

Programming to meet the needs of students
(a) Preparing executive
(b) Planning with KLA or faculty groups

SESSION 8

Literacy Guided
Team

**Instructions for activity 8 (a):
(Preparing executive staff)**

Facilitator:

Give executive staff copies of HOs 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and the participants' worksheet.

Participant:

Read and discuss handouts.

Facilitator:

Lead the executive staff in a discussion about KLA programming. The headings on HOs 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 may prove useful in guiding discussion.

Talk about the importance of planning and how the principles of programming, as discussed, will benefit all students.

Give participants a copy of the relevant KLA supplement provided in this session. **(20 minutes)**

Participant:

Read and discuss the KLA supplement. **(20 minutes)**

Facilitator:

Outline the recommended process for the executive to use with their staff in completing session 8b. **(10 minutes)**

**Instructions for activity 8 (b):
(Planning with KLA or faculty groups)**

It is recommended that a member of the school or district literacy support team assist head teachers in the delivery of this session.

Facilitator:

Give participants copies of HOs 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and the participants' worksheet.

Participant:

Read and discuss handouts. **(15 minutes)**

Facilitator:

Give staff a copy of the relevant KLA supplement and discuss in detail. **(15 minutes)**

Facilitator:

Divide the KLA staff into pairs or groups of three.

Participant:

Develop a plan for a unit of work on a current topic, using the participants' worksheet. **(30 minutes)**

Facilitator:

Allow time for staff to discuss and share plans for units of work at future staff meetings.

Unit, topic, context, content or area of study

Prior learning

- Prior learning about students' current knowledge, skills and understandings needs to be acknowledged.

Syllabus objectives, outcomes and content

- Refer to the syllabus.

Assessment

- Remember to use a variety of assessment strategies throughout the year.
- Ensure that the assessment task you have chosen measures the outcomes of the unit.
- Each assessment task needs to cater for the full range of student abilities.
- Determine the assessment strategy for this unit, topic, context, content or area of study and allocate a weighting for the task. Assessment strategies to consider include:

Response:

- test
- proforma
- other

Performance:

- debate
- other

Process:

- journal
- other

Products:

- project
- essay
- portfolio
- image/object
- other

Other:

Allocate an appropriate weighting to the task in the context of the year assessment.

% Weighting

Indicators and marking grid

- The marking grid should indicate the different levels of achievement
- Copies need to be given to students before the unit begins.

Working towards outcomes	Working through outcomes	Working beyond outcomes

Teaching goals

- Determine what students will need to learn about and learn how to do in order to be successful in this topic, unit or context area.

Learning about

Learning how to

Activities and resources

- Follow the explicit teaching model to identify the strategies, activities and resources that you will use.

Build the field	Phase of the teaching model	Strategies we will use
	Activate and determine prior knowledge	
	Establish expectations	
	Modelling and deconstruction	
	Guided practice	
	Independent practice and demonstration	

Principles of programming

1. Assessment comes first

For students who are experiencing difficulties in literacy, the first step is to find out what they can do now, so that teachers can help them with what they need to learn next. ELLA provides the school with information about each student, and the STLD or other support personnel implement an individual focused assessment with students whose scores indicate a high need for literacy support. Teachers may conduct their own assessments through observation as well. On the basis of this information, teachers can plan lessons that will allow students to progress in both the content of the KLA and its literacy demands.

2. Sequence skills and knowledge

Identified skills can be analysed into a sequence of manageable steps, ordered from easiest to most difficult, or in logical order.

Steps in acquiring a skill are:

- first accuracy, to ensure that the student learns the skill
- then fluency, to help the student do it quickly
- then maintenance, to prevent the skill being forgotten
- and finally, generalisation, to apply the skill in different contexts.

All students need to move through these stages, but practice at each stage is even more important for students with difficulties in learning the skill.

For students experiencing difficulty, the teachers need to:

- integrate the teaching of talking and listening with reading and writing, in all KLAs
- identify and explicitly teach the language demands of the topic
- sequence the content
- check that the students are actually learning by monitoring progress

- provide additional learning experiences to ensure that the students achieve the outcomes which the teacher has established on the basis of the assessment, and move on.

3. Prioritise skills and knowledge

- (a) Teach the things that are easiest first and then move on to those that are more difficult.

For example, teach oral comprehension before written, literal comprehension before inferential comprehension.

- (b) Teach the things that are most useful first.

For example, teach the use of capital letters and full stops before the use of colons and semi-colons.

- (c) Do not teach together things that look alike or sound alike.

For example the terms *mean*, *median* and *mode* are often confusing for students. The teacher may consider introducing them at separated intervals.

The terms *solute*, *solution*, *solvent* and *dissolve* can be difficult for some students. The best-known is probably *dissolve*, and the term *solvent* could be taught first, using household examples likely to be familiar to the students. If *dissolve* and *solvent* are established before the unit, and revised during the unit, then *solution*, if regarded as the next most useful term, may be successfully introduced.

4. Decide how you will know that the student has mastered the skills or outcomes and is ready to move on to the next skill or step

The criteria used in assessment will depend on what the student is aiming to achieve. So for

- *acquisition of the skill*, the student should achieve 80-100% accuracy

- *fluency in the skill*, the student should be able to do it quickly, i.e. so many per minute or within so many minutes
- *maintenance of the skill*, the student should be able to maintain this performance after a period of time
- *generalisation of the skill*, the student needs to recognise that the skill is required in a different situation and should still be able to perform it well.

5. The steps of effective instruction are:

(a) Review of previously taught skills

Review previously taught skills to ensure that students have learned and remembered them. This gives students more practice and allows the teacher to check whether they are having any problems.

The teacher can correct any errors immediately and show or model again how the work is done correctly. Skills can be retaught and different strategies used.

(b) Presentation of new content

A short statement of the purpose and expectations and an overview of the lesson occur first.

The teacher models the skills or concepts being taught.

Students experiencing difficulties will often learn more easily if work is presented in small, manageable steps. Step-by-step instruction needs to be given, one step at a time as needed, not all at the beginning.

Frequent checking of students' understanding is necessary.

A lively lesson pace will maintain students' interest.

(c) Guided practice

In guided practice the teacher guides or leads students through some examples of the skill or concept.

This avoids having students practise errors and ensures their success.

(d) Independent practice

In independent practice students learn to use the new skills or information with a minimum of direct assistance from the teacher until new information is merged with what is already known.

Homework activities can be used for independent practice of skills. To avoid frustration, material set for homework needs to be at independent level. Teachers need to provide a range of contexts so that students can generalise skills.

(e) Cumulative review

Skills and knowledge will not be retained if taught only once or twice and practised for a brief time. They need frequent review, on a weekly basis, until thoroughly established.

Fun formats, such as games, make the review pleasant; tests, quick quizzes, oral questions can be used for review.

Review can be incorporated into homework activities.

Material not learned or remembered may need a different presentation and more practice.

(f) The role of fun and feeling successful

Teachers need to give special attention to students who rarely experience success easily in their learning. Sources of encouragement include:

- building a high level of success into the tasks the teacher presents. The work should be achievable, with some challenging parts
- frequently recognising success, by setting tasks on which students can achieve good results, and by praising students for using strategies effectively

- providing feedback on students' progress by using monitoring tools, like recording known sight words, fluency achieved or quizzes on important concepts
- including fun by using simple games wherever possible, where practice is needed for a skill or concept to be mastered.

6. Choosing appropriate reading material

For students who need additional support in literacy, one of the greatest problems for the teacher is finding reading material at the appropriate level. It is, however, crucial for the development of the students' reading skills that they have opportunities to read independent or instructional level material on at least a daily basis, and in as many KLAs as possible. When selecting appropriate resources it is also important that such material be age-appropriate and includes both literacy and factual texts.

See Choosing appropriate text, page 78 of the *Programming and strategies handbook*.

7. Planning a unit of work

After taking into account the principles outlined, teachers may find using the planning pyramid a useful way of clarifying the goals of learning for a unit of work in order to cater to the diversity of students' literacy needs in the class. See pages 18-20 of the *Programming and strategies handbook*.

When designing or selecting instructional materials and activities, keep in mind that students with difficulties in literacy need:

- very clear, explicit explanation of new skills and concepts through demonstration and modelling
- sufficient guided and independent practice in order to learn and then remember and use the skills and concepts.

8. Teaching a unit of work

Once the unit has been planned, the teacher will have to make decisions about how to put it into practice, including how to assist students with high support needs in literacy. They will require special teaching for the initial acquisition of skills and knowledge to achieve the outcomes the teacher has set. The teacher can consider how students could be grouped for some small-group work, and how support personnel and tutors (volunteers or peers) could be used. This may have been suggested in the individual literacy plan (ILP).

9. Monitoring student progress

Monitoring needs to be simple, manageable and time efficient.

Its purpose is to check that progress is being made towards the learning objectives. If such progress is not being made, or if the goal has been achieved already, it is a signal to the teacher that a change in learning objectives or the use of different strategies may be needed.

Monitoring should involve a combination of:

- observation
- formal testing using curriculum-based assessment
- analysis of work samples
- individual conferences with the students
- anecdotal records.

10. What should be taught next?

On the basis of student monitoring, the student can be moved to the next level of skill, or the next skill in priority. If the student has made sufficient progress, the individual literacy plan (ILP) may be deemed completed after a review meeting at which the student, the parent, year adviser or a class teacher, STLD and any other relevant personnel should be present.

Adapted from: *English K-6 Literacy Interim Support Document*. Board of Studies NSW, 1997.

