

Support for the Environmental Education Policy: Languages



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Introduction

This document complements the *Environmental Education Policy for Schools* and should be read in conjunction with the support document, *Implementing Environmental Education in your school*. It has been specially prepared for secondary teachers who are responsible for implementing syllabuses in the Languages key learning area.

The policy requires schools to maximise every opportunity to draw on the formal and informal curriculum in order to develop students' capacity to support an ecologically sustainable world.

Each faculty in your school is asked to:

- identify and address those outcomes in Board of Studies syllabuses K-12 which are specific to environmental education
- integrate the teaching of environmental education topics and issues to support outcomes in other Board of Studies syllabuses
- use the opportunities provided by special events and actions of the school community to enhance those student learning outcomes related to environmental education
- contribute to the development and implementation of the school environmental management plan.

The policy has three focus areas, each of which can be supported by the activities, projects and programs developed by teachers in all key learning areas in your school. The focus areas are:

- curriculum
- management of resources, and
- management of school grounds.

This document makes specific references to the Languages KLA and provides ideas and examples of how your faculty can contribute to each of these focus areas.



OBJECTIVES OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The objectives of environmental education are summarised below. Wherever possible, you are encouraged to link the appropriate objectives to the achievement of outcomes in the syllabuses you teach.

Curriculum objectives

Students will develop:

- knowledge and understandings about:
 - ❖ the nature and function of ecosystems and how they are interrelated (K1)
 - ❖ the impact of people on environments (K2)
 - ❖ the role of the community, politics and market forces in environmental decision-making (K3)
 - ❖ the principles of ecologically sustainable development (K4), and
 - ❖ career opportunities associated with the environment (K5)
- skills in:
 - ❖ applying technical skills within an environmental context (S1)
 - ❖ identifying and assessing environmental problems (S2)
 - ❖ communicating environmental problems to others (S3)
 - ❖ resolving environmental problems (S4)
 - ❖ adopting behaviours and practices that protect the environment (S5)
 - ❖ evaluating the success of their actions (S6)
- a respect for all life on Earth (V1)
- an appreciation of their cultural heritage (V2), and
- a commitment to act for the environment by supporting long-term solutions to environmental problems (V3).

THE LANGUAGES KLA AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education may be incorporated into the Languages key learning area through specific language activities which are based on an environmental theme, or through the socio-cultural consideration of environmental issues as they relate to particular countries or language groups.

One of the broad goals of learning languages is to enable students to develop an initial understanding of the enriching nature of cultural diversity, and the similarities and differences in lifestyles.

In languages programs the focus on environmental issues may centre initially on the socio-cultural aspects of particular countries or language groups and move to activities in the target language as the language skills of students develop.

Students in Stage 6 can be expected to use their target language in considering environmental issues.

Topics in the Stage 6 syllabuses include youth, social and global issues in which environmental considerations can be incorporated.

SAMPLE STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION INTO LANGUAGES

Stages 4 & 5

Context area	Sample strategies
The local environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing language activities which incorporate aspects of the built environment, including animals, insects, natural features, heritage sites etc. • Labelling elements of the local environment in the target language • Developing language activities on the local environment in the treatment of such themes as <i>where I live; my home and school; the weather</i> • Combining language excursions with an environmental focus (e.g. to Japanese or Chinese gardens)
Recreating an authentic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with students to create a small rice paddy, Japanese garden etc. within the school grounds • Researching flowers, plants, fruit and vegetables typical of the target country and growing them in the school or bringing them into class
Endangered animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing activities using countries, animals and structures to focus on the topic of endangered animals. The complexity of structures and phrases used will depend on the language skills of the students, (e.g. <i>Pandas live in China. I like pandas. There are only 2000 pandas. Tigers live in Asia. They are very strong.</i>) • Combining language excursions with an environmental focus (e.g. environmental education centres and the zoo using the support of education officers) • Developing posters in the target language on endangered animals
Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the theme of recycling to develop language activities in class and using such vocabulary as <i>glass, cans, paper bags, plastic, garbage</i> • Drawing three "garbage bins" on the board for garbage, recyclable goods and non-recyclable goods and then having students "throw" items in the target language into the bins by calling out responses • Labelling recycling bins around the school in the target language • Making up slogans for use on stickers
Raising awareness of environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing posters in the target language on environmental issues, (e.g. recycling cans and glass in the canteen, using less electricity, turning off taps). These can be enhanced by using computer technology • Using the Internet to research environmental issues in the target language country (e.g. issues such as packaging, pollution, recycling and endangered animals) • Searching for current issues in target language countries • Researching changing weather patterns in the target country or continent and comparing these with Australia

Stages 6

Context area	Sample strategies
Syllabus topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using authentic texts in the target language to highlight environmental issues• Using authentic texts and engaging in Internet research in the target language• Using authentic texts, such as articles on environmental issues, for language analysis and comment

