

Aligning curriculum, pedagogies and assessment, an example of practice in Prep/Year 1

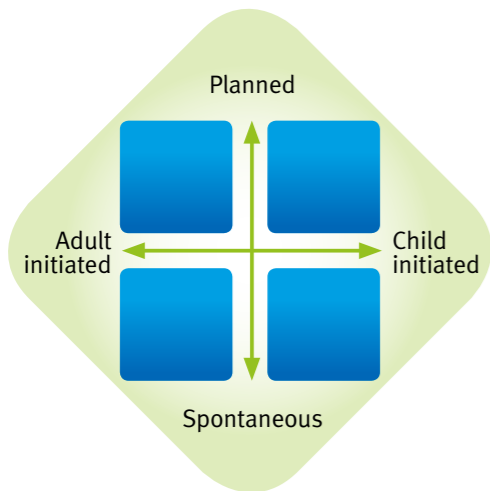
Explicit instruction - 'Letters from Annie and Jake'

Australian Curriculum - Health and Physical Education

Sequencing teaching and learning

How do I teach it?

Achieving range and balance*



Approach

- Explicit instruction

Practices

- Letter writing as stimulus
- Doll play

Strategies

- Think aloud
- Looks like, sounds like, feels like
- Joint construction
- Role Modelling
- Visuals

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 implementing the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education learning area in a Prep/Year 1 classroom.

In response to Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data related to the *Social competence* domain and a requirement to embed the school rules *Be safe, Be respectful and Be responsible* into daily practice, the teacher developed five expectations. The five expectations were *Gentle touch, Nice talk, Sharing and caring, Right place at the right time, and Have-a-go*.

The teacher composed five letters, which were sent from *Annie and Jake*, two dolls which were yet to be introduced to the young learners. Each letter was linked to one of the five expectations and outlined *Annie and Jake's* fears about coming to school (e.g. *We would really love to come to school and be in Prep/Year 1, but we are frightened that someone might hit us*).

On receipt of each letter, the teacher was able to introduce one of the five expectations to the young learners, and collaboratively explore what each of the five expectations would *look like, sound like and feel like*.

As part of this explicit instruction, the teacher and young learners then jointly constructed a response to *Annie and Jake* outlining the targeted Prep/Year 1 expectation. Following on from this, the teacher asked the young learners to model and practise the ideas described in the letter. This supported the young learners' understanding of the personal and social skills required for positive interaction.

After receiving and responding to five letters from *Annie and Jake*, the young learners received a final letter saying that *Annie and Jake* were happy that Prep/Year 1 used *Gentle touch* and *Nice talk*, were *Sharing and caring*, in the *Right place at the right time* and were *Have-a-go kids*. *Annie and Jake* had decided to come to Prep/Year 1.

Annie and Jake arrived at school the next day and became honorary members of the class. The dolls were used to revisit, reinforce and reward the five expectations. Each of the five expectations also had an associated visual that was used for classroom posters, lanyard visuals for teacher and teacher aide and praise notes, which were given to the young learners when they were seen displaying the five expectations.

Assessment

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

Assessment **for learning** - enabling teachers to use information about learner progress to inform their teaching, including anecdotal observations of the young learners' social interactions

Assessment **as learning** - enabling learners to reflect on and monitor their own progress to inform their future learning goals, including one-on-one, small group and class discussions, and praise notes
 Assessment **of learning** - there was no summative assessment task attached to this explicit instruction

Making judgments

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

Although there was no summative assessment task attached to this explicit instruction, by monitoring learning through the use of assessment **for** and **as** learning, and providing feedback to the young learners, decisions could be made by the teacher relating to what:

- the children knew and understood
- strengths, misconceptions and misunderstandings were evident
- were the next steps for learning.

Feedback

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

The teacher used anecdotal notes to inform feedback, and distributed praise notes to the young learners.

The feedback provided the young learners with progress on their learning to date (*Lennox, I noticed that you were sharing and caring today when you took Mackenzie's hand and let her join your game*), and gave specific information about what to do next (*Remember to use your words when you are playing. You could say, "Mackenzie, would you like to play with me?"*)

Ongoing, informal verbal feedback was given throughout, as appropriate to this explicit instruction.



Curriculum intent

What do my students need to learn?

Australian Curriculum – Health and Physical Education

The Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education is organised into two content strands: Personal, social and community health and Movement and physical activity. Each strand contains content descriptions which are organised under three sub-strands. This example focuses on the sub-strand of Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing.

The Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing sub-strand develops knowledge, understanding and skills to enable students to critically engage with a range of health focus areas and issues. It also helps them apply new information to changing circumstances and environments that influence their own and others' health, safety and wellbeing.

Foundation (Prep) Year Content Descriptions (as applicable to this explicit instruction)

- **Practice personal and social skills to interact positively with others (ACPPS004)**
- **Identify and describe emotional responses people may experience in different situations (ACPPS005)**

Foundation (Prep) Year Achievement Standard

By the end of Foundation Year, students recognise how they are growing and changing. They **identify and describe the different emotions people experience**. They identify actions that help them be healthy, safe and physically active. They identify different settings where they can be active and demonstrate how to move and play safely. They describe how their body responds to movement.

Students use personal and social skills when working with others in a range of activities. They demonstrate, with guidance, practices and protective behaviours to keep themselves safe and healthy in different activities. They perform fundamental movement skills and solve movement challenges.

Year 1 and 2 Content Descriptions (as applicable to this explicit instruction)

- **Describe ways to include others to make them feel they belong (ACPPS019)**
- **Identify and practise emotional responses that account for own and others' feelings (ACPPS020)**

Year 1 and 2 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 2, students describe changes that occur as they grow older. They recognise how strengths and achievements contribute to identities. They **identify how emotional responses impact on others' feelings**. They examine messages related to health decisions and describe how to keep themselves and others healthy, safe and physically active. They identify areas where they can be active and how the body reacts to different physical activities.

Students demonstrate positive ways to interact with others. They select and apply strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe and are able to ask for help with tasks or problems. They demonstrate fundamental movement skills in a variety of movement sequences and situations and test alternatives to solve movement challenges. They perform movement sequences that incorporate the elements of movement.

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

Sharing in a *Looks like, sounds like, feels like* strategy and joint construction of the letters for *Annie and Jake*, allowed the young learners to have a voice in how they saw the five expectations looking, sounding and feeling in their classroom. The expectations of the classroom were socially and co-constructed, allowing the young learners and teacher sustained, shared thinking and action about their social learning environment. The learning was explicit in that both the learners and teacher were conscious of the learning purpose and expected skills and understandings related to the three school rules and five expectations. The conversations between the learners and teacher about behaviour were meaningful and supported thinking, learning and engagement. The dialogue between the young learners and teacher, and joint construction of the letters to Annie and Jake, acknowledged differences in the young learners' cultural, social and personal experiences and perspectives. Although only five of the characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies have been highlighted here, there were opportunities to embed each of the eleven characteristics.

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*

Letter writing as stimulus

In response to the school's requirement to embed the three school rules into daily practice, the teacher developed five expectations that used early years language and related to common classroom issues. The teacher used letter writing as a highly engaging and motivating stimulus to scaffold learning and promote understanding and conversation related to the social environment of the classroom.

The letter writing ensured that rich language was modelled by the teacher and the learners were engaged in meaningful dialogue that supported thinking and learning.

Doll play

After their introduction to the classroom, the dolls *Annie and Jake* were used to model, revisit, reinforce and reward *Gentle touch, Nice talk, Sharing and caring, Right place at the right time* and *Have-a-go kids*. Through this doll play, the young learners were able to extend their vocabulary in relation to the social environment of the classroom, predict and plan for possible social scenarios in the classroom, communicate using verbal and non-verbal skills, negotiate and reflect on classroom behaviours.

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

Strategies*

Looks like, sounds like, feels like

The teacher used the *Looks like, sounds like, feels like* strategy to involve the young learners in in-depth thinking on classroom expectations. It encouraged the young learners to move from concrete descriptions (for example, *Sharing and caring looks like Sophia holding my hand*), to abstract descriptors (for example, *Sharing and caring feels safe*).

Think aloud

The *Think aloud* strategy was employed by the teacher to make explicit the expected behaviours within the classroom (for example, *How would I feel if someone wasn't using nice talk to me? I would feel sad, or How can I make sure I am sharing and caring? I can let Liam join in my game*).

Joint construction

Joint construction of the letters to *Annie and Jake* allowed the young learners the opportunity to verbalise their understandings of the classroom expectations and take ownership of the classroom's social environment.

Role Modelling

Using the dolls *Annie and Jake* to role model classroom situations and expectations encouraged the young learners to articulate what they understood about classroom situations, predict, hypothesise, question and problem solve.

Visuals

The use of consistent visuals to depict the five expectations enabled the young learners and teacher to immediately tune-in to a targeted expectation. This cut down on teacher talk, encouraged a shared understanding of classroom expectations and allowed the young learners to easily refocus on expectations within the classroom's social environment.

** 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?