

Aligning curriculum, pedagogies and assessment

An example of practice in Prep

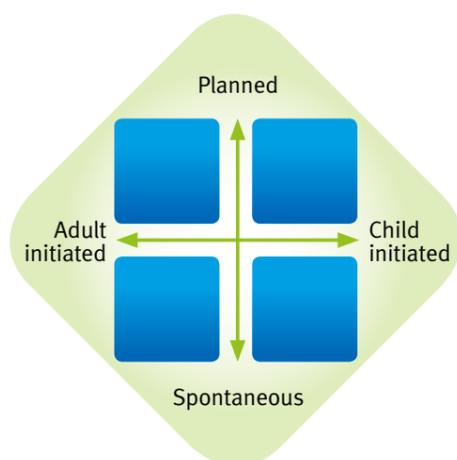
Explicit instruction - 'I'm an author and illustrator'

Australian Curriculum - English

Sequencing teaching and learning

How do I teach it?

Achieving range and balance*



Approach

- Explicit instruction

Practices

- Teacher initiated
- Small group focus

Strategies

- Joint deconstruction
- Joint construction
- Drawings as a writing scaffold

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 **explicit instruction** when extending a group of children while implementing C2C Unit 2 - English (V3.0). The teacher adapted lessons 21 through 30 to extend these children's learning about writing within the context of the unit's curriculum intent.

Using data gathered from anecdotal observations, the teacher identified a group of children who were already demonstrating productive knowledge and understanding at the 'Applying' level of an upcoming assessment task. The teacher planned to further extend the children's skills through literacy within the English unit. The teacher consulted the *P-10 Literacy continuum* (P-2), focusing on *Aspects of writing*, and planned to teach the markers in Cluster 3. The teacher assigned the children the roles of author and illustrator, and had the children write, illustrate and publish picture books that would be circulated amongst the class for the purpose of home reading.

The teacher and children read and discussed the features of simple texts. Sentences in texts were jointly deconstructed and constructed, modelling, demonstrating and practising expressing one or two ideas using simple narrative structure. After considering their own ideas for stories, the children were then asked to write and draw their own stories using familiar words and phrases, and images to convey ideas. The children's original drawings were used as plans for their published illustrations which were completed using a black ink and watercolour technique.

The children's stories were typed by the teacher, and writing and illustrations compiled into a book, complete with title page and author/illustrator blurb. The teacher sought permission from the children's parents/carers for each book's inclusion in a class home reading library. The books were sent home on a nightly roster, with all children very eager to read their friends' published works.

Assessment

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

Assessment **for learning** - analysis of the children's drawings, narrative drafts, recordings of oral compositions

Assessment **as learning** - Two Stars and a Wish strategy

Assessment **of learning** - Unit 2 - Year Prep (V3.0) Assessment task: Retell a story

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 (Productive)

Applying (AP) Uses descriptive words and some high-frequency words. Represents beginning and end sounds with letters. Writes in sentences.

Making Connections (MC) Represents beginning sounds. Knows print carries a constant message. Uses spaces between words.

(N.B. Reflects Knowledge and understanding: Productive strand of the assessment task. The Knowledge and understanding: Receptive 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*).

Working With (WW) Uses familiar words and phrases and images to convey ideas. Shows evidence of sound-letter knowledge, beginning writing behaviours and experimentation with capital letters and full stops.

Exploring (EX) Uses illustrations and beginning concepts of print to represent an event.

Becoming Aware (BA) Differentiates between writing and drawing.

Feedback

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

The teacher used analysis of the children's drawings, narrative drafts and recordings of oral compositions to inform feedback.

The feedback provided the children with progress on their learning to date (*Summer, I noticed that you are using capital letters at the beginning of all your sentences*), and gave specific information about what to do next

(Remember to use a capital letter when you are writing someone's name).

Regular, specific verbal feedback was given throughout this explicit instruction sequence, as well as individualised written feedback using the *Two Stars and a Wish* strategy from the *First Steps in Writing Resource Book* (Department of Education WA 2013).



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 explicit instruction)

Language

- Know that spoken sounds and words can be written down using letters of the alphabet and how to write some high-frequency sight words and known words (ACELA1758)
- Recognise that sentences are key units for expressing ideas (ACELA1435)
- Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (ACELA1786)

Literature

- Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences (ACELT1575)

Literacy

- Create short texts to explore, record and report ideas and events using familiar words and beginning writing knowledge (ACELY1651)

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)

Students understand that their texts can reflect their own experiences. They identify and describe likes and dislikes about familiar texts, objects, characters and events. 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

This explicit instruction encouraged the children's artistry to explore new possibilities and ways of thinking about texts. The learning was explicit in that the learning purpose and the processes employed were clear to the children throughout the task. The language of narrative was used throughout, by both children and the teacher, supporting thinking, learning, engagement and imagination. The writing, illustrating and publishing of texts acknowledged the important role that personal, written and oral stories play in our lives. Learning was modelled, encouraged, questioned and challenged throughout, as well as supported through the provision of feedback.

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 - Explicit instruction

Practices*

Teacher initiated

The teacher consulted the Literacy continuum P-2, focusing on Aspects of writing, and planned to teach the markers in Cluster 4. The teacher assigned the children the roles of author and illustrator, and had the children write, illustrate and publish picture books that would be circulated amongst the class for the purpose of home reading.

Small group focus

The teacher identified a group of children who were already demonstrating productive knowledge and understanding at the 'Applying' level of an upcoming assessment task. The teacher planned to further extend the children's skills through literacy within the English unit.

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

Strategies*

Joint deconstruction

Joint deconstruction of simple narratives focused on the skills needed to express and develop ideas in writing, including the development of a shared metalanguage for use by the children and the teacher. The explicit instruction focused on using familiar words, phrases and images to convey ideas, sound-letter knowledge, beginning writing behaviours and experimentation with capital letters and full stops.

Joint construction

The children and teacher jointly constructed a simple narrative text, with the teacher prompting using the established metalanguage.

Drawings as a writing scaffold

After considering their own ideas for stories, the children were then asked to write and draw their own stories.

** 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?