learning

Practices*

Pair inquiry

The children were encouraged to engage with the *Book boxes* in pairs, rather than individually, to foster ‘book talk’ amongst peers. Pairings were usually based on friendships, but at times, the teacher paired particular children with particular *Book boxes*, depending on intended learning targets and outcomes.

Specific focus

The learning intention of the *Book boxes* was very specific, in that the focus was on identifying some features of texts including events and characters, and retelling events from a text. Although the focus was specific, the children’s inquiry into the *Book boxes* during outdoor time (a different physical, social and temporal environment to that of indoor learning), led to engagement that was rich and deep, often including impromptu child created dramatic re-enactments of the books, the creation of story maps and requests for reading by the teacher to the whole class.

**These are examples of the Practices implemented, and not intended as a finite list.*

Strategies*

Using picture books as stimulus

The teacher chose books that contained a very clear sequence of events throughout the story. Books chosen included *Rosie’s Walk* by Pat Hutchins, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and *Handa’s Surprise* by Eileen Browne.

Toys as sequencing scaffolds

Using toys related to the texts (for example miniature worlds toys for *Rosie’s Walk*), allowed the children the opportunity to engage actively and more deeply with the text, whilst using new vocabulary from the text.

Illustrations as sequencing scaffolds

Allowing the children to *read the pictures* stripped away the written complexities of the texts, allowing all children to focus on the events in the text and engage in the sequencing activity regardless of their current reading ability.

** These are examples of the Strategies implemented, and not intended as a finite list.*

Questions for teacher-based reflection

- How is an array of effective pedagogies ensured?
- How are holistic development and academic goals balanced?
- How is a balance between child-initiated and adult-initiated learning experiences fostered?
- How are positive personal relationships with children nurtured?
- How is playfulness in learning and teaching interactions embedded?
- How are high-quality, verbal interactions encouraged?
- How are interactions to scaffold cognitive challenge and develop higher order thinking incorporated?
- How are real-life, imaginary, spontaneous and planned experiences integrated?

Questions for school-based reflection

- How is the provision of training, resources and support considered?
- How are the professional demands on teachers, and the lead-in time required to establish new approaches, recognised and supported?

Other considerations

Care needed to be taken to work within copyright regulations when copying illustrations for use within the *Book boxes*.