



## **ORAL LANGUAGE—LISTENING AND SPEAKING**

Listening and speaking are natural, developmental processes that infants and young children are immersed in from their earliest experiences. Almost all children arrive at school with an impressive command of their mother-tongue language. However, the expectations and approach to language development in school is often very different from the successful learning environment the child has previously experienced. In the transition from home to school, or from one school to another, it is important to acknowledge the language profile of the individual and build on previous learning in ways that are positive and productive.

Oral language encompasses all aspects of listening and speaking—skills that are essential for ongoing language development, for learning and for relating to others. Listening (the receptive mode) and speaking (the expressive mode) work together in a transactional process between listeners and speakers. A balanced programme will provide meaningful and well-planned opportunities for learners to participate as listeners as well as speakers. Listening involves more than just hearing sounds. It requires active and conscious attention in order to make sense of what is heard. Purposeful talk enables learners to articulate thoughts as they construct and reconstruct meaning to understand the world around them. Oral language involves recognizing and using certain types of language according to the audience and purposes (for example, the language used at home, the language of the classroom, the language of play, the language of inquiry, conversations with peers, giving instructions, interpreting creative texts, the language of fantasy, the language of different generations, of different times and places).

In an inquiry-based learning environment, oral language exposes the thinking of the learner. It is a means by which “inner speech” (Vygotsky 1999) can be communicated and shared to negotiate and construct meaning and develop deeper levels of understanding.

### **Overall expectations**

Learners are able to understand the difference between literal and figurative language; how to use language differently for different purposes. They are aware that they are building on their previous experiences and using language to construct new meaning.

### **Conceptual understandings**

- Spoken language can be used to persuade and influence people.
- Metaphorical language creates strong visual images in our imagination.
- Listeners identify key ideas in spoken language and synthesize them to create their own understanding.
- People draw on what they already know in order to infer new meaning from what they hear.

### **Learning outcomes**

Learners:

- participate appropriately as listener and speaker, in discussions, conversations, debates and group presentations
- generate, develop and modify ideas and opinions through discussion



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- listen and respond appropriately to instructions, questions and explanations
- infer meanings, draw conclusions and make judgments about oral presentations
- use an increasing vocabulary and more complex sentence structures with a high level of specificity
- argue persuasively and justify a point of view
- show open-minded attitudes when listening to other points of view
- paraphrase and summarize when communicating orally
- understand and use figurative language such as simile, personification and metaphor
- use oral language to formulate and communicate possibilities and theories
- use standard grammatical structures competently in appropriate situations
- use register, tone, voice level and intonation to enhance meaning
- appreciate that people speak and respond according to personal and cultural perspectives
- use speech responsibly to inform, entertain and influence others
- reflect on communication to monitor and assess their own learning.

## **VISUAL LANGUAGE—VIEWING AND PRESENTING**

Viewing and presenting are fundamental processes that are historically and universally powerful and significant. The receptive processes (viewing) and expressive processes (presenting) are connected and allow for reciprocal growth in understanding; neither process has meaning except in relation to the other. It is important to provide a balanced programme with opportunities for students to experience both viewing and presenting. These processes involve interpreting, using and constructing visuals and multimedia in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes and audiences. They allow students to understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs. Visual texts may be paper, electronic or live, observable forms of communication that are consciously constructed to convey meaning and immediately engage viewers, allowing them instant access to data. Examples of visual texts are: advertisements, brochures, computer games and programs, websites, movies, posters, signs, logos, flags, maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations, graphic organizers, cartoons and comics. Learning to interpret this data, and to understand and use different media, are invaluable life skills.

Acquiring skills related to information and communication technology (ICT) and visual texts is significant because of their persuasive influence in society. It is important to learn how visual images influence meaning and produce powerful associations that shape the way we think and feel. Opportunities that invite students to explore the function and construction of images facilitate the process of critically analysing a range of visual texts. Learning to understand and use different visual texts expands the sources of information and expressive abilities of students.

### **Overall expectations**

Through inquiry, learners engage with an increasing range of visual text resources. As well as exploring the viewing and presenting strategies that are a part of the planned learning environment, they select and use strategies that suit their learning styles. They are able to make connections between visual imagery and social commentary. They show more discernment in selecting information they consider reliable. They are able to use visual imagery to support a position.



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## Conceptual understandings

- The aim of commercial media is to influence and persuade viewers.
- Individuals respond differently to visual texts, according to their previous experiences, preferences and perspectives.
- Knowing about the techniques used in visual texts helps us to interpret presentations and create our own visual effects.
- Synthesizing information from visual texts is dependent upon personal interpretation and leads to new understanding.

## Learning outcomes

Learners:

- view and critically analyse a range of visual texts, communicating understanding through oral, written and visual media
- identify factors that influence personal reactions to visual texts; design visual texts with the intention of influencing the way people think and feel
- analyse and interpret the ways in which visual effects are used to establish context
- identify elements and techniques that make advertisements, logos and symbols effective and draw on this knowledge to create their own visual effects
- realize that cultural influences affect the way we respond to visual effects and explain how this affects our interpretation, for example, the use of particular colours or symbols
- realize that individuals interpret visual information according to their personal experiences and different perspectives
- show how body language, for example, facial expression, gesture and movement, posture and orientation, eye contact and touch, can be used to achieve effects and influence meaning
- apply knowledge of presentation techniques in original and innovative ways; explain their own ideas for achieving desired effects
- examine and analyse text and illustrations in reference material, including online text, explaining how visual and written information work together to reinforce each other and make meaning more explicit
- navigate the internet in response to verbal and visual prompts with confidence and familiarity; use ICT to prepare their own presentations
- use appropriate terminology to identify a range of visual effects/formats and critically analyse their effectiveness, for example, mood, media, juxtaposition, proportion
- analyse the selection and composition of visual presentations; select examples to explain how they achieve a particular impact, for example, dominant images, use of colour, texture, symbolism
- identify the intended audience and purpose of a visual presentation; identify overt and subliminal messages
- reflect on ways in which understanding the intention of a visual message can influence personal responses.



## **WRITTEN LANGUAGE—READING**

Reading is a developmental process that involves constructing meaning from text. The process is interactive and involves the reader's purpose for reading, the reader's prior knowledge and experience, and the text itself. It begins to happen when the young learner realizes that print conveys meaning and becomes concerned with trying to make sense of the marks on the page. The most significant contribution parents and teachers can make to success in reading is to provide a captivating range of picture books and other illustrated materials to share with beginning readers. Enthusiasm and curiosity are essential ingredients in promoting the desire to read. Children of all ages need to experience and enjoy a wide variety of interesting, informative, intriguing and creative reading materials.

Reading helps us to clarify our ideas, feelings, thoughts and opinions. Literature offers us a means of understanding ourselves and others, and has the power to influence and structure thinking. Well-written fiction provides opportunities for learners to imagine themselves in another's situation, reflecting on feelings and actions, and developing empathy. The ability to read and comprehend non-fiction is essential for the process of inquiry. As inquirers, learners need to be able to identify, synthesize and apply useful and relevant information from text. Teachers should provide a balance between fiction and non-fiction, to meet the range of learning needs and interests of their students.

Children learn to read by reading. In order to develop lifelong reading habits, learners need to have extended periods of time to read for pleasure, interest, and information, experiencing an extensive range of quality fiction and non-fiction texts. As learners engage with interesting and appealing texts, appropriate to their experiences and developmental phase, they acquire the skills, strategies and conceptual understanding necessary to become competent, motivated, independent readers.

### **Overall expectations**

Learners show an understanding of the strategies authors use to engage them. They have their favourite authors and can articulate reasons for their choices. Reading provides a sense of accomplishment, not only in the process, but in the access it provides them to further knowledge about, and understanding of, the world.

### **Conceptual understandings**

- Authors structure stories around significant themes.
- Effective stories have a structure, purpose and sequence of events (plot) that help to make the author's intention clear.
- Synthesizing ideas and information from texts leads to new ideas and understanding.
- Reading opens our minds to multiple perspectives and helps us to understand how people think, feel and act.

### **Learning outcomes**

Learners:

- read a wide range of texts confidently, independently and with understanding
- work in cooperative groups to locate and select texts appropriate to purpose and audience



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- participate in class, group or individual author studies, gaining an in-depth understanding of the work and style of a particular author and appreciating what it means to be an author
- identify genre (including fantasy, biography, science fiction, mystery, historical novel) and explain elements and literary forms that are associated with different genres
- appreciate structural and stylistic differences between fiction and non-fiction; show understanding of this distinction when structuring their own writing
- appreciate authors' use of language and interpret meaning beyond the literal
- understand that authors use words and literary devices to evoke mental images
- recognize and understand figurative language, for example, similes, metaphors, idioms
- make inferences and be able to justify them
- identify and describe elements of a story—plot, setting, characters, theme—and explain how they contribute to its effectiveness
- compare and contrast the plots of two different but similar novels, commenting on effectiveness and impact
- distinguish between fact and opinion, and reach their own conclusions about what represents valid information
- use a range of strategies to solve comprehension problems and deepen their understanding of a text
- consistently and confidently use a range of resources to find information and support their inquiries
- participate in collaborative learning, considering multiple perspectives and working with peers to co-construct new understanding
- use the internet responsibly and knowledgeably, appreciating its uses and limitations to locate, organize and synthesize information from a variety of sources including the library/media centre, the internet, people in the school, family, the immediate community or the global community.

## **WRITTEN LANGUAGE—WRITING**

Writing is a way of expressing ourselves. It is a personal act that grows and develops with the individual. From the earliest lines and marks of young learners to the expression of mature writers, it allows us to organize and communicate thoughts, ideas and information in a visible and tangible way. Writing is primarily concerned with communicating meaning and intention. When children are encouraged to express themselves and reveal their own “voice”, writing is a genuine expression of the individual. The quality of expression lies in the authenticity of the message and the desire to communicate. If the writer has shared his or her message in such a way that others can appreciate it, the writer's intention has been achieved. Over time, writing involves developing a variety of structures, strategies and literary techniques (spelling, grammar, plot, character, punctuation, voice) and applying them with increasing skill and effectiveness. However, the writer's ability to communicate his or her intention and share meaning takes precedence over accuracy and the application of skills. Accuracy and skills grow out of the process of producing meaningful communication. Children learn to write by writing. Acquiring a set of isolated skills will not turn them into writers. It is only in the process of sharing their ideas in written form that skills are developed, applied and refined to produce increasingly effective written communication.



## **Overall expectations**

Learners show an understanding of the conventions pertaining to writing, in its different forms, that are widely accepted. In addition, they demonstrate a high level of integration of the strands of language in order to create meaning in a manner that suits their learning styles. They can analyse the writing of others and identify common or recurring themes or issues. They accept feedback from others.

## **Conceptual understandings**

- Stories that people want to read are built around themes to which they can make connections.
- Effective stories have a purpose and structure that help to make the author's intention clear.
- Synthesizing ideas enables us to build on what we know, reflect on different perspectives, and express new ideas.
- Knowing what we aim to achieve helps us to plan and develop different forms of writing.
- Through the process of planning, drafting, editing and revising, our writing improves over time.

## **Learning outcomes**

Learners:

- write independently and with confidence, showing the development of their own voice and style
- write using a range of text types in order to communicate effectively, for example, narrative, instructional, persuasive
- adapt writing according to the audience and demonstrate the ability to engage and sustain the interest of the reader
- use appropriate paragraphing to organize ideas
- use a range of vocabulary and relevant supporting details to convey meaning and create atmosphere and mood
- use planning, drafting, editing and reviewing processes independently and with increasing competence
- critique the writing of peers sensitively; offer constructive suggestions
- vary sentence structure and length
- demonstrate an increasing understanding of how grammar works
- use standard spelling for most words and use appropriate resources to check spelling
- use a dictionary, thesaurus, spellchecker confidently and effectively to check accuracy, broaden vocabulary and enrich their writing
- choose to publish written work in handwritten form or in digital format independently
- use written language as a means of reflecting on their own learning
- recognize and use figurative language to enhance writing, for example, similes, metaphors, idioms, alliteration
- identify and describe elements of a story—setting, plot, character, theme
- locate, organize, synthesize and present written information obtained from a variety of valid sources



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- use a range of tools and techniques to produce written work that is attractively and effective