

new First Steps[®] in Literacy

CANADIAN EDITION

Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning



PEARSON

First Steps® *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, Canadian Edition

© Western Australian Minister for Education 2013

Published in Canada by
Pearson Canada Inc.
26 Prince Andrew Place
Don Mills, ON M3C 2T8

Text by Kevlynn Annandale, Ross Bindon, Kerry Handley, Annette Johnston, Lynn Lockett, Philippa Lynch.

Vice-President, Publishing and Marketing, School Division: Mark Cobham
Vice-President, Marketing and Professional Field Services: Anne-Marie Scullion
Publisher, Pearson Professional Learning: Debbie Davidson
Research and Communications Manager: Chris Allen
Canadian Edition Advisors: Noreene Decker, Norma MacFarlane, Mary Lou Stirling
Project Co-ordinator, Pearson Professional Learning: Joanne Close
Developmental Editors: Katherine Revington, Jacquelyn Busby
Senior Production Editor: Jennifer Handel
Proofreader: Laura Neves
Production Coordinator: Zane Kaneps
Composition: Computer Composition of Canada Inc.
Illustrator: Kevin Cheng
Permissions and Photo Research: Terri Rothman
Cover Design: Alex Li
Cover Image: Joe Drivas/Photographer's Choice/GettyImages

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-221012-6

ISBN-10: 0-13-221012-6

Canadian Edition Reviewers

Writing Reviewers

Julie Bain, *Elementary English Language Arts Specialist, Calgary Board of Education*
Cindy Coffin, *Assistant Superintendent, Learning Services, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools*
Kathryn D'Angelo, *District Administrator for Learning Services, K–12, Richmond SD*
Lynn Landry, *Literacy Leader P–9, Halifax Regional School Board*
Deidre McConnell, *Assistant Principal, Calgary Board of Education*
Marta Mulhern, *Instructional Co-ordinator, Literacy, Peel District School Board*
Rhonda Nixon, *Assistant Principal, Doctoral Student, Language and Literacy, Edmonton Catholic School Board*
Ken Pettigrew, *Instructional Leader, English and Literacy, K–8, Toronto District School Board*
Carole Stickley, *Former Literacy Facilitator, New Westminster Board of Education*

Reading Reviewers

Marilyn Allen, *Coordinator, St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division, #20*
Andrea Bishop, *Curriculum Consultant, Language 1–8, Halton Catholic District School Board*
Elizabeth Ford-Makarow, *Educational Consultant, Riverside School Board*
Don Jones, *Literacy Coordinator, Halton District School Board, Lecturer with Charles Sturt University, Burlington Campus*
Deidre McConnell, *Assistant Principal, Calgary Board of Education*
Rhonda Nixon, *Assistant Principal, Doctoral Student, Language and Literacy, Edmonton Catholic School Board*
Carole Stickley, *Former Literacy Facilitator, New Westminster Board of Education*
Maureen Taylor, *Integrated Learning Consultant, Saskatchewan Rivers School Division*

For permission to reproduce copyrighted material, the publisher gratefully acknowledges the copyright holders listed on page 218, which is considered an extension of this copyright page.

PEARSON



Contents

Chapter 1

First Steps, Canadian Edition

Why a New Edition of *First Steps*?

- So What's Different?

Overview of *First Steps, Canadian Edition*

- The Nature of the Resource
- The Structure of the Resource
- The Structure of the Strands
- Overview of the *First Steps* Materials

Understanding the *First Steps*

Maps of Development

The Maps of Development and Curriculum Frameworks

Defining the Substrands

- Use of Texts
- An Overview of Texts
- Contextual Understanding
- Conventions
- Processes and Strategies

The Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Cycle

Chapter 2

Planning for the Successful Implementation of *First Steps*

The Successful Implementation of Change

- High-Quality Professional Development
- Principal as Learner and Leader
- Ongoing Support for Teachers
- Whole-School Implementation
- Providing Time
- Maintaining Continuity Through Planning
- Reflecting and Celebrating
- Developing and Articulating a Vision
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Outcomes
- Involving Parents

Chapter 3

Understanding *First Steps* Beliefs

The Art of Teaching Literacy

Whose Literacy?

The Reflective Teacher

First Steps Beliefs

Chapter 4

***First Steps* and Diversity**

Defining Diversity

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners:

A Broad Overview

Using *First Steps* with Diverse Learners

- Identification of Varied Patterns of Development
- Scope to Annotate Maps of Development
- Support for Teachers to Differentiate Instruction
- Selection from a Wide Range of Effective Teaching and Learning Practices
- Activities and Learning Experiences That Are Adaptable

Using *First Steps* with Diverse Learners: Case Stories

1: Professional Learning Communities

2: Aboriginal Students

3: Assessment for Learning

4: English Language Learners

5: Differentiated Instruction

Chapter 5

Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment

The Importance of a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment

Reflecting *First Steps* Beliefs in Creating a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment

The Physical Environment

- Factors to Consider
- Organizing Floor Areas
- Organizing Wall Spaces

The Classroom Culture

- Recognizing and Celebrating Individual Differences
- Clarifying and Supporting Expectations
- Maintaining a Core of Routines
- Negotiating Aspects of the Classroom

Chapter 6

Assessment and Evaluation: Theory, Principles, and Practices

Definitions	85
Successful Assessment and Evaluation	87
• Clear Purpose	87
• Ongoing Assessment in Authentic Contexts	88
• Range of Tools and Methods	88
• Collaborative Approach	88
• Systems to Record and Manage Data	89
• Adaptations	89
• Analysis of Information	89
A Process for Assessment and Evaluation	90
What Are the Most Reliable and Valid Ways to Collect Data?	92
• Focused Observation	92
• Products	93
• Conversations	106
How Can the Data Be Recorded?	112
How Can the Data Be Shared with Others?	118

Chapter 7

Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Why Label Teaching Practices?	121
What Is a Practice?	122
Understanding Effective Teaching and Learning Practices	122
Description of Effective Teaching and Learning Practices	124
• Familiarizing	125
• Modelling	126
• Sharing	127
• Guiding	128
• Analyzing	130
• Practising	131
• Applying	132
• Investigating	133
• Playing	134
• Discussing	135
• Innovating	136
• Transforming	137
• Simulating	139
• Reflecting	140

Chapter 8

Classroom Planning and Grouping

Using <i>First Steps</i> for Long-Term and Short-Term Planning	141
• What Is Planning?	141
• Why Plan?	141
• Considerations for Planning	142
• Levels of Planning	142
• Planning for Individuals	148
• Planning Across the Strands	150
Organizational Structures for Individual Lessons	152
• Grouping Considerations	152
• Flexible Grouping	154
• Lesson Structures	156
Working with Groups	160
• Group Management	160

Chapter 9

The Metacognitive Process: Reflecting, Representing, and Reporting

Supporting Metacognitive Thinking	163
Teaching Metacognitive Thinking	164
Metacognitive Thinking Vocabulary	166
The Metacognitive Process	166
Reflecting on and Representing Learning	169
Ways of Reporting Learning	184

Chapter 10

Communicating with Parents

Developing Home–School Partnerships	190
The Importance of Developing Partnerships with Parents	191
Raising Awareness and Sharing Information	192
Involving Parents	201
Helping Parents Support Literacy Development	202

Glossary

Bibliography

Index

Credits

Authors' Acknowledgments

The *First Steps*[®] team gives grateful thanks to

- **all teachers and students** who were involved in piloting the materials and offering feedback, either as critical readers, test pilots, or navigator schools;
- **the authors** of the original *First Steps*[®], developed by the Education Department of Western Australia, and the efforts of the many individuals who contributed to that resource.



CHAPTER 1

First Steps, Canadian Edition

Why a New Edition of *First Steps*?

This new edition of *First Steps* is the result of over a decade of reflection by teachers. Since 1990, teachers around the world have used the original *First Steps* materials to make practical connections between assessment, teaching, and learning, and to address diverse needs within the classroom. They have strategically drawn upon the *First Steps* Developmental Continua and Resource Books to map the development of their students and make informed decisions about appropriate teaching and learning experiences. The work of these many thousands of teachers, along with the valuable stories they have shared, has provided the impetus for ongoing, rigorous reflection and reorientation of the resource.

This edition builds on the original *First Steps* resource by drawing upon contemporary research and developments in the field of literacy learning. In addition, this version has been edited to better meet the needs of Canadian educators. It makes the links between assessment and teaching clearer and more explicit. This will help teachers to be more strategic about what to teach, how to teach it, when to teach it and, most important, why.

First Steps, Canadian Edition, has a strong focus on supporting teachers and schools as they practise a more student-centred approach, shifting emphasis from what is to be taught to what is actually learned by each student. *First Steps*, Canadian Edition, will help teachers to maintain a focus on students, when the gravitational pull is sometimes toward covering curriculum content.

So What's Different?

Teachers familiar with *First Steps* will notice some significant changes to the resource.

• *Strands*

This edition of *First Steps* is organized around four strands of literacy: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Viewing. All strands are threaded with practical, accessible, classroom-tested instructional approaches and activities.

In response to the increasing impact of visual images on daily

communication and the integration of print, images, and symbols in multimedia texts, a Viewing strand has been added. Viewing is defined as the comprehension and composition of visual images, both moving and still, in a variety of media.

The Spelling strand in the original *First Steps* material has been incorporated into the Writing strand to emphasize the relationship between the two.

• **Organization Within the Strands**

Within the resource each strand is seen as intertwined smaller categories, referred to throughout the resource as substrands. The strands and substrands reflect the change in how literacy is perceived and defined today. The types of literacy skills, knowledge, and understandings needed by students to participate effectively in contemporary society have provided the basis for the overall organizational structure of the resource.

The substrands provide lenses through which student performance in all facets of literacy can be monitored and supported cohesively. The substrands, as defined later in this chapter, are as follows:

- Use of Texts
- Contextual Understanding
- Conventions
- Processes and Strategies

• **Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning (LATL)**

International feedback has contributed to a new, comprehensive, cornerstone book in this new edition of *First Steps: Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*. This book provides a means of reflecting on core understandings and beliefs about assessment, teaching, and learning that are common to all strands of literacy.

• **The Maps of Development**

The *First Steps* Maps of Development (formerly known as the *First Steps* Developmental Continua) are substantially more comprehensive.

The Maps of Development have been reconceptualized with an updated and revised set of indicators. The Maps now allow teachers to take into account their own practical research into particular individuals or groups of students, based on a factor of diversity and observed over time; for example, teachers can now allow for differences in linguistic background.

Suggested teaching emphases are clearly linked to phases of

development and target specific areas of strength or need. Within each Map of Development book, a revised and expanded range of teaching and learning experiences has been created at each phase of development. Combined, these improved features provide teachers with comprehensive support and clear pathways to make informed, strategic decisions about how best to support students' literacy development.

- **The Resource Books**

The Resource Books have been updated and expanded. Clear links can now be made between the Maps of Development and the Resource Books through common organizational structures. New chapters dedicated to each substrand have been created. These provide concise theory and practical ideas for enhancing teaching and learning in each substrand.



- **The CD-ROMs**

CD-ROMs have been added to the resource to help teachers access and manipulate line masters suggested in *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning*, the Maps of Development, and the Resource Books.

Overview of *First Steps*, Canadian Edition

The Nature of the Resource

The great irony of innovation in teaching is that the least tangible elements of the process are the most powerful. Too often it appears that a book or a collection of books is the key to positive change, when, really, the crucial factor is the teacher's engagement in sustained, practical, owned professional development. The subsequent coaching, feedback, discussion, and reflection in a supportive setting are just as critical.

First Steps, Canadian Edition, is designed to complement carefully structured professional development processes that promote long-term commitment. Together, the professional development and the books provide a strategic, whole-school approach to improving students' literacy outcomes. It is unlikely that *First Steps*, Canadian Edition, will reach its full potential as a teaching and learning resource without the combination of three important elements:

- quality professional development
- practical and comprehensive materials
- strategic planning for school implementation

As a resource, *First Steps*, Canadian Edition, is only one part of an explicit and cohesive approach to improving literacy learning. It can be implemented in the company of other programs, and alongside a variety of resources and personal ideas. In doing so, schools and teachers need to be aware of the impact of competing priorities and how the different resources can work together to achieve common goals.

Given the breadth of literacy, schools and teachers may choose to implement only one strand or limited strands of the resource. Prioritization makes sense and helps teachers to integrate new practices. Ownership and commitment to the implementation of *First Steps* is often engendered through the customization of the professional development of a chosen strand. A selection of additional sessions, beyond the regular course, will be available to meet the needs of teachers in different schools and contexts. Attempting to implement parts of the resource smaller than a strand will generally result in piecemeal, disconnected outcomes.

The Structure of the Resource

First Steps, Canadian Edition, materials are made up of four interwoven strands of literacy: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Viewing, which symbolize the interrelatedness of literacy learning. All strands are threaded with practical, accessible, classroom-tested instructional approaches and activities.

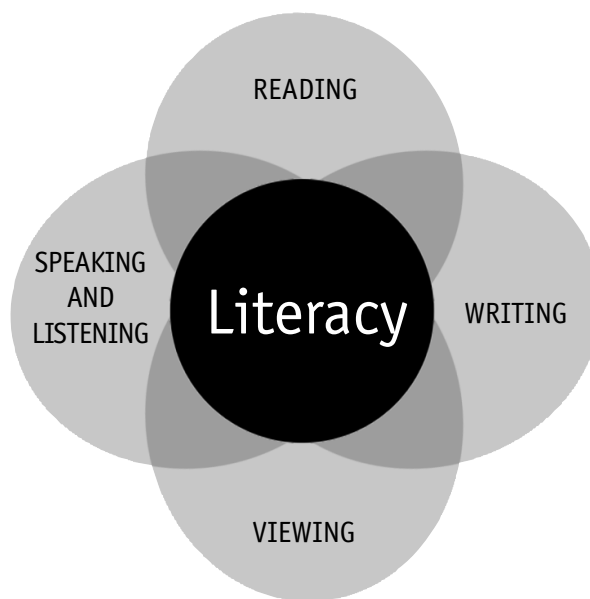


Figure 1.1 Strands of literacy

Within the resource each strand is seen as intertwined smaller categories, referred to throughout the resource as substrands.

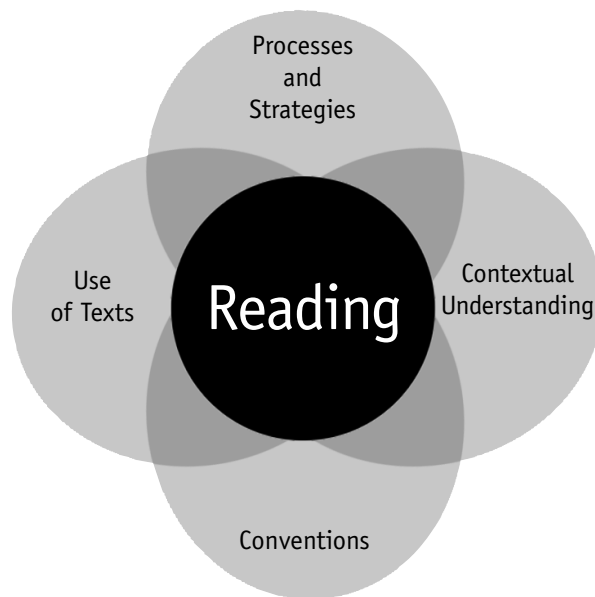


Figure 1.2 How substrands of literacy make up a strand, e.g., Reading

These strands and substrands reflect the change in how literacy is perceived and defined today. The types of literacy skills and understandings needed by students to participate effectively in contemporary society have provided the impetus for the overall organizational structure of the resource.

Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning

Research shows that teachers gradually integrate and adopt innovations based on their established understandings of what works best for students (Breen 1997). This means that the teaching of literacy is underpinned by some personal, fundamental beliefs about what constitutes effective teaching. Consequently, the core of this edition of *First Steps* is the book *Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning (LATL)*.

- *LATL* is an essential element of the professional development course for each strand.
- It provides an overview of this edition of *First Steps*.
- It enables teachers to reflect on how the beliefs underpinning the *First Steps* materials reconcile with their own personal and professional beliefs about teaching.
- It addresses aspects of assessment, teaching, and learning that are generic and therefore applicable to all strands; e.g., **data collection**.
- It discusses management aspects, such as classroom and school planning, creating a positive classroom environment, and communicating with parents.

The Structure of the Strands

Each strand of *First Steps*, Canadian Edition, consists of two books, each supported by a CD-ROM. One is dedicated to assessing the development of students and links developmental phases with appropriate instruction for individuals and groups of students. This book is the Map of Development.

The second book within each strand deals with the theoretical and practical background to different facets of that strand of literacy. This book is the Resource Book.

First Steps users will find that the Map of Development helps to assess and plan, while the Resource Book provides supporting detail about the nature of the strategies and activities.

The Maps of Development

The *First Steps* Maps of Development (formerly known as the *First Steps* Developmental Continua) validate what teachers know about their students and are organized to help teachers link assessment to teaching. Although literacy in practice is an amalgam of the strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Viewing, individual maps are necessary to represent the complexity of each strand.

Considering each strand as intertwined substrands provides further opportunity for a more specialized analysis of the strands. These substrands allow teachers to focus on important aspects within each strand of literacy. The organization of the Maps into the substrands provides a practical framework for looking at assessment, teaching, and learning and reflects current beliefs about how literacy is defined.

The Maps of Development are based on long-term research and theory and suggest the broad phases of development through which a learner passes in becoming a competent user of that strand (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, or Viewing). Each of the Maps identifies behaviours and related abilities, suggested teaching emphases, and a range of teaching and learning experiences at each phase of development. Together, these features help teachers make informed, strategic decisions about how to support students' literacy development.

• Phases

The Maps make explicit some of the indicators, or descriptors of behaviour, that help identify how students are comprehending and composing meaning. The indicators were drawn from research into the development of literacy in predominantly English-speaking

Although not directly addressed by *First Steps Literacy*, Canadian Edition, representing can be seen as a strand, too. Often subsumed under writing, it encompasses drama, visual art, and music as ways of expressing understanding.

students but many have been found to be applicable to English language learners. They are essentially a “what to look for,” enabling teachers to be focused in their data collection, management, and interpretation. It was found that indicators tend to cluster together; that is, if students exhibit one behaviour, they tend to exhibit several other related behaviours. Each cluster of indicators is called a “phase.” This clustering of indicators into phases does not demonstrate that language develops in a linear sequence, but does enable teachers to map student progress.

• Key Indicators

Key Indicators describe behaviours that are typical of a phase and are used collectively to identify a student’s phase of development, so that links can be made to appropriate teaching and learning experiences. Additional indicators describe or illustrate development within a phase or movement toward the next phase. Individual students may exhibit a range of indicators from various phases at any one time. Students rarely progress in a neat and well-sequenced manner; instead, they may remain in one phase for some length of time and move rapidly through other phases. Similarly, they may show marked progress in one substrand but not in another. There are many factors that influence the rate and nature of a student’s development, including socio-cultural context, cognitive ability, and the teaching and learning experiences offered to them.

The indicators within each Map of Development are organized under the following substrand headings:

- Use of Texts
- Contextual Understanding
- Conventions
- Processes and Strategies

• Major Teaching Emphases

Major Teaching Emphases are also included at each phase of development. These are suggestions of appropriate teaching priorities for each phase and are organized under these headings:

- Environment and Attitude
- Use of Texts
- Contextual Understanding
- Conventions
- Processes and Strategies

• Teaching and Learning Experiences

Teaching and Learning Experiences are provided in each phase. These suggest different ways in which Major Teaching Emphases may be addressed and offer examples of activities designed to support students' development within the four substrand areas of literacy.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the relationships between Indicators, Major Teaching Emphases, and Teaching and Learning Experiences documented in the Maps of Development. Once the indicators have been used to identify the student's phase of development, the combined selection of Major Teaching Emphases and Teaching and Learning Experiences within the identified phase will support further development.

The Resource Books

Each Resource Book explains the theory and critical features that underpin the strand within chapters dedicated to each substrand. The learning experiences of the Processes and Strategies substrand are also included in the Resource Books because these experiences can apply to students at all phases. The books also explore how to help students compose and comprehend spoken, written, and visual texts for different purposes by providing an explanation of the structure and characteristics of a wide range of text forms.

The CD-ROMs

Each strand includes two CD-ROMs that provide teachers with access to any line masters that have been provided in either the Map, Resource Book, or *LATL*. These line masters will always be identified with the CD-ROM icon. Parent Support Cards for each phase of development are also provided on the Map of Development CD-ROM. Teachers are able to reproduce all line masters provided on the CD-ROM for classroom use.



First Steps: Map of Development				
Phase Global Statement	Phase Global Statement	Phase Global Statement	Phase Global Statement	Phase Global Statement
Indicators	Indicators	Indicators	Indicators	Indicators
Major Teaching Emphases	Major Teaching Emphases	Major Teaching Emphases	Major Teaching Emphases	Major Teaching Emphases
Teaching and Learning Experiences	Teaching and Learning Experiences	Teaching and Learning Experiences	Teaching and Learning Experiences	Teaching and Learning Experiences

Indicators are used in conjunction with the Global Statement to determine a student's phase of development.

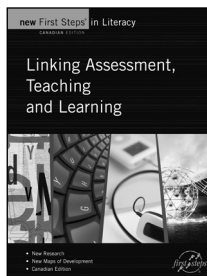
Major Teaching Emphases are chosen from the identified phase of development.

Teaching and Learning Experiences are selected from the same phase of development.

Figure 1.3 Relationships between Indicators, Major Teaching Emphases, and Teaching and Learning Experiences

Overview of the First Steps Materials

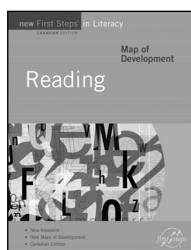
Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning



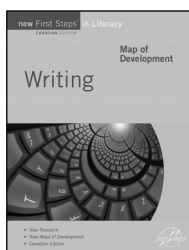
LATL

Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning is a foundation text that supports successful assessment, teaching, and learning.

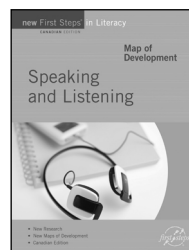
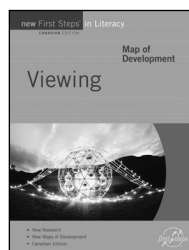
First Steps Maps of Development



Available

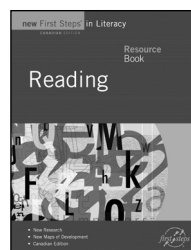


Available

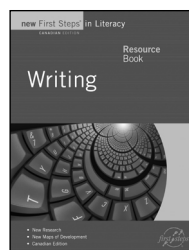


The *First Steps* Maps of Development provide phase-specific teaching and learning experiences that support students' development.

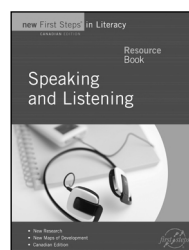
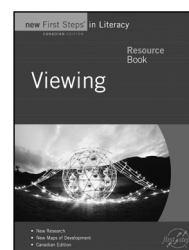
First Steps Resource Books



Available



Available



The Resource Books provide further information that supports teachers as they use the Maps of Development.

CD-ROMs (2 per strand)



Reading



Writing



Viewing



Speaking and Listening

The *First Steps* CD-ROMs include reproducible assessment and teaching line masters, recording sheets, and parent support cards for each book.

Understanding the *First Steps* Maps of Development

A number of essential understandings underpin the effective use of the *First Steps* Maps of Development. These understandings can be grouped under three headings:

- Exercising Professional Judgment
- Interpreting Indicators
- Considering Diversity

Exercising Professional Judgment

Teachers using the *First Steps* Maps of Development can exercise professional judgment by considering the following understandings about the Maps.

- The Maps represent a progressive picture of what students do as a result of comprehensive and responsive literacy teaching.
- The Maps can be used by teachers in conjunction with school, district, or provincial assessment and evaluation practices.
- The Maps provide a framework for, but do not replace, professional judgment in the areas of assessment, teaching, and learning.
- The Maps provide a framework that supports professional judgment when the teacher is planning for whole-class, small-group, and individual learning experiences.
- The Maps are designed to be used strategically; teachers decide how much data needs to be collected, how many students will be identified on the maps, in how many strands, and over what period of time.

Interpreting Indicators

- Indicators are recorded when they are displayed independently and observed on several occasions in different contexts, including other curriculum areas.
- Indicators are intended to be interpreted in the context of the Global Statement, the indicators from the surrounding phases, and what the teacher knows about the student.
- Other indicators describe behaviours that provide further detail of the phase. These are particularly useful when documenting small growth over a period of time.
- Literacy behaviours demonstrated by students may be represented by a number of indicators in different substrands. For example, if a student uses a self-questioning strategy during reading to identify stereotypes in a text, an emphasis on the strategy used

will see the indicator feature in the Processes and Strategies substrand; an emphasis on the student's knowledge of stereotypes, however, would see the indicator appear in the Contextual Understanding substrand.

- Ongoing collegial discussion in professional learning communities (PLCs) about the interpretation of indicators is an essential part of the implementation of *First Steps* in a school.

Considering Diversity

- Social, cultural, and linguistic factors have significant influence on student progress. The reason a student is or is not displaying an indicator is as important as the display of the indicator itself.
- Disabilities and varied learning styles may mean that some students need to display indicators with the aid of specialized communication equipment or means, such as specialized computer communication aids.
- *First Steps* Maps of Development can be annotated for individual students and groups of students by conducting systematic research. This can be done by noting the absence or addition of particular behaviours based on a factor of diversity observed over time. (See Chapter 4: *First Steps* and Diversity.)
- English language learners may show indicators across a range of phases and may never fit neatly into one particular phase. This is true of all progress maps and assessment tools designed for broad student populations. For example, within an apparently homogeneous group of students who all share the same first language, there will be significant variations in how literate each student is in that first language. The nature and timing of each one's previous experiences with English and a variety of social and cultural factors may affect an individual's development. It is critical that teachers employ professional judgment in assessing and evaluating the performance of students from diverse backgrounds.

The Maps of Development and Curriculum Frameworks

First Steps has been designed to support, not replace, a curriculum or a standardized assessment. It has an emphasis on **how** students learn, unlike a curriculum that has a strong focus on **what** students learn. *First Steps* has been designed primarily to help teachers make decisions about instruction, unlike a standardized assessment that has a focus on large-scale comparability of student populations.

Attempts to equalize or convert *First Steps* into a curriculum or standardized assessment, or vice versa, are fraught with danger as each was written for a different purpose.

Most education systems have a curriculum framework as a cornerstone of their endeavours. Provincial curriculum frameworks normally set out **what** all students should know, understand, be able to do, and value as a result of the programs they undertake at school. Often this framework is accompanied by a corresponding assessment framework that measures whether these outcomes or expectations have been achieved, and the relative performance of subgroups within the student population. The primary purpose of curriculum and assessment frameworks is to describe and monitor performance so that it can be reported to stakeholders in the community.

In mapping terms, the education system is delineating destinations; that is, where the system wants students to be at a given point in their schooling.

Important destinations can also be found in the *First Steps* Maps of Development. However, a few significant differences between the two merit discussion. (See also Figure 1.4 on page 14.)

- The Maps of Development allow teachers to find out **where** students are. The indicators serve as towns on the way to the major destination. This fine-grained detail is valuable, as not all students will follow the same path to the destination. Some may move quickly while others may need some critical navigational advice.
- Unlike many curriculum and assessment frameworks, the Maps of Development help teachers focus on **how** to support students in reaching their destinations. The Major Teaching Emphases provided in the Maps of Development provide strong suggestions of what is required to help students move from where they are to where they need to be. Without strategic, informed, responsive instruction, the students may not be able to bridge the gap between their current performance (their current location) and the performance required by the education system (where they need to be). The Major Teaching Emphases within the Maps of Development enable teachers to make this critical link between assessment and teaching.
- The Maps of Development recognize that many factors affect students' learning. The phases of development cannot be equated with age or grade levels. Scope is provided for teachers to consider the influence of students' social and cultural backgrounds in

Relationship Between *First Steps* Maps of Development and Curriculum Frameworks

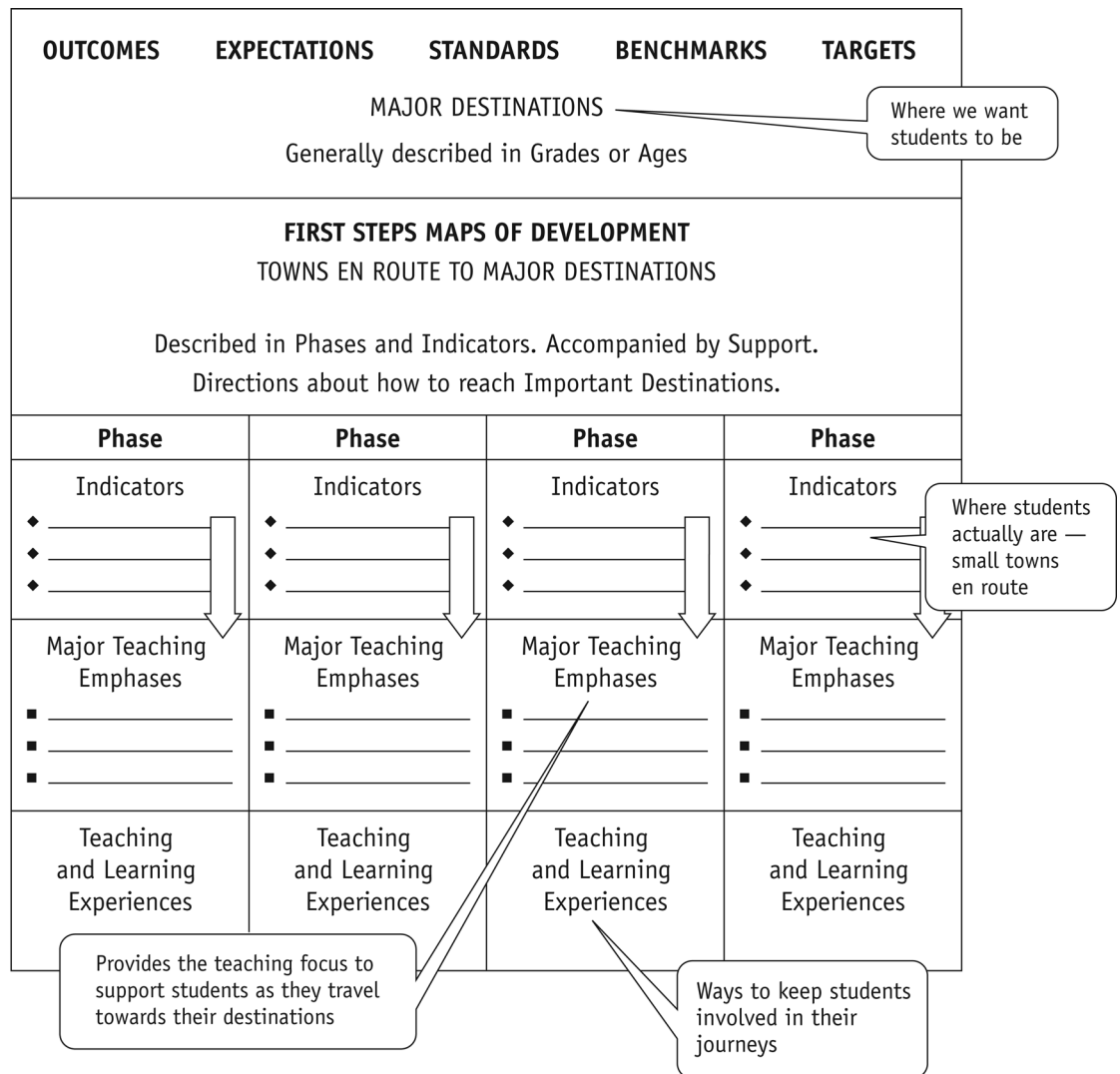


Figure 1.4

determining where students are and what is required to get them to their next important destination. Teachers are able to conduct research into the impact of different factors on students' progress, and annotate the Map of Development to enhance its usefulness.

Defining the Substrands

Although they are strongly interrelated, any one of the four interwoven strands of literacy—Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Viewing—is a substantial area of focus in its own right. Traditionally, curriculum developers have made the strands more manageable for teachers by breaking them into component parts.

- Writing may have been divided into areas of ideas, structure, and language conventions.
- Reading may have been considered in terms of comprehension and decoding.

While there is justification for many different ways of perceiving any area of learning, it is important that an organizing framework is cohesive; that it amplifies rather than diminishes relationships between oral, written, and visual language; and that it reflects literacy as a social and cultural practice.

On this basis each strand of literacy in the *First Steps* resource is organized into four significant areas, referred to as substrands:

- **Use of Texts**—the comprehension and composition of a range of texts
- **Contextual Understanding**—how the context affects the interpretation and choice of language
- **Conventions**—knowledge of the structures and features of texts
- **Processes and Strategies**—application of knowledge and understandings to comprehend and compose texts

The substrands provide lenses through which student performance in all facets of literacy can be monitored and supported cohesively.

Use of Texts

The Use of Texts substrand focuses on the comprehension and composition of a range of texts. Texts are defined as any communication—spoken, written, or visual—from which meaning is created.

There are many criteria used to sort the myriad of texts that students encounter. Within the strands regular references are made to written texts (Reading and Writing), spoken texts (Speaking and Listening), and visual texts (Viewing).

An Overview of Texts

Communication MODES	COMMUNICATION PURPOSES								TEXT PRODUCT TYPES
	Entertain	Recount	Socialize	Inquire	Describe	Persuade	Explain	Instruct	
Written	Narrative, e.g., Fairy-tale Fable Fantasy Poem, e.g., Haiku Limerick Free verse Song lyric Word puzzle	Biography Autobiography Diary Journal Retelling <i>direct or indirect</i> experiences Minutes of meetings Review	Invitation Apology Message Note Personal correspondence Announcement	Survey Questionnaire Interview	Report Label Menu Contents page Index Glossary Bibliography Blurb Description	Exposition Menu Job application Editorial Headlines Competition entry Slogan Advertisement	Explanation Affidavit Memo Rules Policy Journal Timetable Complaint	Directions Timetable Recipe Manual Invoice List Experiment Summons Blueprint Map	Magazine Letter Book Brochure Pamphlet Newspaper Newsletter Chart Journal Itinerary
	Joke		Chat room conversation						CD-ROM Text message E-mail Fax Card
Oral	Joke Story Song lyric Theatre	Conversation	Greeting Apology Telephone conversation Voice mail message	Interview	Oral report	Debate Discussion Theatre Talk radio Song lyric	Oral explanation	Oral directions	Performance Speech
	Talking book Song lyric								Audio cassette Radio Television CD-ROM Video DVD
Visual	Play Theatre Mime								Gesture Performance
	Painting Photograph Cartoon	Picture book Photograph Timeline				Logo Advertisement Catalogue	Venn diagram Timeline Graph Table Flowchart	Road sign	Button Flyer Poster Magazine Graffiti Sticker Clothing Tattoo
Electronic	Television sitcom Film				Travel brochure	Advertisement	Documentary News report		CD-ROM Videocassette Web page DVD

Figure 1.5

All methods of classification of texts overlap substantially. By returning to the primary purpose of a text to identify it, students assume a powerful position as composers and comprehenders. Identifying texts by their primary purpose enables students to take into account contextual understandings associated with the text.

The table (Figure 1.5 on page 16) categorizes texts according to purpose. The broken lines indicate that modes, media, genres, and text product types are frequently interwoven in pursuit of that purpose.

Texts usually have a structure or pattern that results from the social and/or cultural context, and the purpose of the text. The dynamic and fluid nature of language means that the purposes and shapes of texts frequently merge and are subsumed into one another; e.g., a persuasive argument presented in a narrative form.

What students do with texts and how they are shaped to achieve these purposes are culturally specific. This is an important consideration in the assessment of a student's use of texts. It is also important, however, to consider how students' spoken, read, and viewed texts grow in sophistication over a period. The *First Steps* Maps of Development assist teachers in this monitoring process. This substrand illustrates how students can

- expand the variety of texts they use
- enhance the control they exercise over the range of texts
- use and manipulate texts in complex ways

This notion is perhaps most evident in writing. Consider the following two recount samples (Figures 1.6 and 1.7) that highlight differences in the complexity within the text and the students' control of the form.

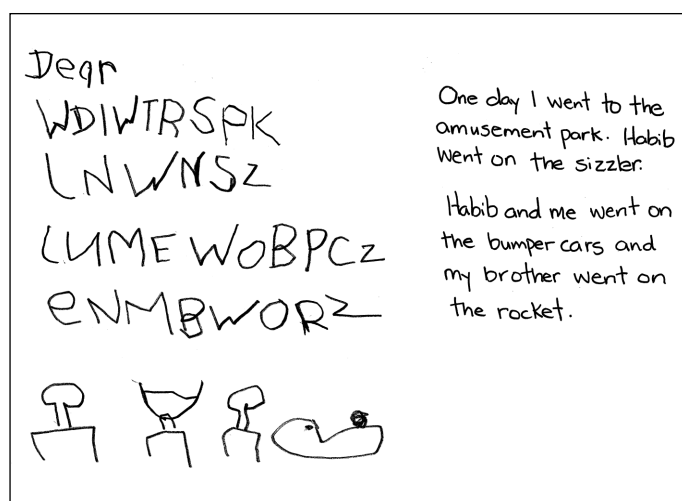


Figure 1.6 Sample recount one

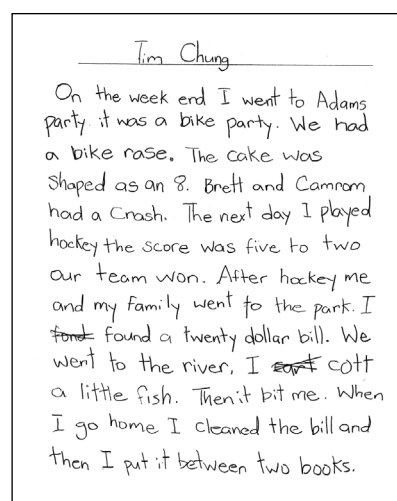


Figure 1.7 Sample recount two

Luke and Freebody identify the four roles of a literate learner as

- meaning maker
- text user
- code user
- text analyzer

Contextual Understanding

The Contextual Understanding substrand focuses on how the interpretation, choice of language, and the shaping of a text vary according to the context in which it is used. From an early age children become aware that the language of the playground may not be as appropriate or effective in a more formal setting. Several factors influence the use of language:

- purpose of communication
- subject matter
- mode of communication (spoken, written, visual)
- roles of participants and relationships between them
- social situation

Although some of these understandings of situational context are developed through imitation, observation, and repetition, it is important that students are provided with opportunities to reflect on how language varies and needs to be amended according to purpose, subject, mode of communication, and roles of communicators.

There are broader influences that have impact on language use. All texts reflect to some extent the expectations and values of social and cultural groups. This understanding of socio-cultural context involves knowing that

- the way people use language both reflects and shapes their socio-cultural outlook—the beliefs, values, and assumptions of their socio-cultural group, especially with regard to gender, ethnicity, and status
- texts will be interpreted differently by different people according to their socio-cultural background—awareness of the influence of socio-cultural factors on composing and comprehending is pivotal
- language and culture are strongly related
- language is crafted, communicated, and manipulated to influence others, often to maintain or challenge existing power relationships between groups such as employers and employees, businesses and consumers, or governments and citizens
- there are many varieties of English used around the world that reflect and shape socio-cultural attitudes and assumptions, including the Standard English generally used in formal communication, education, and some professional settings

Conventions

The Conventions substrand focuses on the knowledge of the structures and features of a variety of texts. Different socio-cultural

groups may adopt different legitimate conventions in their use of language. It is imperative that students become aware of the language structures and features that are typical of Standard English so that they are able to have access and influence in formal settings. Effective language users are able to act on their awareness of contextual understandings to make choices about the mode of communication, the type of text, the grammatical structures, the presentation style, and the words that are most appropriate and effective in a particular setting. They are able to talk about the choices they have made and the language structures and features they can recognize in their daily encounters with authentic language. For example, students preparing a recount of a school event for a local newspaper may conclude (after reading several newspaper articles) that they need to use a particular text structure and its grammatical conventions to meet the expectations of the paper's readers.

Examples of Conventions Associated with Spoken, Written, and Visual Texts

- patterns of text structure and organization (selection and sequence according to purpose and text type)
- textual cohesion (pronoun reference, conjunction)
- grammar (tense, agreement of subject and verb, passive or active voice)
- vocabulary and tone (specialized vocabulary, colloquial/formal, connotation/nuance)
- stylistic features (figurative/rhetorical, analogies, irony, alliteration)

Examples of Conventions Specific to Spoken Texts

- intonation, rhythm, pace, pitch, volume, pauses
- pronunciation and enunciation
- nonverbal language (facial, body movement, proximity, gesture)

Examples of Conventions Specific to Written Texts

- print elements (letter, word, spacing)
- paragraphing and punctuation
- spelling
- layout and presentation
- referencing style

Examples of Conventions Specific to Visual Texts

- conventions of the technical code (lighting, camera angles, special effects)

- conventions of written and audio codes (theme music, commentary)
- conventions of the symbolic code (colour, clothing, setting)

Processes and Strategies

The Processes and Strategies substrand focuses on the application of knowledge and understandings to comprehend and compose texts. Whether students are comprehending or composing they are acting upon what they know about how texts work. Some strategies are employed intuitively, particularly in familiar contexts with familiar people. However, unfamiliar contexts and participants, more complex texts, and sophisticated purposes require the deliberate selection and manipulation of processes and strategies from a versatile repertoire.

Examples of Processes and Strategies Used by Students When Reading

- skimming and scanning to select a text or find specific information
- connecting prior knowledge to information in the text
- breaking words into parts such as phonemes, attaching sounds, and combining the parts
- predicting storyline from the title, cover, or pictures

Examples of Processes and Strategies Used by Students When Writing

- planning, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading
- researching and note-making
- recalling, inventing, and consulting when spelling
- copying words from the environment

Examples of Processes and Strategies Used by Students When Speaking and Listening

- listening for pauses, changes in tone, and key words to monitor spoken texts
- staying on the topic and making relevant contributions to conversations and discussions
- making notes, rehearsing, and refining formal spoken presentations
- questioning to elicit information

Examples of Processes and Strategies Used by Students When Viewing

- drawing on prior knowledge and experience to predict text structure
- using knowledge of conventions associated with viewed texts to interpret meaning; e.g., colour, music, symbolism, camera angles

- self-questioning to clarify content
- making connections to own experiences

The Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Cycle

Once a strand has been selected as an area of need, *LATL* can be used in conjunction with the appropriate Map of Development and the Resource Book. Effective teachers create unique pathways as they make decisions about assessment, teaching, and learning.

These pathways are rarely linear and in a single direction, but they do appear to incorporate at least four essential elements. In a cyclic manner, consciously or subconsciously, teachers tend to

- assess student needs
- identify resources and plan
- select teaching and learning experiences
- monitor student progress and teacher effectiveness

Revisiting and reflecting occur frequently and often act as a directional force in the process.

The *First Steps* resource has been designed to aid the assessment, teaching, and learning process. The Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Cycle (Figure 1.8 on page 22) illustrates how teachers can navigate *First Steps* by selecting and using parts of the resource that assist their natural cycle of teaching and reflection. Although most teachers will move in a clockwise direction from Evaluating Student Needs, the personal pattern of movement is an inward and outward one (in star or flower-petal fashion). As teachers become familiar with identifying students on the Maps of Development and with the different parts of the resource, the balance between what is effectively in-head knowledge and what needs to be referred to in the text will shift. Resources other than *First Steps* are used to supplement the cycle. The options explored on each pathway of the Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Cycle are rarely the same, as teachers continually improve the integrity, validity, and efficiency of what they do.

Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Cycle

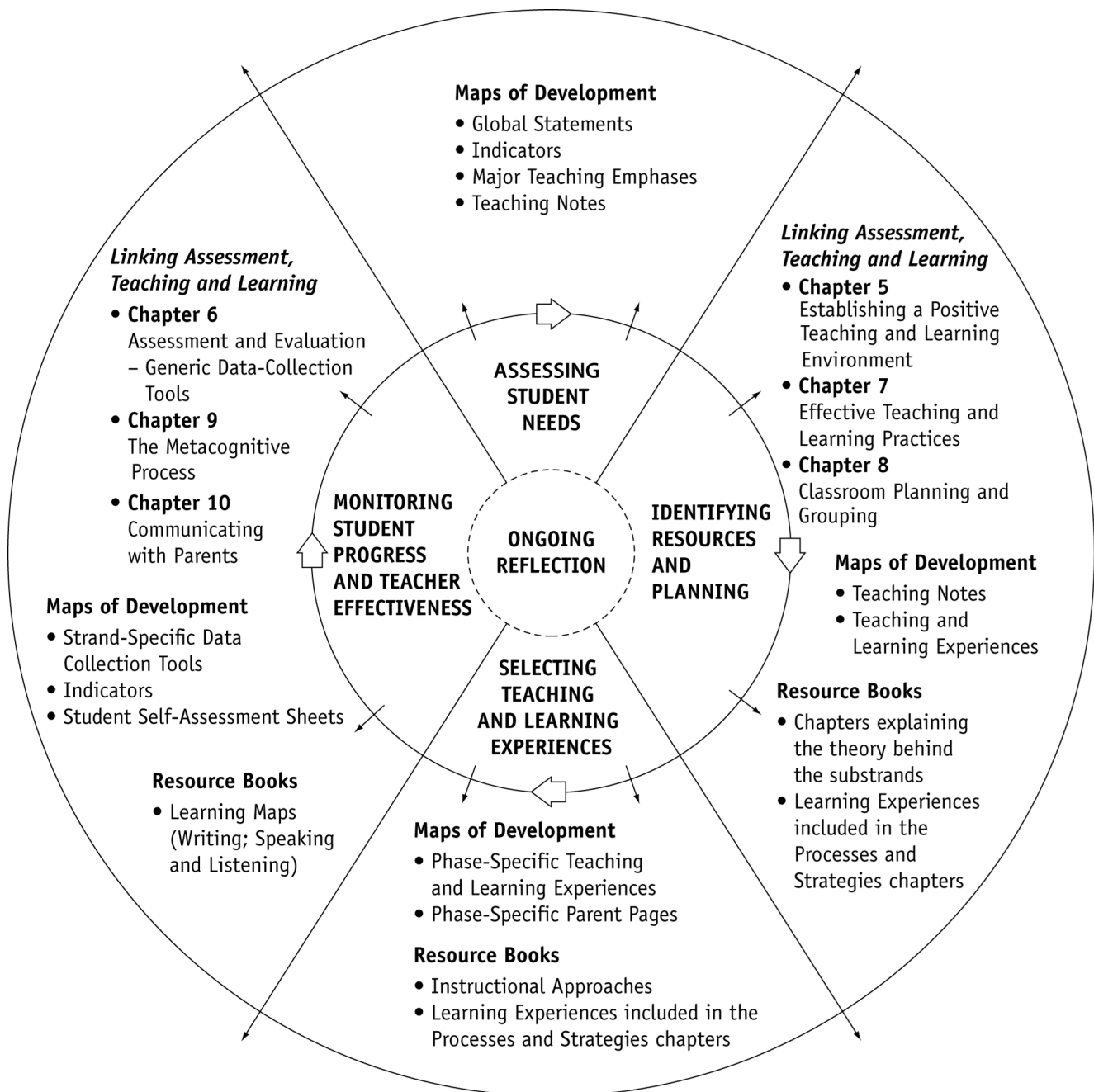


Figure 1.8

CHAPTER 2

Planning for the Successful Implementation of *First Steps*

The Successful Implementation of Change

As *First Steps* continues to be implemented in thousands of schools throughout the world, several factors that most often characterize successful implementation have been identified. Leaders in the field of educational change, Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers, Barrie Bennett, Carol Rolheiser, Susan Loucks-Horsley, Dennis Sparks, and Michael Fullan, have influenced the creation of the framework recommended by *First Steps* for successful implementation.

Implementation factors to be considered at both the classroom and school levels are discussed under the following headings:

- High-Quality Professional Development
- Principal as Learner and Leader
- Ongoing Support for Teachers
- Whole-School Implementation
- Providing Time
- Maintaining Continuity Through Planning
- Reflecting and Celebrating
- Developing and Articulating a Vision
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Outcomes
- Involving Parents

These particular characteristics underlie any successful change effort. They are not ordered, but the absence of any one of them has the power to dilute the impact *First Steps* may have on improving student outcomes.

High-Quality Professional Development

Classroom teachers use *First Steps* materials most effectively when the texts are coupled with high-quality professional development. In *First Steps*, professional learning is viewed as a recursive process of attending courses, applying new learning, exchanging ideas, reflecting on practice, and collaborating within a school community.

The *First Steps* texts provide an excellent vehicle for this process and have not been written to “stand alone.”

Schools successfully implementing *First Steps* commit to one strand of *First Steps* professional development at a time (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, or Viewing). It is critical that professional development courses be followed up with ongoing sessions within each school. These follow-up sessions may take the form of study-group meetings, grade-level meetings, collaborative planning sessions, further workshops, modelled lessons, and peer coaching or attendance at related courses or conferences.

Staff development should not be perceived as something we do unto the weaker teacher or reserve for inexperienced staff members. All staff members, including principals, consultants, and teacher mentors, should be able to announce, “This is my year to study ...”

There needs to be a genuine feeling that no one has arrived. Everyone needs to be swept up by the deeply ingrained value placed on adult learning.

Shelley Harwayne

Professional Development Corner: Stenhouse Newslinks

Principal as Learner and Leader

Leadership is critical to a school’s successful implementation of any professional development program. School leaders play a vital role in creating an environment that is conducive to the implementation and institutionalization of any innovation. School leaders can create this type of supportive environment in a number of ways:

- by clarifying expectations
- by participating in professional development sessions
- by providing encouragement
- by organizing resources such as money, materials, and time
- by limiting distractions
- by facilitating support for teachers
- by promoting an ethos of a community of continuing learners within a school
- by participating in the school community as partners or mentors to teachers

Teachers need to know from the outset that *First Steps*, as a professional resource, is supported and valued by the principal and other school leaders. Visibility, presence, and participation of school leaders in *First Steps* professional development sessions

communicate powerful messages about the importance of the resource for students, teachers, and the school community. Most important, participation in professional development will provide principals with the necessary understandings and processes to effectively support the implementation of *First Steps* across the school.

The Principal Principle: it means that the further the principal is from the innovation, the faster he/she will expect you to implement it and with less support and resources than you need.

Barrie Bennett

PETA — Primary English Teachers Association (PEN 102)

Ongoing Support for Teachers

Research supports the notion that “one-day wonders” or isolated training sessions are unlikely to result in significant changes in the classroom setting (Joyce and Showers 1995; Fullan, Hill, and Crévola 2006). Optimal professional development for teachers consists of high-quality courses presented over time, combined with processes that provide ongoing support to translate the new learning into classroom practice. Sustained practice is necessary to incorporate any new learning into regular classroom procedures. Ongoing feedback and support are crucial in the implementation of *First Steps*.

First Steps is based on the belief that effective implementation requires multiple opportunities to learn, experiment, observe, reflect, discuss, refine, and adapt the new understandings, skills, and processes presented during the professional development courses. The likelihood of a successful implementation of *First Steps* can be greatly enhanced if teachers have the time and support needed to explore facets of the program with professional learning communities in their school or family of schools.

Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn, by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Gayle Karhanek, comprises both theory and practical strategies to help schools institute and nourish professional learning communities.

... a large dramatic increase in transfer of training occurs when in-class coaching is added to an initial training experience ...

Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers

Student Achievement Through Staff Development, page 112

Whole-School Implementation

School-wide improvement efforts that focus on shared team goals help create a collective commitment to student learning. Linking the initiative to current school-improvement goals can stimulate a shared commitment to new professional development initiatives. Research highlights that schools and staff improve by promoting both individual and organizational growth and by working together in communities. For effective change to occur, a new professional development initiative should belong to a whole staff. A new initiative may often begin with one person or a selected few within a school, but ultimately should result in a whole-school commitment. Implementation at a whole-school level is an important factor to consider when using *First Steps*.

... whole-school and whole-district programs often achieve higher rates of transfer than do programs that involve small groups of volunteer teachers from schools.

Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers

Student Achievement Through Staff Development, page 13

Providing Time

Learning takes time. Finding time to attend professional development courses, to integrate new ideas into classroom practice, to collaborate about new ideas, and to work as a whole school to create ongoing implementation plans is a constant challenge faced by all schools implementing any new initiative. Those schools that recognize learning as a process and not merely as an event provide opportunities for continuous learning. These schools also create realistic implementation timelines that acknowledge existing commitments and priorities within the school.

First Steps professional development courses are most effective when they are conducted over time, providing participants with the benefits of spaced learning and thus avoiding information overload. These courses can then be interspersed with ongoing support and reflection sessions.

Teachers often cite the provision of time to work with others as the most valuable form of ongoing support. Schools that have worked hard to create this needed time for teachers to reflect and work with others as they implement *First Steps* have demonstrated a

commitment to the importance of collaborative learning. Many of these schools re-examined existing structures and schedules to create common times for teachers to meet together.

Following is a compilation of innovative ways in which schools have created time for ongoing learning:

- providing common planning or preparation time for same-grade-level teachers
- hiring substitute teachers to release teachers from classrooms
- allocating time at regular staff meetings for *First Steps* discussions
- providing breakfast for meetings before school—“Breakfast Club”
- releasing teachers from classrooms—principal providing relief
- reviewing school start and finish times to create a monthly “early release” day
- making use of school assemblies or other school-wide events to release pairs or small groups of teachers

Maintaining Continuity Through Planning

Any new initiative will be more successful when teams of people work together to create continuous plans of implementation. Ongoing whole-school planning for implementation is essential and can often be identified as critical to the success of *First Steps* in schools.

Regular participative decision-making sessions involving all staff allow for the development of implementation plans that can then provide the momentum for the transference of *First Steps* materials into the classroom. Plans created by staff are most effective when they

- are short term (four to six weeks) and flexible
- provide a framework for reflection and assessment
- support the needs of teachers
- document a minimum requirement for implementation
- promote progress

A big vision with small building blocks can create consensus and progress.

Michael Fullan

Change Forces, page 62

Figure 2.1 on page 28 provides an example of an implementation plan created over time by a school staff.

Whole-School Planning for Implementation			
Date	What	By When	Resources
20 Sept	Predict whole class using Global Statement Identify 3 students on Writing Map of Development (WMD) Indicators Do Modelled Writing 3 x 4	17 Oct	Class Profile sheets Individual Profile sheets Flip charts
17 Oct	Attend Data-Collection Methods Workshop Try out 4 different data-collection methods, presented during training (LATL and WMD books) Grade-level meeting for Key Indicator Review Session Introduce DEAW (Drop Everything and Write)	24 Oct 10 Nov	<i>Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning (LATL) and WMD books</i> Substitute teacher for grade-level meetings
13 Nov	Continue to experiment with data-collection methods Include “Look What I Can Do” sheets Identify 3 students on WMD using Key Indicators	10 Dec	“Look What I Can Do” sheets Individual Profile sheets
10 Dec	Identify 5 students on WMD using Key Indicators Select Major Teaching Emphases (MTEs) related to phases in class Select activities from WMD to support MTEs Bring MTE/Activities to share	6 Jan	Individual Profile sheets WMD and Writing Resource Book (WRB)

Sample Only

Figure 2.1 Sample of whole-school plan for implementation of *First Steps*

Reflecting and Celebrating

In schools introducing *First Steps*, it is important to have a climate that encourages ongoing reflection and self-assessment by teachers. The process of whole-school planning provides a perfect forum for groups of teachers to reflect on successes, ponder questions, and discuss issues about implementation. Reflective discussions about agreed-upon goals, student outcomes or expectations, and teaching strategies can drive the development of new plans and allow staff to continue to move the *First Steps* implementation process forward at an appropriate pace. Improvements in student outcomes that are shared and celebrated by school communities create a sense of achievement that can drive further implementation. Principals can motivate the staff to maintain efforts by recognizing and acknowledging group and individual contributions.

Developing and Articulating a Vision

It is important for schools to have a mental image or clear vision of what the successful implementation of *First Steps* might look like in the long term. What might students, individual teachers, teachers as a whole team, and parents be doing as a result of introducing this resource? Creating this shared vision ensures a common set of expectations and goals for everyone to work towards. The following table (Figure 2.2) reflects the practices that would be evident in a school successfully using *First Steps*. The list can be used as a framework for schools to create their long-term goals and to reflect on their implementation achievements.

Goals and Expectations for the Implementation of <i>First Steps</i>	
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are actively involved in meaningful and developmentally appropriate learning experiences • are metacognitive about their learning and set goals for future achievement • display measurable and observable progress • select and apply their literacy skills and understandings to a variety of contexts
Individual Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use assessment practices that are valid, educative, explicit, fair, and comprehensive • critically analyze the data collected to make judgments about student progress • use Major Teaching Emphases and Teaching Notes to make strategic decisions to target student needs • select from a wide range of teaching and learning experiences to target student needs • understand that <i>First Steps</i> in practice will vary from context to context, but will be recognizable by the essential element of linking assessment to teaching • continually reflect and refine their teaching practice to achieve student outcomes
Whole Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategically plan to support the implementation of <i>First Steps</i>, encouraging whole-school involvement in consensus-driven, ongoing professional development • are aware of, and value, the elements of time, space, and support in the <i>First Steps</i> implementation process • recognize the principal's role as key educational leader • use ongoing processes for collaboratively creating short- and long-term plans for the implementation of <i>First Steps</i>
Parents/ Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are informed about their child's literacy development through the sharing of information including strategies to support their child's literacy development in the home • are invited to provide information about their child's literacy development • are encouraged to be actively involved in the school environment

Figure 2.2 Created by Dale Elementary School, 2001

Monitoring and Evaluating the Outcomes

Whole-school monitoring of student achievement is critical throughout the implementation process in schools that are using *First Steps*. Staff should be involved in setting standards for assessing the effect of *First Steps*. Principals then play a major role in gathering evidence about the learning, application of learning, and impact on student outcomes. Figure 2.3: Kirkpatrick's Model of Evaluation (1996) can easily be applied to schools and provides principals with a framework for evaluating the different outcomes of implementing *First Steps*.

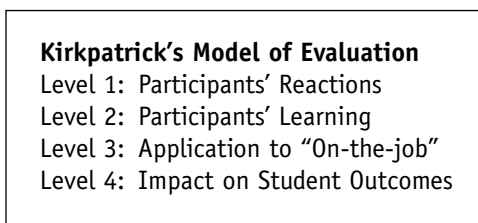


Figure 2.3

Information at the different levels can generally be gathered through a range of data-collection tools.

Involving Parents

Schools that are successfully using *First Steps* have made a conscious commitment to involve and inform parents and caregivers before and during the process of implementing the new resource. From the outset, parents and caregivers have been informed about the upcoming professional development courses, the goals, and the expected impact on their child's or children's education. After teachers have attended professional development courses, many schools have organized information sessions for parents and caregivers to provide them with an overview of the *First Steps* resource. Teachers have then provided parents with ongoing information designed to help support literacy development in the home.

Teachers using the *First Steps* resource recognize that schools build on the successful learning that is provided in the home by parents. *First Steps* is based on the belief that parents and teachers working together in partnership will help children achieve success.

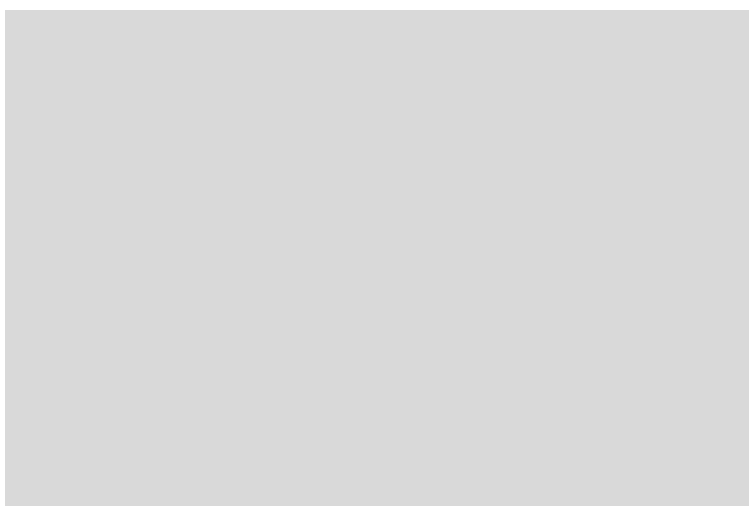
CHAPTER 3

Understanding *First Steps* Beliefs

The Art of Teaching Literacy

Effective teaching is a complex, personal act that requires constant reflection, collaboration, and support. Of the many decisions teachers make each day, few are formulaic. What's best for one student may not be best for others. It may not be what the curriculum suggests, or what can be achieved with limited time and resources. Simple answers in the form of a single book, professional development course, or sweeping new initiative are generally cruel illusions. Effective teaching is challenging.

Teaching literacy effectively is even more challenging. It's not like teaching someone to change a car tire. Tires the world over are round and made of rubber, whereas being literate can look different depending on where you are, whom you're communicating with, what you're trying to achieve, and whether you're trying to make meaning through print, oral language, visual imagery, or a combination of these resources. That's one of the reasons why many educators are talking about many different literacies, rather than a single set of cognitive skills that enable a person to be universally literate. The spoken language of the corporate world might be useful in the boardroom but has limited impact in the street. What counts as literacy varies from context to context and who decides what counts as literacy also changes. Literacies are neither neutral nor static.



New technology will lead to improved tires in the future, as it has done in the past, but the tire will remain generally round and made of rubber. In contrast, the rapid, relentless development of information communication technology is making significant differences in the nature of literacies. Cell phones are dragging once-private phone conversations into public arenas. E-mails are being used to distribute jokes and stories once shared in a social chat. Text messaging is a common form of communication that at one time took the form of oral communication (in person or via a phone). Consumers are being ambushed by information carefully orchestrated across print and television, online and live-performance media. As social practice, literacies reflect the advances in information communication technology in profound ways.

Finally, changing a tire is a narrow, procedural act that relies on some fundamental understandings about simple mechanics. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing, on the other hand, are practices that often rely on social and cultural expectations. They are not simply feats of the mind or natural ways of doing things. They occur to achieve particular purposes and therefore make no sense when they are divorced from a meaningful context.

Introducing students to the ways in which language is used to get things done is a subtle and changing art that varies according to a student's social and cultural understandings. Teachers confronted with these understandings recognize the similarities and differences between the literacy being taught in schools and the literacies that students use at home and in the community.

Whose Literacy?

Learners are different. Dale, Khaleda, and Alejandra live in settings that are geographically, socially, and culturally worlds apart, although they could just as easily be seated next to each other in one classroom. They wake up each morning to different family arrangements and speak different languages, dialects, and forms of English. They view the day's events through unique personal lenses and have different social and cultural ways of doing things. Dale nods his head to his brother to indicate that it is time to head off to school. Khaleda engages in a long and practised routine of kisses, "high-fives," and personalized farewells. Alejandra sends off a brief

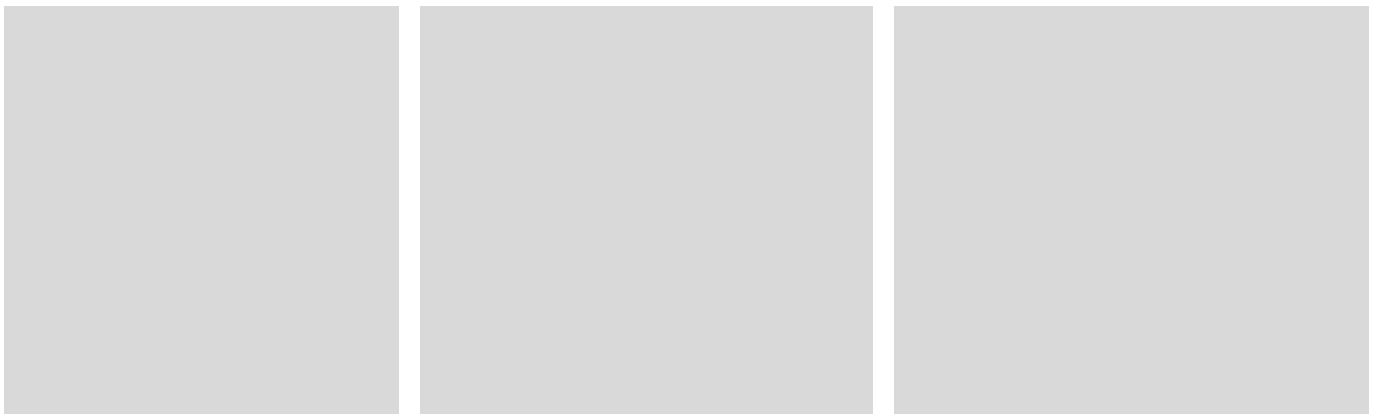
e-mail with digital photos to her dad before racing out the door. Yet for all their differences, Dale, Khaleda, and Alejandra share a basic human desire to communicate by making meaning.

Literacy for each learner means something slightly different in action, but has a common core.

- There are common understandings about who will understand these morning routines, gestures, and messages and who will not.
- There are common and changing understandings about whether these messages are most meaningful:
 - face to face (supported by nonverbal cues)
 - on paper (in permanent visual symbols)
 - through an electronic medium (appearing on a screen)
- There are common understandings developing about the language forms that are used to get things done within and beyond the community.

Varied purposes, participants, contexts, and subject matter mean that shared understandings about literacy may look different in action. Both within classrooms and across a school, teachers face the challenge of acknowledging and building upon the diversity students bring to their learning.

Dale could be taught the procedure of composing and sending an e-mail, but it would make little sense to him without an authentic purpose and audience. Alejandra could be taught the meaning of the nod, the eye contact, and the body language associated with Dale's departure, but its use would probably leave her siblings and peers amused and confused. Khaleda could probably explain her affectionate morning rituals, but only by elaborating on her family structure and relationships. What these frequent, tailored acts of communication have in common is that they find meaning in social and cultural settings.



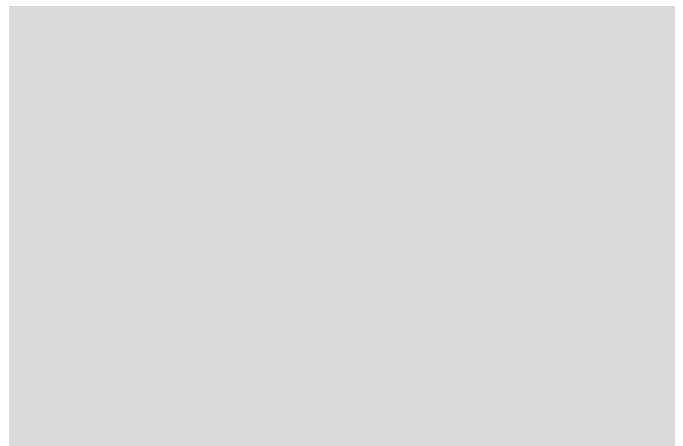
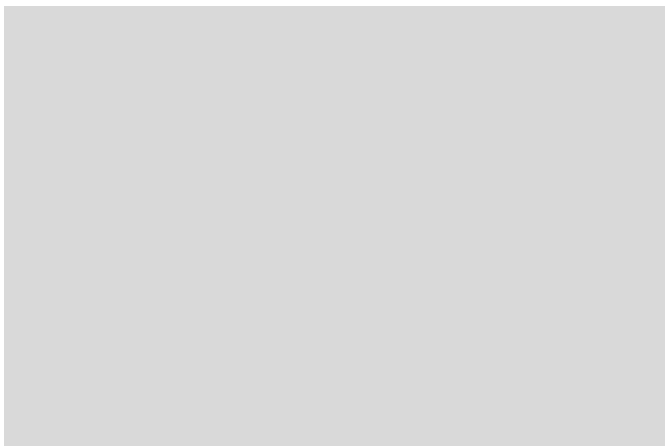
Students from different cultural backgrounds learn in one classroom.

Teachers also come from a range of social and cultural backgrounds. They are faced with the challenge of helping students develop a versatile, shared core of understandings that will provide the foundation for the mastery of new and unfamiliar types of literacies. This means helping students make connections between what they know and what they need to know to live, work, and socialize in different settings with different cultural groups at different times.

The Reflective Teacher

First Steps is underpinned by the belief that constant reflection and inquiry form a key avenue to professional growth. This growth will look different according to the context and the world view of each teacher. Reflection is not always natural; for many it is a learned skill. It is not always easy. Stepping back from, and questioning, embedded and sometimes routine or expedient behaviours is rarely comfortable. Continual, rigorous reflection is a personal and professional balancing act.

It is also messy. In the hope that practices might be mimicked, educators will sometimes ask, “What does *First Steps* look like in practice?” However, *First Steps* is a resource, as opposed to a program or curriculum, and as such it is shaped by the nature of the students, the school and community context, and by the personal beliefs and understandings that drive teacher practice. What is important is that, in reaching a consensus about direction, teachers in a school engage in vigorous and ongoing debate about their educational beliefs, examining how these beliefs shape learning for students and how they may need to change over time. Teachers, like students, may follow uncommon paths to common outcomes.



Teachers working in different contexts

First Steps Beliefs

Reflecting on beliefs about teaching, learning, and literacy usually has the effect of making these beliefs more tangible. It seems easier to question what certain beliefs look like when they are being enacted in the classroom on a daily basis. Reflection of this sort is critical in teaching, given that numerous other factors have impact on how things are done. Such factors may include resources, time, expectations, and our own personal values about many social and cultural issues. All of these can permeate our teaching and warp intentions. Ongoing reflection on, and owning of, established beliefs enable teachers to maintain perspective amid competing priorities.

First Steps beliefs are more a focus for reflection than a set of rules to teach by. They make transparent the theory and ideals that underpin the resource. Teaching, driven by a collection of explicit, positive beliefs, is not necessarily easy, but it carries with it intrinsic worth that helps teachers, parents, students, and schools understand why something is being done. More important, it acts as a springboard for action, a cue card for direction, and a mirror for reflection. By reflecting on beliefs shared and disputed, teachers can more clearly define why they teach literacy the way they do. These key underpinnings, detailed below and on the pages that follow, are explored again in Chapter 5.

***First Steps* is based on these beliefs about effective teaching and learning practices:**

F Focused on strategies	S Supportive
I Investigative	T Tested
R Reflective	E Embedded
S Scaffolded	P Purposefully practised
T Tailored/Differentiated	S Shared

Figure 3.1

• ***Focused on Strategies***

Effective teachers explicitly teach students a range of strategies to create and comprehend texts from a variety of media in a range of contexts. They encourage students to be aware of, apply, monitor, and adjust strategies through modelling, guiding, and providing practice opportunities across the different curriculum contexts. The

ultimate aim is that students will have a bank of known strategies they use independently. They will be able to reflect on the use and effectiveness of strategies as they apply them to different situations.

• ***Investigative***

Effective teachers understand that students are active, interactive, and hypothesis-driven learners who learn best in investigative or problem-solving situations. They are aware that young children are constantly learning about their environment through interaction, exploration, trial and error, and by “having a go” at things. As a student’s world of experience expands through investigation, deeper understandings are constructed. Effective teachers plan opportunities to engage students in authentic literacy events that require an understanding of purpose, audience, and context. Additional learning is always built upon existing foundations, and existing structures are constantly being adapted to accommodate fresh insights.

• ***Reflective***

Effective teachers provide time and support for students to reflect, represent, and report on their learning in different ways. They show students how to reflect upon their learning to make it more powerful. They understand that students need time to reflect on an experience, on what they have learned from it, and how they learned it. Often in classrooms busy teachers believe they must move the students from one learning activity to another, with no time, no space, and no structure to help them stand back and think about what they have learned, all in one effort to fulfill curriculum requirements. Effective teachers realize that if students are encouraged to pause and reflect on the insights they have gained and on things that have started to make sense to them, they will consciously take control of their learning in a new way. Students will develop an awareness of specific understandings and the place of those understandings in the overall scheme of things. They will come to value and respect themselves as learners and will become aware of their own learning processes.

• ***Scaffolded***

Effective teachers support students with a range of scaffolds, such as modelling, sharing, guiding, and conferencing. They use strategic leads and prompts to limit the impact of complex tasks on students’ working memory.* Teacher-provided scaffolds are like the training

*Working memory, which is sometimes called M-space, is very different from long- or short-term memory. It is, in effect, a measure of the number of discrete elements that the mind can cope with at any one time.

Scaffolding is teacher-provided support for students working in what Vygotsky (1978) called the zone of proximal development, that area just beyond a student’s level of development.

wheels on a bike; once the rider has mastered the skill of bike riding the training wheels are removed. Scaffolds are seen as interim measures to support student learning in the progress toward independence. Effective teachers provide specific feedback as a key part of this progress.

Gradual Release

Pearson and Gallagher's Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (1983) details for teachers how to support students on their way to becoming self-directed learners.

• ***Tailored/Differentiated***

Effective teachers know that every student progresses along an individual pathway of development. As a consequence, learning must be differentiated to reflect these individual pathways. The notion of differentiated instruction is not new, and has long been practised with individuals and groups of students. By mapping the milestones of language and literacy development and linking assessment to teaching, effective teachers differentiate their teaching to individual, group, and class needs. Differentiated instruction does not necessarily mean planning and implementing individual learning programs for all students within the classroom. When differentiating instruction, teachers need to look for common needs and develop organizational structures that allow all students to participate at their developmental level. To create a tailored literacy program, effective teachers incorporate a balance of small-group, whole-class, and individual instruction.

• ***Supportive***

Effective teachers understand that the learning environment needs to be emotionally safe and receptive to risk-taking. They realize the importance of a constructive, participative, and collaborative classroom culture in which students are accepted and supported by their peers, their teacher, and the school environment. Effective teachers create an environment in which students feel safe to ask for help when they need it and to express themselves readily without fear of judgment or ridicule.

• ***Tested***

Effective teachers rely heavily on a range of research-based practices that have been thoroughly tested because they know that there is no single method or approach to teach all students successfully. They use their knowledge of current theory, practice, and research to guide their selection of appropriate assessment, teaching, and learning experiences to help develop the skills and understandings of each individual student in their class. They reflect on the effectiveness of their choices.

- ***Embedded***

Effective teachers embed teaching and learning experiences in the lives of their students, creating contexts across the curriculum that are authentic, socio-culturally appropriate, and engaging. They plan experiences that build on what they know about their students' development, individual characteristics, and cultural background. Effective teachers work to build students' linguistic and conceptual knowledge base. They help students to make connections between their current understandings and new learning that is being undertaken.

- ***Purposefully Practised***

Effective teachers orchestrate purposeful practice over time to help students consolidate and integrate their understandings and skills. They understand that students need to practise and apply a particular aspect of literacy in a number of contexts to develop automaticity. Opportunities to practise in stimulating circumstances constitute an important component of all literacy programs, so that “mental space” is made available for new learning. The amount of time needed to practise new skills and learning will vary from student to student. Some may need to apply these understandings in only a few situations before they come to terms with them. Others will need to apply the understandings more frequently and in a wider variety of situations before they can begin to generalize and transfer them. In contrast to mindless repetition, purposeful practice is focused, scaffolded, and contextualized with an emphasis on process, not product. If the practice is not embedded in, and seen to be arising from, past experience, then only rote learning may occur, while real learning, which is capable of generalization, will probably not take place. Effective teachers select their practice activities bearing in mind their students' needs and focusing on strategies to be developed.

- ***Shared***

Effective teachers understand that real learning occurs when students, teachers, schools, and parents share the responsibility of a cohesive learning program and have high expectations. They invite all stakeholders to play pivotal roles in teaching and learning across the curriculum and in everyday life. Effective teachers work collaboratively with support staff to build learning programs that support those students experiencing difficulties within the regular classroom. Whenever a student is withdrawn from the regular classroom to work specifically on a one-on-one basis, the program should always be developed in conjunction with the regular classroom literacy program.

CHAPTER 4

First Steps and Diversity

Experience has revealed that *First Steps* can be used successfully with a diverse range of students in many different parts of the world. This success occurs when teachers map the development of their students with factors of diversity, such as cultural and linguistic background, uppermost in their minds. Similar consideration is given to the selection of Major Teaching Emphases and learning experiences. As a result, teaching is differentiated to meet the needs of many different students without marginalizing them or creating an unsustainable teaching load.

Defining Diversity

In an ideal world teachers would respond to the diversity of the students in their care by taking into account every factor that may have an impact on progress at school. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- gender
- age
- cognitive ability
- physical ability
- physical appearance
- learning style
- social background
- economic background
- geographic background
- cultural background
- linguistic background
- religious belief

All students come to school with diverse literacies and experiences. In any one classroom there may be students who can read and comprehend as competently as students much older than themselves and there may be students who are unable to decode words or comprehend meaningfully. Then there are the others that fall somewhere in between. There are students whose main interest is sport, science, art, or any of a myriad of other subjects. Some students may prefer to work alone while others prefer to work in

groups. Some may learn relatively quickly while others may need to have the lesson repeated in different ways many times.

If all students differ in terms of development, interest, and learning profiles and if teachers believe their responsibility is to meet the needs of their students and foster continual growth, then there is no specific teaching methodology that will suit all teachers or all learners. It is necessary, therefore, for teachers to become knowledgeable about their students and find out what students' strengths and competencies are so that appropriate teaching and learning experiences can be chosen.

However, attempts to meet the challenge of diversity by creating individual education plans for each and every student are often impractical and sometimes misguided. A student's learning plan may be developed to respond to the role played by cultural background in learning, but may ignore or minimize consideration of economic circumstances, gender, or learning style that influence the individual's learning in equally powerful ways. Similarly, students may be grouped and taught according to a factor of diversity such as English Language Learners (ELLs), despite the facts that some individuals have quite different experiences with literacy and the group is composed of a range of different language backgrounds. As a result, students may be stereotyped, the teaching focus may be biased, and expectations lowered. Assessing, planning, and teaching in a way that acknowledges and supports diversity requires ongoing reflection to ensure that students' needs are being met in a practical and effective way.

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners: A Broad Overview

Diverse learners are part of the population of every school. Many of these students are at risk of not achieving their full potential, and the reasons for this are varied.

Teaching for diversity requires that thought be given to what is effective for an individual or group as opposed to isolating certain assessment, teaching, and learning practices as "ELL practices" or "Gifted and Talented practices."

For example, research suggests that ELL students generally respond positively to

- open-ended questions

- opportunities to code-switch
- activities that are highly contextualized
- experiences that value the first language
- tasks that are skillfully scaffolded
- learning experiences that include a reflection component
- visual rather than aural activities

Gifted and Talented students generally respond positively to

- open-ended questions and tasks
- negotiated activities
- investigative learning experiences
- opportunities to challenge conventional thinking or approaches
- learning experiences that require the application of multiple abilities and/or cross-curricular subject knowledge

Although generalized to describe the tendencies of two extremely diverse groups of students, the two lists signal ways to differentiate instruction in order to meet the diverse needs of students in a particular classroom. By summarizing research findings, a generic list of characteristics can be identified. Teachers may create similar lists by summarizing research findings on other factors of diversity. Action research in the classroom that focuses on the needs of particular individuals or groups can be used to add to or amend the lists. In this way, approaches that may be used for one group of learners may also be useful for others and some practical planning may occur.

The following pages illustrate how approaches, identified through research as most successful with ELL and/or Gifted and Talented students, can also be used with other kinds of learners. It is acknowledged that putting a label on students does not make a homogeneous group. The range of needs and strengths of students within these groups will vary significantly. Suggestions on how teachers might use the approaches with different groups are provided.

Universal Design for Learning

One framework for planning for a diverse range of students has its roots in architecture. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is based on the notion that what can help one student learn—a text modification, a physical tool, a strategy—can help all students. UDL can be thought of as the framework on which teachers can develop differentiated instruction.

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Open-Ended Questions and Tasks

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Open-Ended Questions and Tasks	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching ELL Students	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Students Experiencing Learning Difficulties in Literacy	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Gifted and Talented Students
<p>Open-ended questions and tasks require students to think, reflect, and communicate effectively. Answering questions gives students an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, whether there are any gaps in their understanding, and their control over language.</p> <p>Questions such as these are open-ended: What can you tell me about ...? How do you feel about ...? Why do you think ...?</p> <p>Open-ended tasks allow students to approach problem-solving in a way they choose as well as demonstrate what they know in their preferred learning style. For example, a student who has investigated weather patterns may demonstrate what he or she has learned by using pictures and diagrams if a visual learner or by constructing a model if a kinesthetic learner.</p>	<p>Ask questions that allow for discussion and that require more varied and complex sentence structures for the answer.</p> <p>Encourage students to take risks and contribute to discussions.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for peer discussion groups; e.g., a reading discussion group will provide students with real opportunities to share stories or books they have read and allow other students to model appropriate language use.</p> <p>Plan activities in which students need to communicate.</p>	<p>Encourage students to reflect on their understandings.</p> <p>Use Bloom's Taxonomy (or similar) as a guide for developing higher order thinking skills.</p> <p>Use a variety of grouping structures so that students have opportunities to work with other students of varying abilities.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities to challenge conventional thinking or approaches; e.g., If you could change this, what would you change it to and why?</p> <p>Provide choices in relation to how tasks can be solved and what decisions need to be made.</p> <p>Encourage the use of multiple texts and other supplementary materials.</p> <p>Ask questions or set tasks that stimulate inquiry and lead to active exploration and discovery; e.g., What do you think would be the most effective way to ...?</p>

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Heavily Contextualized Activities

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Heavily Contextualized Activities	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching ELL Students	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Students Experiencing Learning Difficulties in Literacy	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Gifted and Talented Students
<p>Authentic literacy experiences that have a clear and immediate context enable students to make links with their prior knowledge and expand their knowledge base.</p> <p>Students need to see the purposes of the tasks in which they are involved and the relevance to their current and future lives. Teachers can assist students to make these connections.</p> <p>Using language in a meaningful way promotes in students a desire to convey or understand a particular message.</p>	<p>Engage students in activities that enable them to learn both English language and the academic content.</p> <p>Make the learning context rich, scaffolding the development of English and the concepts being taught.</p> <p>Use real-life scenarios, such as conversations and games, when developing talk.</p> <p>In order to build a common context, provide a shared experience; e.g., field trip, film, experiment, cooking.</p> <p>Take photos that can be revisited at a later time.</p> <p>Allow students to read the same book in their home language or watch it on video or DVD.</p> <p>Ensure that students see and hear English being used for specific purposes. This gives them a framework to build on and opportunities to try out and practise new structures.</p>	<p>Make all school learning experiences meaningful.</p> <p>Use material that is familiar to students; e.g., find music they like and write out song lyrics for a reading task.</p> <p>Use material that is capable of attracting and maintaining their attention; e.g., fan magazines, a current news situation of interest and relevance to them.</p> <p>Provide study guides and vocabulary lists before reading.</p> <p>Prepare students for reading and/or writing tasks by activating their prior knowledge; e.g., discuss what they already know about the topic, brainstorm appropriate vocabulary, and create graphic organizers.</p> <p>Use real artifacts (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) where possible.</p>	<p>Make use of more complex and abstract materials.</p> <p>Challenge students to develop alternative representations, ideas, or applications.</p> <p>Encourage students to demonstrate their learning in a wide variety of text product types; e.g., instead of preparing a written or oral book report the students could design a game around the themes or characters.</p>

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Negotiated Activities

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Negotiated Activities	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching ELL Students	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Students Experiencing Learning Difficulties in Literacy	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Gifted and Talented Students
<p>Students are active learners and need the opportunity to take control of their own learning and develop responsibility for their work. This leads to independence.</p> <p>Negotiated learning involves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – shared goal setting between the teacher and student, – based on that student's needs and interests – assessment based on student growth and attainment of goals 	<p>Encourage students to choose topics in which they are interested.</p> <p>Give students choices about how to represent their learning; e.g., write a report, build a model, draw pictures, or do an oral presentation.</p> <p>Assist students to make choices that will develop their skills and understandings.</p> <p>Encourage collaboration with students of similar interests.</p>	<p>Encourage self-motivation by allowing students some choice about the learning experiences they undertake.</p> <p>Provide support by creating a negotiated curriculum based on individual or small-group needs.</p> <p>Support learners in reaching the goals they have set for themselves.</p> <p>Allow for a variety of grouping arrangements where the students can choose whom to work with and for how long.</p> <p>Provide a variety of games that allow purposeful practice of skills and understandings.</p>	<p>Provide a challenging and enriched curriculum.</p> <p>Encourage cooperation and collaboration on tasks.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for inquiry-based studies; e.g., allow students to examine an area of interest and decide on a problem or topic to study in depth.</p> <p>Encourage students to undertake experiences that develop their strengths and interests.</p> <p>Allow students to take control of their learning and set realistic goals to develop independence as learners.</p>

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Visual and Aural Activities

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Visual and Aural Activities	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching ELL Students	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Students Experiencing Learning Difficulties in Literacy	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Gifted and Talented Students
<p>Using visual and/or concrete artifacts enables students to build up their background knowledge and make connections between spoken, visual, and written language. Learning may proceed more smoothly when a student can integrate the senses rather than just relying on aural input.</p>	<p>Provide pictures, photos, drawings, charts, and diagrams to support talk.</p> <p>Encourage the use of gestures and body language.</p> <p>Encourage the creation of dual-language texts.</p> <p>Create opportunities for students to use multimedia.</p> <p>Record oral discussions; e.g., brainstorming to reinforce learning.</p> <p>Use demonstrations and activities where students have the opportunity for “hands-on” learning.</p> <p>Combine visual with aural activities; e.g., highlight the visual pattern as well as identifying the appropriate sound when teaching spelling patterns.</p>	<div data-bbox="632 388 823 892"> <p>Students have preferred ways of learning. Providing opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know in a form they choose can be empowering.</p> </div>	

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Valuing the First Language

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Through Valuing the First Language	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching ELL Students	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Students Experiencing Learning Difficulties in Literacy	How Teachers Apply This When Teaching Gifted and Talented Students
<p>The home language of students must be valued within the school context. Allowing students to see their language and culture honoured can empower them, help boost their self-esteem and confidence, encourage them to be risk-takers, and provide positive school experiences.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for students to read, write, or speak with others in their first language.</p> <p>Encourage the development of books and tapes for students to read or listen to in their home language.</p> <p>Include in the school newsletter stories students have written in their home language.</p> <p>Study the different cultures of students and celebrate or acknowledge cultural events.</p> <p>Use literature, music, and art from students' cultures.</p> <p>Encourage parent and community involvement and assistance.</p> <p>Create environmental print that incorporates students' languages as well as English.</p>	<p>Unless these students also have English as an additional language this section is not applicable.</p>	

Using *First Steps* with Diverse Learners

Teachers can use *First Steps* resources to support diverse learners.

The *First Steps* materials have a variety of features that assist teachers to support these learners successfully. The materials

- allow for the identification of varied patterns of development
- provide scope to annotate Maps of Development
- provide support for teachers to differentiate instruction
- assist teachers to select from a wide range of effective teaching and learning practices
- include activities and learning experiences that are adaptable

Identification of Varied Patterns of Development

The *First Steps* Maps of Development collectively provide a framework for recording students' literacy development. Although the Maps of Development are based on research and theory generated in English-speaking contexts, many of these contexts include student populations that are culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse. In using the Maps of Development to ascertain a student's progress, teachers need to be aware that such diversity means that there is no such thing as a "normal" profile. Each student will display an individual pathway that may include quiet or slow periods of development and periods of rapid growth. Regardless of the pattern of development that emerges, it is vital that teachers continue to reflect on why particular indicators have been displayed and what role has been played by one or more factors of diversity.

There is no requirement that a student begin at the first phase on a Map of Development and show progress to the final phase. For example, students who bring to school literacy experiences in a language other than English will be unlikely to engage in "pretend reading" behaviours because they are aware of many concepts of print. Instead they may draw on those understandings to display indicators further along the Map of Development. In this situation it may be helpful to record the literacy behaviours they display in their other language as well as in English. In contrast, a student with a disability or learning difficulty may display indicators in quite advanced phases in one substrand, but not in another, due to the nature of the disability or difficulty. The purpose of the Map of Development is to reveal these patterns so teachers can differentiate their instruction rather than label students with a phase name for reporting purposes.

Scope to Annotate Maps of Development

Teachers can annotate individual students' Maps of Development, noting such elements of diversity as

- the nature of the student; e.g., used a communication aid
- the instructional setting; e.g., worked in a group to complete task
- the socio-cultural setting; e.g., directionality of how print is written and read in first language differs from English

By undertaking action research, liaising with peers, discussing with parents, and reflecting on research findings, teachers may also be able to note additional behaviours that are consistently displayed by particular students but not included in the indicators of the *First Steps* Map of Development.

Consider the case of a teacher working with a student who is an English Language Learner. The student may have difficulty representing all vowel and consonant sounds due to the effect of a first language or dialect, e.g., **omitting inflectional endings when spelling certain words**. By identifying the prevalence and consistency of the behaviour, discussing it with the student's previous teacher, reflecting on the appropriateness of the teaching the student has encountered, and examining the research available on the topic, the teacher may choose to add the behaviour on the individual's Map of Development. Generalizing this behaviour to other students who have English as an additional language or dialect would be risky, particularly when the nature of the first language or dialect of some students may not have the same effect on that particular literacy behaviour.

Support for Teachers to Differentiate Instruction

The *First Steps* materials have been designed to help teachers link assessment to teaching for a range of students. The Major Teaching Emphases help teachers to differentiate instruction for individual, small-group, and whole-class teaching. Guidelines for decision-making are also provided in areas such as assessment procedures, grouping of students, and the selection of texts. There are no foolproof ways to meet the diverse needs of many classrooms, but research and experience provide a basis for the consideration of many factors. Similarly there is no replacement for the professional judgment that is used to apply these understandings to each educational context encountered.

Selection from a Wide Range of Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning identifies effective Teaching and Learning Practices that have been made explicit to assist teachers in expanding and refining their teaching repertoires. These practices are elaborated in each Resource Book as instructional approaches specific to that strand. The selection and use of these practices and approaches allows teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners. While the list of practices and approaches is not exhaustive, the overt discussion and application of each is designed to help teachers reflect on which teaching and learning approaches work best for which students, and for what reason.

Activities and Learning Experiences That Are Adaptable

Suggested teaching and learning experiences are included at each phase of the Map of Development books and as generic experiences in the Resource Books. The learning experiences have been written in such a way that they are not content specific or text specific. This allows for adaptation to meet the needs of diverse student groups. Research has indicated high levels of effectiveness where an educational program is culturally inclusive and responsive (Vogt et al. 1987). For example, students from cultures with prominent oral storytelling traditions often perform better when asked to demonstrate their comprehension through retelling, rather than answering a series of disconnected questions. Opportunities for the use of a first language or dialect, such as using technology to make the experience accessible to those with disabilities, or ways of extending the task to make it more challenging for the talented and gifted can be considered. The suggested learning experiences are not an exhaustive list, but a springboard for the generation of further activities that would be appropriate to meet student needs.

Using *First Steps* with Diverse Learners: Case Stories

The *First Steps* resource has been used successfully, for over a decade, with diverse students in many different parts of the world. While the beliefs underpinning *First Steps* stay the same, the implementation and use of the resource has been adapted to suit the needs of individual students and the school environment. This section provides a snapshot of how five educators, from different contexts, have successfully used *First Steps* with their students.

Case Story 1: Using First Steps to Build Professional Learning Communities

Contributor: Zoe Watson, Superintendent, District 6, New Brunswick

Context: Professional Development Leadership

My familiarity with *First Steps* began when I was a Supervisor of Elementary Schools. My role was to provide professional development leadership for several elementary schools. I facilitated sessions for entire school staffs on reading, oral language, and writing components of *First Steps*. I used the oral language materials with Kindergarten teachers, and they were excellent. I used the reading and writing components with Kindergarten to Grade 5 teachers, and the writing component with middle school teachers. The latter component was particularly strong in that it provided teachers with many excellent strategies and covered the genres of writing with specific information on how to best teach them.

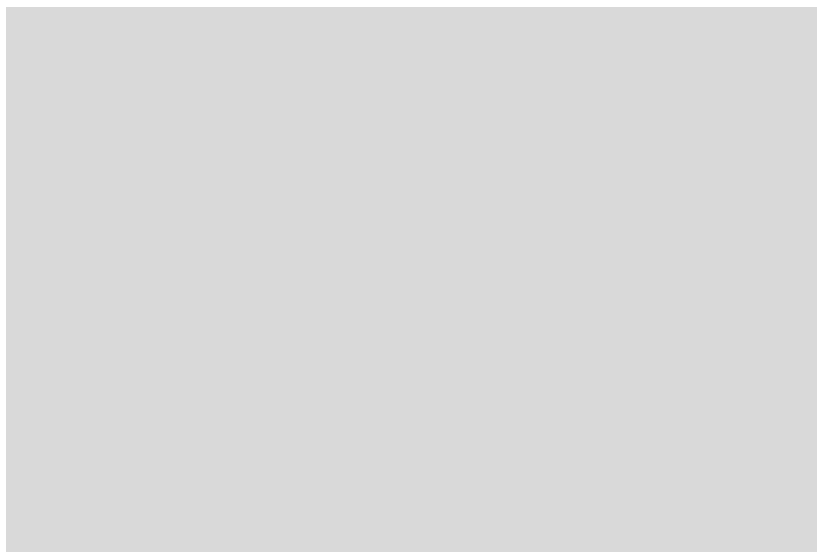
With our current focus on reading and writing across the curriculum, I see *First Steps* as valuable professional development for *all* teachers. *First Steps* is useful for teachers who may be new to the division, who do not have a strong background in teaching language arts, or who are new to the profession. Sessions where entire staffs are trained together is the model I would recommend—these sessions allow teachers to have professional discussions about literacy learning and to use some of the suggested strategies. While facilitating the writing training, I would ask teachers to bring samples of student writing so they could use their own students' work as we discussed the characteristics of each phase of writing. I would recommend about two weeks between sessions so teachers can use some of the materials in their teaching and have an opportunity to reflect at the next session.

For us, *First Steps* is an ideal vehicle for having teachers come together to work as a professional learning community. Teachers learn together, and if the sessions are delivered to an entire staff, all teachers are familiar with the language, the strategies, and the developmental maps (the continua). Teachers can identify where their students are on the maps and then locate strategies to move them forward. It is important to know where students are in their reading, writing, and oral language. But we must be careful not to focus solely on identifying students on the map or the value of *First Steps* will be lost. Our experience showed us that it is important for school districts to move slowly with implementation and to continue support when the training is complete.

Case Story 2: Using First Steps with Aboriginal Students

Contributors: Jackie, Karen, and Laurie

Context: Arcola Community School, Saskatchewan



The photos in this section are generic in nature and not specific to the case stories recorded here.

Jackie's group consisted of 24 Grades 3 and 4 students, and Karen's group consisted of 18 Grades 2 and 3 students. One-third of each class was considered to be of Aboriginal descent. Students were plotted in the Experimental and Early writing phases on the *First Steps* Developmental Continuum (now known as the Writing Map of Development).

Major Teaching Emphases from the Early and Experimental phases suggested working with a range of writing forms for different purposes and audiences. To begin, students were immersed in a variety of procedural writing using print and online resources. The Developmental Continuum suggested the use of pictures to sequence and compose texts and stated that this strategy is particularly useful as a way to record procedures.

As a problem-solving activity, small groups of students sequenced a series of photographs about the making of bannock that we had produced with a digital camera. A Guided Writing lesson resulted in a poster titled "How to Make Bannock." Students established that instructions consist of a title; an aim or goal; the requirements, or the materials that are needed; the method, or list of steps to do the job; and an evaluative statement saying what would happen if the instructions worked. The Shared Writing activity produced a model of procedural writing used as a reference when students wrote their own procedures.

As students moved to writing their own procedures, we wanted them to have choice; we wanted Aboriginal content and perspective; and we wanted technology infused naturally into the curriculum. Children were taught playground games, including Aboriginal games that we got from a Web site sponsored by Galileo Network Educational Association. The Web site features elders telling stories about traditional Aboriginal games. We were able to show the importance of oral storytelling in First Nations culture and discuss the importance of authors telling their stories before they are written. The Screaming Race, a favourite game of the students, built lung capacity and taught students why it was important to be able to scream loudly in a traditional First Nations camp. We took digital pictures of the students playing this game as well as a number of other playground games. The pictures were organized into folders on laptops, and students used iPhoto software (from Apple) to compose their books. The pictures provided a scaffold for students to write their procedures. Jackie and Karen commented that without the pictures, it would have been difficult for many students to capture all of the steps of the game.

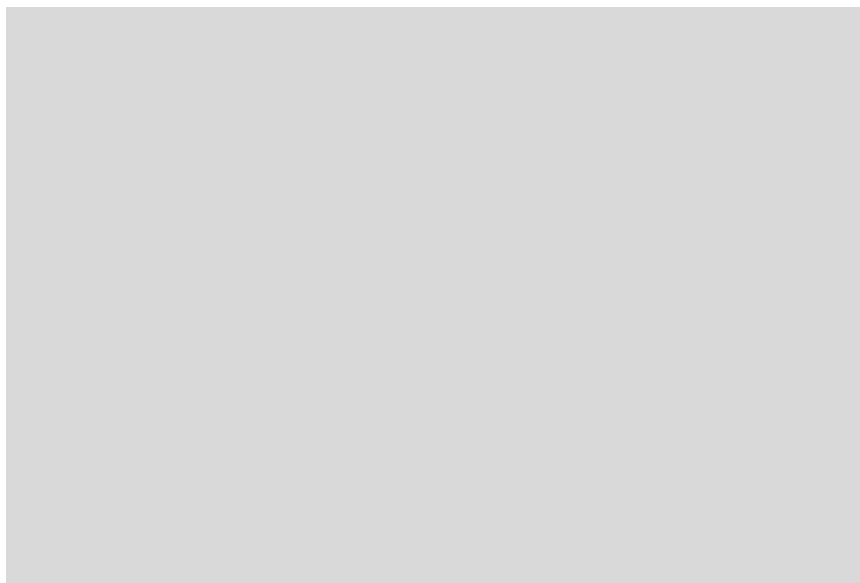
As students wrote, there were many opportunities for focus lessons on revision and editing. Students read their writing to one another and to us, and were willing to add missing steps. These young writers overused such words as *then*, which provided us with an opportunity to discuss linking words related to time and to discuss the power of action words (verbs) in procedural writing. The spell check feature of the software helped students to identify misspelled words and gave us the opportunity to talk about the strengths and limitations of a spell checker. The collaborative nature of Guided Writing supported students as they discussed pictures and wrote about their games.

First Steps emphasizes writing across the curriculum through authentic learning opportunities. Play naturally engaged students in this activity, and Aboriginal content and perspective and technology were infused into the theme. Explicitly teaching students about forms of writing is important to writing development—the section of the *First Steps Writing Resource Book* on procedural writing laid the foundation for this project. The *First Steps* Developmental Continuum provided activities appropriate for various levels of students. Taking pictures of students playing games in physical education provided the scaffold that many students needed to write a procedure.

Case Story 3: Using First Steps to Support Assessment for Learning

Contributor: Stephen McClelland, K–12 Literacy Resource Central,
Coordinator of *First Steps* Tutors

Context: Simcoe County District School Board, Ontario



As a geographically large board with a variety of rural and urban settings, our district has schools that range in size from populations of 120 students to very large urban schools. In past years, we sought to find an assessment tool that we could use on a system-wide basis to support our different learning communities.

Using *First Steps* has supported our district (including me) in being continuously assessment literate. *First Steps* professional learning has supported our understandings about three capacities:

- the capacity to examine student performance data and results—and to make critical sense of them
- the capacity to make the kinds of changes needed to increase performance through the development of classroom and school improvement plans based on these understandings
- the capacity of teachers to make decisions effectively by being proactive and open about school performance data

Initially, I used *First Steps* to support Grades 4 to 8 students in special education programs. The Developmental Continuum (now the Map of Development) helped me understand the needs of my students. The

diagnostic and formative aspects of *First Steps* enabled me to really know my learners and their learning needs.

I then taught Grade 2, where I was able to use *First Steps* to assess for learning as a crucial and important first step. Whenever I needed help with understanding why students were stuck, the Developmental Continuum supported decisions about next steps. The class profiles supported education and success for all learners because I could see class needs and identify gaps at a glance. The Resource Book helped me know what to do with the whole class. When I looked at phase levels in the Developmental Continuum, I could easily see gaps and skills development that we needed to explore. Activities linked to different developmental phase levels helped me explore and support learning needs—I was able to differentiate instruction.

First Steps helped school teams to communicate by providing a common literacy and developmental language. We were able to really understand the placement of students and what steps we should take when lessons were not working. Additionally, *First Steps* helped us to identify what our needs were in the area of at-risk and extension programs. *First Steps* professional learning enabled us to have conversations about how and what to change, and targeted next steps to support all students in going forward in their learning. This dialoguing with a common language provided links to special education resource staff and supported planning for individual student learning needs. Divisions and groups of teachers in our district also had a common language that supported not only planning, but also communications with parents.

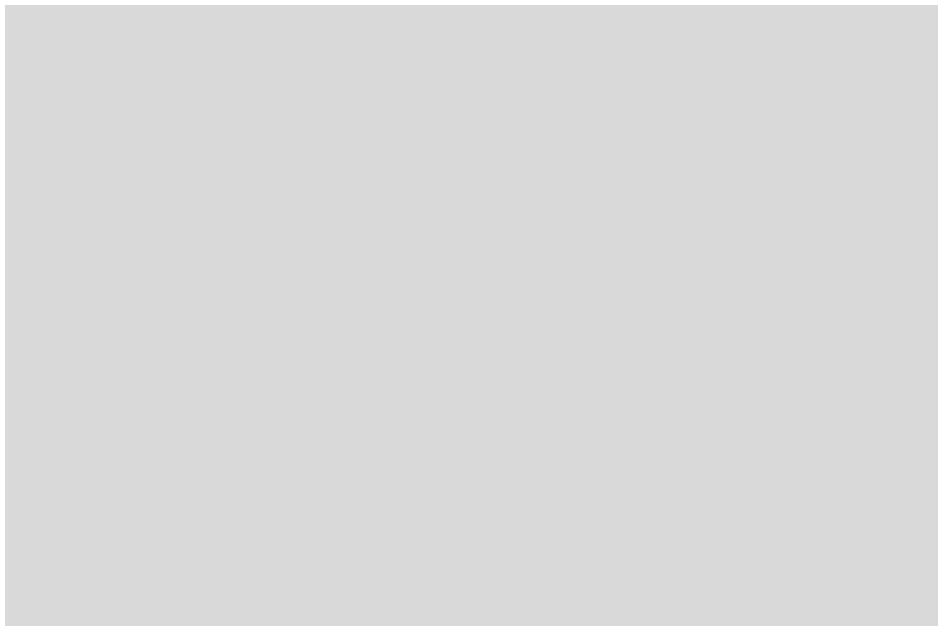
Using the Developmental Continuum assessment tool as a system enabled us to know a lot about students and to get on with teaching. The Simcoe County District School Board keeps data at the school level. A resource teacher and the superintendent may ask to see *First Steps* data before working with administrators and setting school goals. To support school-team dialogue and student development as students pass to the next grade, I have also used the Developmental Continuum in June so that I could complete class profiles for the teacher at the next grade level.

As a result of *First Steps* professional learning, in schools across our district teachers and school teams examined together how well students were doing, relating this to how they were teaching, and then made improvements. Shared meaning meant a focus on instruction, assessment, continuous feedback and use of data, and instructional leadership at the district and school levels. We also had a professional learning framework that provided a process whereby we could build capacity and commitment within schools across the district.

Case Story 4: Using First Steps with Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELL)

Contributor: Colin, Grade 2 Teacher

Context: Elementary School, Toronto



Most of the 23 students in my Grade 2 class were English Language Learners (ELL), representing diverse backgrounds. All students were receiving instruction in English, and six students were receiving support from an ELL resource teacher for 40 minutes every day.

At the beginning of the term, the focus of my writing program was recount writing. Through discussions during Shared Writing experiences, I noticed that most of my ELL students found it difficult to describe events with detail. When I would ask my students to describe what something looked like, it was common to hear responses such as “good” or “nice.” I was concerned by the limited vocabulary they demonstrated and worried that this would prevent many of my students from taking part meaningfully in the writing program. As well, the number of blank pages in my students’ writing journals confirmed that I needed to act immediately.

After assessing their daily journal writing, I determined that the majority of my students were in the Early writing phase on the *First Steps* Developmental Continuum (now the Writing Map of Development). Once I reviewed the Major Teaching Emphases for this phase, I decided to focus on vocabulary development. It was important that I engage my students in discussions about words and how they enhance meaning. Since speaking and listening are the foundation of all other language learning, I knew that I needed to begin by enriching my students’ oral

communication skills. Meaningful classroom talk lets students explore new knowledge, observe effective models, experiment with and practise new skills, and consolidate new learning.

Relying on the *First Steps Oral Language* resource for support, I introduced my students to barrier games. Barrier games demand that students give and receive instructions, using language appropriate to the complexity of the task. Over time, we played a variety of barrier games that required students to describe such things as sequence, location, direction, relation, and procedure. These games encouraged my students to experiment with language in order to communicate more effectively. As speakers, they learned the significance of being specific and detailed; as listeners, they learned the importance of monitoring information and asking questions for clarification.

As my students became more confident, I linked the barrier games back to our focus on recount writing. We added descriptive words that had helped us in the barrier games to our class vocabulary wall. Then, through Shared and Interactive Writing lessons, I encouraged my students to refer to the wall and to describe events in greater detail. A colleague who observed one of these Interactive Writing lessons commented on how impressed she was with the quality of vocabulary students were contributing to the writing. Most important, I am beginning to see progress in my students' independent writing, as well.

The *First Steps* resources provided me with a framework for my teaching and offered me the support I needed to help my students succeed.

Case Story 5: Using First Steps to Support Differentiated Instruction

Contributor: Marta Mulhern, Instructional Coordinator, Literacy.

Language Gr. 1–8/English Gr. 9–12

Context: Peel District School Board, Ontario

The Peel District School Board is one of Canada's largest school boards, serving more than 220 schools with a diverse population of students. Classrooms in Peel contain students with different experiential backgrounds. Many cultures are represented in our schools, and many students do not speak English as their first language. Like all boards, we have students with unique learning styles, strengths, and needs. One of eight key Peel board goals is to help all students succeed to the best of their ability.

Our quest is to help all students learn and to foster success for students

by helping them to become self-directed, effective problem-solvers who are critically literate. Our district strives continuously to keep abreast of current research to learn more about how to effectively support diverse learning needs and improve student achievement. We want to focus efforts where the impact is greatest with ongoing system planning for student success. For many years we have been exploring and implementing research-based instructional strategies that make a positive difference in student achievement.

Using *First Steps* has had a significant impact in enabling our teachers and district literacy teams to capably assess and plan strategically in order to meet the needs of the diverse learners in our classrooms, while building on their strengths. As a research-based developmental framework and professional learning resource, *First Steps* is differentiated instruction. Teaching essential skills, strategies, and content in ways that address the varied learning needs of students, by meeting them where they are developmentally, maximizes student learning.

First Steps offers a holistic literacy approach that supports teaching with student variance in mind. I came to know *First Steps* as an Early Literacy Teacher. This role was originally created to support early literacy development as well as the implementation of this framework in Peel. At the time, there were about 25 Early Literacy Teachers. Our district started to implement *First Steps* in the primary division. As Early Literacy Teachers, we worked with up to six schools to model *First Steps* strategies, coach teachers, and help staffs deepen their understanding of developmental learning. Through workshops, professional dialogue, teacher moderation, and planning opportunities, teachers have become increasingly confident using this resource as a tool for differentiating instruction. The biggest benefit of *First Steps* is that it allows teachers to use assessment to drive their instructional practices. Assessment literacy is a key focus in our board.

As a Resource Teacher, I was able to further understanding about *First Steps* professional learning and resources from Kindergarten to Grade 8. In this role, I facilitated discussions and workshops about *First Steps* and continued to work with teachers by engaging in teacher moderation activities. Such professional development enables teachers to articulate their reasoning with regard to assessment and evaluation.

When I became Literacy Coordinator for K–12, part of my role was to support *First Steps* implementation centrally. A significant part of my coordinating role has been to make explicit connections: building awareness regarding the strong links between *First Steps* resources and key Ministry of

Education and Peel documents, such as our Transformational Practices document. Similar to Ministry and Peel guidelines about effective literacy practice, *First Steps* advocates a problem-solving approach to literacy and a literacy framework based on recent, comprehensive research.

Using *First Steps* in our district has meant differentiated instruction that is responsive teaching. Instructional time is extremely valuable time. Responsive teaching means that teachers are able to proactively plan varied approaches to what students need to learn, and how they will learn it, and support students as they express what they have learned. When we can see where students are on the *First Steps* maps of development and where learning needs can be clustered, using flexible groupings, we are able to do targeted planning that maximizes instructional time. Teachers are always aware of limited time and want to know how to make the most of instructional time to support students' ongoing literacy development.

In Peel, *First Steps* is our literacy framework. We use *First Steps* to support a school success model that differentiates instruction. Teachers and administrators use data to identify their school's greatest area of need. Once they have targeted a need such as reading or writing, schools are better equipped to purposefully program for students and to plan professional development for teachers that meets their needs. We also have district supports that help schools determine where they are in terms of *First Steps* implementation. This resource tool includes indicators and next steps for implementation stages, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and suggested workshops and professional development activities. We continue to refine this package by acknowledging where schools are in the implementation process and by suggesting "next steps."

No matter where a school is in terms of professional learning needs, *First Steps* supports effective practices as well as talk about gradual release of responsibility, modelling for the whole class, and opportunities for guided practice. While supporting students where they are in learning needs, school literacy teams also benefit from a common literacy language. Language from *First Steps* supports common understandings and discussion that gets students to deconstruct various features of text without being too formulaic.

This common literacy language has resulted in a learning community that fosters links between heart and mind. In our diverse learning community, we want to be a learning place where individuals not only derive meaning but also become part of a learning community rich with shared meanings. *First Steps* empowers us as literacy educators to reach each child within the learning community based on the needs indicated by phase of development, preferences, and interests.

CHAPTER 5

Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment

The Importance of a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment

A visitor to a stranger's home gets a sense of what is important to the inhabitants and how things are done in that household. The introduction of fellow members of the household implies respect; the display of homemade artwork conveys a sense of pride and accomplishment; and the nature of the activity in the house suggests the interests of individuals. A classroom community is no different. Students, teachers, parents, and community visitors enter, thinking:

- What is important here?
- How are things done?
- Who constructed this environment?
- Why are things the way they are?

Teacher beliefs about how students learn provide the basis for the kinds of learning environments established in classrooms. Although many teachers share common beliefs and philosophies about learning, classrooms rarely look or sound the same. Individual teachers and students shape the environment to support their own particular needs. Translating beliefs into practice involves teachers in making decisions about their own teaching and the social and physical environment of the classroom.

Reflecting *First Steps* Beliefs in Creating a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment

Creating a positive environment that promotes social, emotional, and academic excellence is vitally important if students are to succeed. The beliefs underpinning *First Steps* provide a sound basis for making decisions about the physical setting and the culture of the classroom.

As emphasized in Chapter 3, *First Steps* is based on these beliefs about the practice of effective teaching and learning.

F	Focused on Strategies	S	Supportive
I	Investigative	T	Tested
R	Reflective	E	Embedded
S	Scaffolded	P	Purposefully Practised
T	Tailored/Differentiated	S	Shared

The following pages illustrate how the creation of a positive teaching and learning environment is influenced by these beliefs.

Focused on Strategies

Effective teachers explicitly teach students a range of strategies to create and comprehend texts from a variety of media in a range of contexts. They encourage students to be aware of, apply, monitor, and adjust strategies through modelling, guiding, and providing practice opportunities and application across the different curriculum contexts.

A teaching and learning environment focused on strategies may include

- students referring to collaboratively generated (teacher and students) charts that provide guidelines about use of strategies; e.g., “How to spell a difficult word,” “Ways to check that I’m making sense when reading,” or “Being an effective listener”
- the teacher recapping a strategy by writing the lesson objective
- pieces of student work on display, annotated with teacher feedback about the effective use of strategies as opposed to a generic comment, such as “Nice work, Lina”
- opportunities for students to reflect on and discuss their use of strategies with others
- opportunities to discuss how strategies have been applied across curriculum areas

Investigative

Effective teachers understand that students are active, interactive, and hypothesis-driven learners who learn best in investigative or problem-solving situations. They are aware that young children are constantly learning about their environment through interaction, exploration, trial and error, and “having a go” at things.

An investigative teaching and learning environment may include

- places and items that provoke cross-curriculum inquiry and use of language; e.g., an aquarium, a miniature greenhouse, or a set of balance scales
- places and items that provoke literacy-focused inquiry linked to other learning areas; e.g., a computer connected to the Internet, a recording of a novel excerpt, or a newspaper article located on a world map
- open-ended tasks as part of daily activities
- time to discuss and record probing, higher order questions and reflections about places and items of investigation
- opportunities to work collaboratively with peers; e.g., working in small groups to produce a Readers Theatre presentation, working in pairs to research a topic on the Internet
- learning charts that demonstrate ongoing inquiry and capture the developing understandings and thoughts of students
- learning opportunities that promote risk-taking and acceptance of multiple possibilities in responses

How many words can you make? Each word must contain the two letters in the centre box.

l	f	ch	p	r
t	b	ea	d	g
m	n	ed	ing	s

Figure 5.1 Example of open-ended task

Reflective

Effective teachers provide time and support for students to reflect, represent, and report on their learning in different ways. They show students how to reflect upon their learning to make it more powerful. They understand that students need time to reflect on an experience, on what they have learned from it, and how they learned this.

A reflective teaching and learning environment may include

- a quiet area for small-group conferences where students can share their work and respond to suggestions
- Have-a-Go pads on desks so that students can rehearse their spelling and reflect on their attempts
- cumulative charts that represent ongoing learning
- open-ended questions posed freely by students in response to a focus
- self-talk or thinking aloud as a means of clarifying and consolidating new understandings and skills
- a time to share new discoveries and look back at what worked and what didn't, with a particular focus on strategies
- the use of reflection processes and the products of reflection such as learning logs or journals

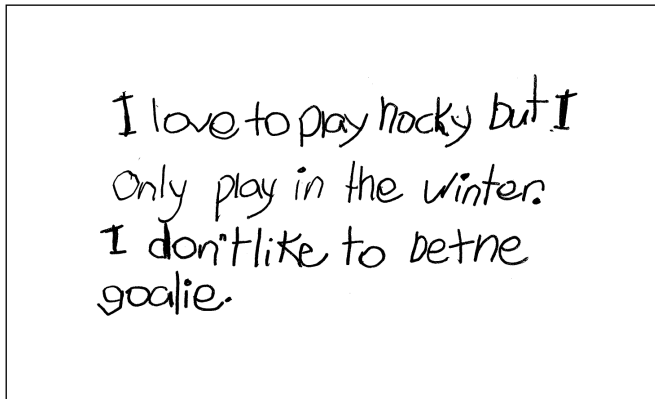
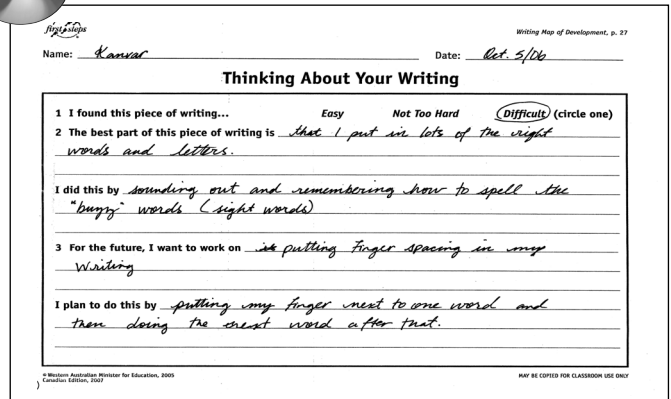


Figure 5.2a Independent writing sample from Grade 1 student

first steps
Name: Kanwar Date: Oct. 5/06

Thinking About Your Writing

1 I found this piece of writing... Easy Not Too Hard Difficult (circle one)

2 The best part of this piece of writing is that I put in lots of the right words and letters.

I did this by sounding out and remembering how to spell the "buzzy" words (sight words)

3 For the future, I want to work on putting finger spacing in my writing

I plan to do this by putting my finger next to one word and then doing the next word after that.

© Western Australian Minister for Education, 2005
Canadian Edition, 2007

MAY BE COPIED FOR CLASSROOM USE ONLY

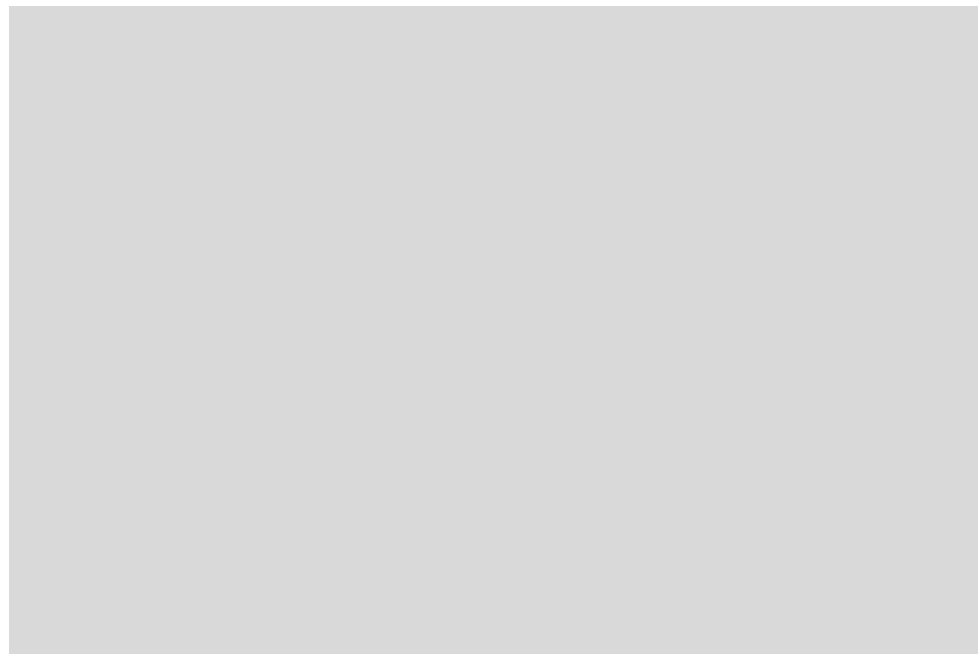
Figure 5.2b Writer's reflection sheet completed with teacher

Scaffolded

Effective teachers support students with a range of scaffolds, such as modelling, sharing, guiding, and conferencing. They use strategic leads and prompts to limit the impact of complex tasks on students' working memory.

A scaffolded teaching and learning environment may include

- an area for whole-class and small-group modelled, shared, and guided lessons
- collaboratively generated (teacher and students) charts that provide working guidelines for the completion of tasks; e.g., **writing of specific text types**
- differentiated tasks being assigned as part of daily activities
- spaces and procedures for conducting conferences
- student-generated word banks
- appropriate technology to support all students; e.g., **voice-activated computer**
- time for peer tutoring and collaboration
- time for all students to work with the teacher
- opportunities for students to work in a variety of groupings



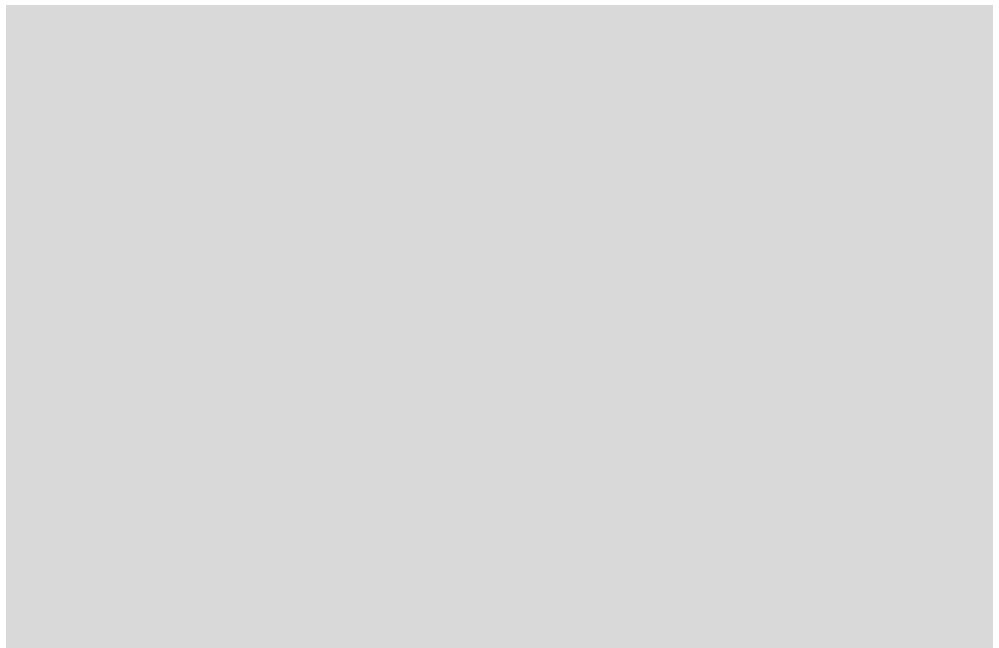
Teacher scaffolding for students by recording a whole-class brainstorm

Tailored/Differentiated

Effective teachers know that every student progresses along an individual pathway of development. By mapping the milestones of language and literacy development and linking assessment to teaching, effective teachers differentiate instruction to best meet individual, group, and class needs.

A tailored/differentiated teaching and learning environment may include

- a seating arrangement that enables students to move easily to individual, paired, small-group, or whole-class settings
- materials for a wide range of ability levels
- learning centres or sites containing activities that challenge a range of senses and learning styles; e.g., moveable letters, recorded poems, language games, computers
- an area to display self-generated or negotiated literacy goals
- learning experiences that address a range of learning styles and developmental levels



A variety of learning centres

Supportive

Effective teachers understand that the learning environment needs to be emotionally safe and receptive to risk-taking. They realize the importance of a constructive, participative, and collaborative classroom culture in which students are accepted and supported by their peers, their teacher, and the school environment.

A supportive teaching and learning environment may include

- collaboratively generated (teacher and students) charts at eye level that list an agreed-upon code of behaviour, roles, or students' rights and responsibilities
- Y- or T-charts that describe what positive social behaviours look, feel, and sound like
- a safe place for storing students' belongings
- prominent and frequently changing displays of students' work
- students asking more questions than the teacher
- students contributing freely and comfortably to discussions, including constructive criticism
- processes and products such as codes of behaviour and favourite-topic surveys that have been generated at class meetings
- students being encouraged to take, and rewarded for taking, risks



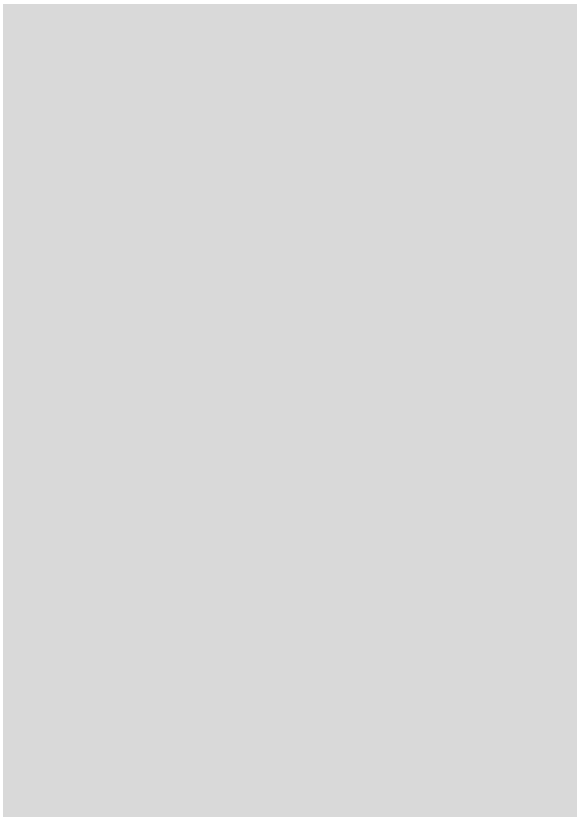
Figure 5.3
A class-generated
Y-Chart describing
positive social
behaviours

Tested

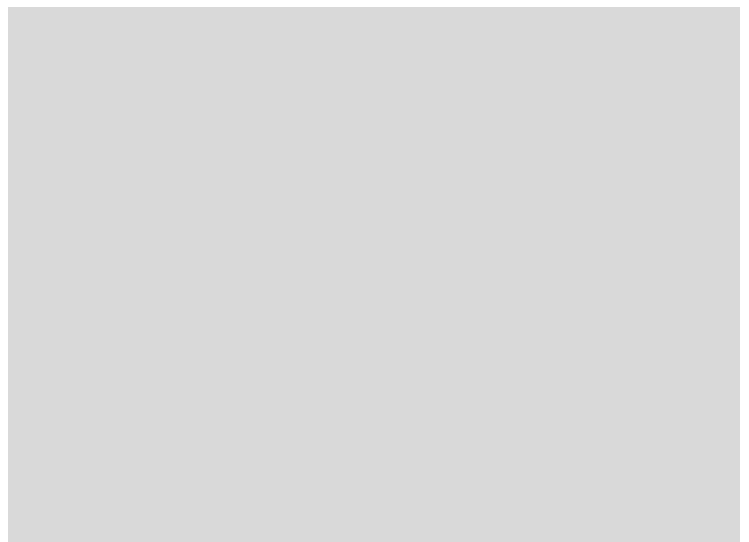
Effective teachers rely heavily on a range of research-based practices that have been thoroughly tested because they know that there is no single method or approach to successfully teach all students. They use their knowledge of current theory, practice, and research to guide their selection of appropriate assessment, as well as teaching and learning experiences to help develop the skills and understandings of each student in their class.

A teaching and learning environment designed around proven approaches may include

- teaching practices that are underpinned by research and reflective of teachers' beliefs
- teachers willing to try new strategies, reflect on their success, and reconcile this thinking with what reliable research says
- a variety of instructional practices and approaches
- a shared reason for doing things; e.g., "The 200 words in our common word bank make up 68 per cent of the words most people write. We need to be able to spell these easily."



A teacher scans current literacy publications.



A teacher searches the Web for information about current literacy practices.

Embedded

Effective teachers embed teaching and learning experiences in the lives of their students, creating contexts across the curriculum that are authentic, socio-culturally appropriate, and engaging. They plan experiences that build on what they know about their students' development, individual characteristics, and cultural background.

A teaching and learning environment with embedded learning experiences may include

- work displays that include the first language or dialect, or cultural displays
- charts that are covered in examples of text forms collected by students as they have become familiar with the form
- texts that reflect students' interests, cross-curricular topics, and diverse cultures
- a calendar that includes festivals and celebrations of a wide range of religions and cultures
- adaptations to work and traffic areas to assist students with disabilities or special needs
- displays that include student names alongside home and community achievements
- a range of visitors from the local community



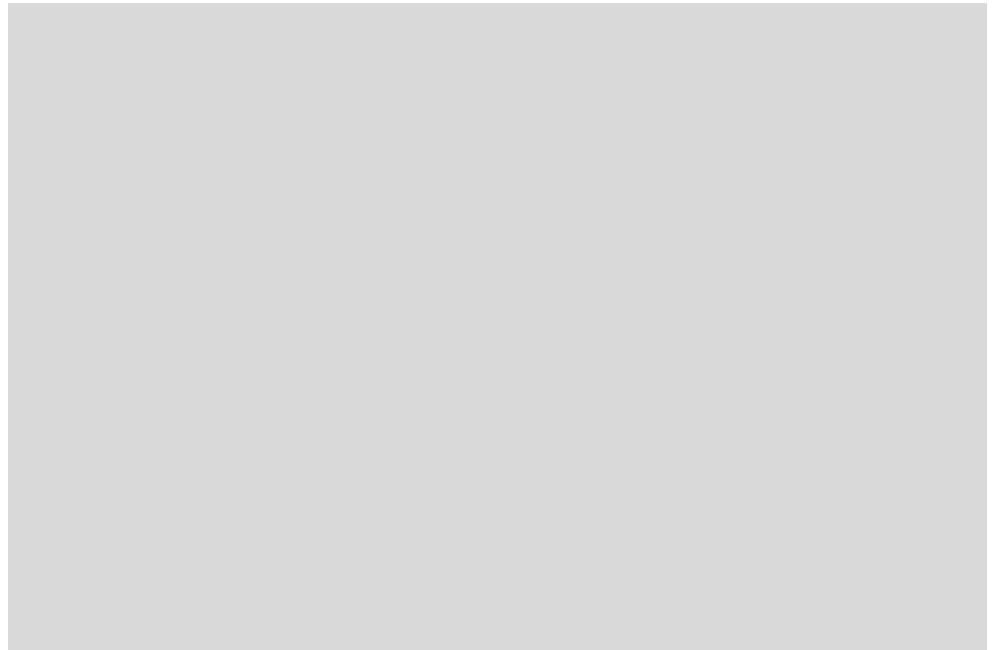
Figure 5.4 A classroom display incorporating students' first languages

Purposefully Practised

Effective teachers orchestrate purposeful practice over time to help students consolidate and integrate their understandings and skills. They understand that students need to practise and apply a particular aspect of literacy in a number of contexts to develop proficiency.

A teaching and learning environment that encourages purposeful practice may include

- a selection of games and activities that promote the consolidation of skills and understandings
- small learning centres equipped with tools to encourage practice
- small copies of known big books made available for individual student use
- time allocated to practise new skills and strategies across curriculum areas



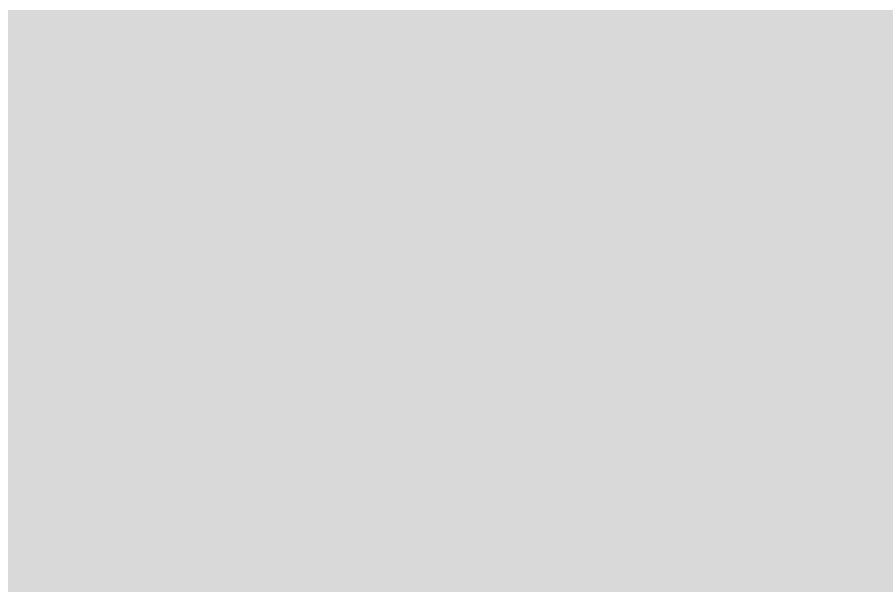
A student uses the writing centre to practise new skills.

Shared

Effective teachers understand that learning occurs when students, teachers, schools, and parents share the responsibility of a cohesive learning program and have high expectations. They invite all stakeholders to play pivotal roles in teaching and learning across the curriculum and in everyday life.

A teaching and learning environment that promotes shared responsibility may include

- a space for parent helpers to sit and discuss work with students
- a display of school initiatives, such as fund-raising or community events
- home–school communication books
- a shared letter to or from a community member on a whiteboard or flip-chart
- “parent nights,” where students take their parents or caregivers on Learning Journeys
- a roster of responsibilities (may include teachers, students, helpers, principal)
- a two-way message board or mailbox that holds brief positive messages
- provision of time for student self-assessment and goal-setting
- opportunities to work collaboratively with others; e.g., peer tutoring, buddy classes
- teachers working as teams
- students conducting class meetings



An opportunity to work collaboratively with a partner

The Physical Environment

This section of the chapter looks at ways teachers can create and enhance the teaching and learning environment for their students with a focus on the physical environment.

Factors to Consider

As each new school year starts, teachers consider how to set up their classrooms effectively. What and how the teacher is expecting students to learn will affect the physical layout of the room. It makes sense to have an environment that is comfortable, stimulating, and attractive as these factors are conducive to learning. Walking into a classroom that is visually rich can be appealing to students. However, if teachers want their students to use this resource daily, the students need to have some ownership of what is displayed. Collaboratively generating and building the print-rich classroom environment over time is a powerful approach to understanding how literacy works.

When deciding on the layout of the classroom, effective teachers take into account the classroom culture they wish to promote and the needs of their students. Considering the physical arrangement of the classroom—where to have a meeting area; how chairs and tables are arranged; where the equipment and materials are kept—will all facilitate implementation of different activities and the accommodation of different working groups. For example, while desks in rows facing the front might imply that the teacher dominates the instructional process, the arrangement also reflects an understanding of the importance of attending behaviours and active listening. Students can easily form groups of four by turning their desks around and joining the pair behind them. Teachers should consider changing the physical layout of the room throughout the year according to the social dynamics of the class, the nature of the teaching and learning, and their own professional reflection.

When planning the physical layout of a classroom, consider the following factors.

- 1 Fixed Features**
What in the way of doors, windows, cupboards, and display boards cannot be moved?
- 2 Climate**
What areas will be affected by heating, cooling, or wind?
- 3 Traffic**
Is there adequate access to exits, storage, and meeting areas?
- 4 Noise**
Is there sufficient space between quiet areas and noisy areas?
- 5 Student Numbers**
Which areas are designed for working alone, in pairs, as a group, as a whole class?
- 6 Supervision**
Can the teacher easily see the students?
- 7 Furniture**
Is the available furniture appropriate for the activity?
- 8 Safety**
Does the classroom have any features or furniture that pose a health or safety risk?
- 9 Student Attention**
Do the arrangements encourage on-task behaviour?
- 10 Proximity**
Are adjoining areas compatible? That is, should a hands-on art area be next to a computer area?

Organizing Floor Areas

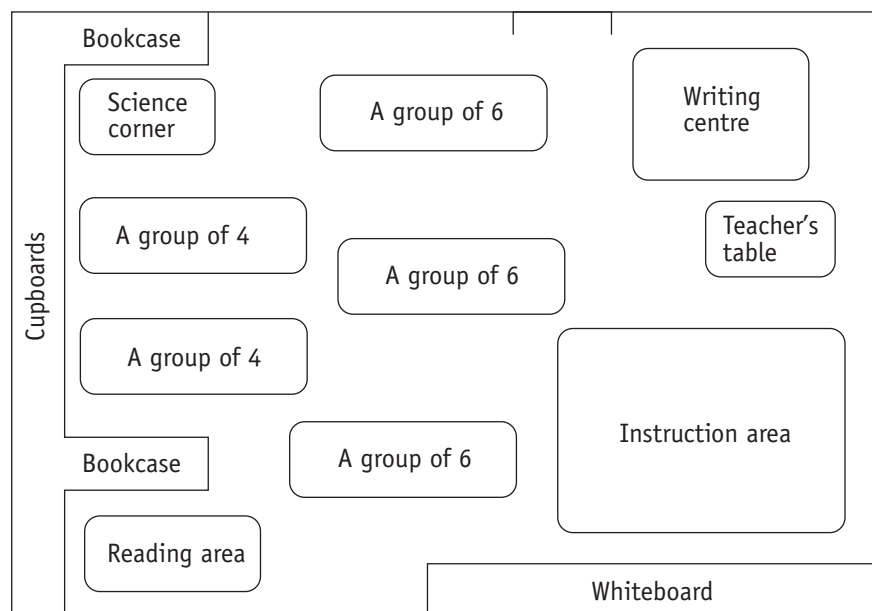
There are many ways to go about organizing the physical setting of the classroom. One way is to consider the room from a bird's-eye view, allocating areas according to needs. An approximate bird's-eye view of the classroom should begin with a draft plan that shows fixed features. (If this is done during the school year, students might be able to help construct the diagram and assist with the decision-making.) Small squares or sticky notes can then be used to represent the main areas required in the room. Areas need

not be substantial. An area could simply be a learning centre housed on a small table in a corner.

Consider the following areas and their purposes.

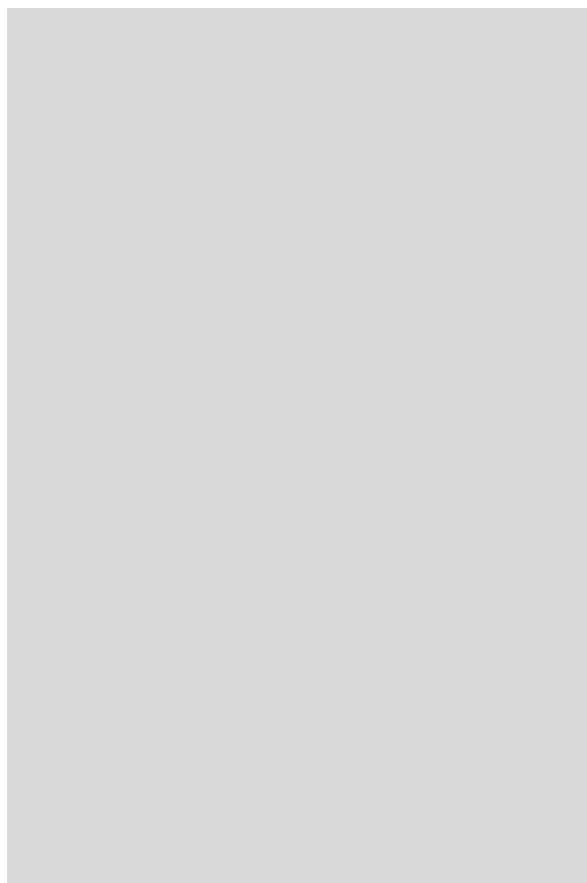
Area	Purpose: To Accommodate...
Teacher's area	Desk, display board, and storage
Students' desk area	Chairs and desks for conventional seatwork
Instruction area	Whole-class and small-group gatherings; e.g., modelled and shared lessons, class meetings
Quiet area	Recreational reading
Computer area	Computer-based tasks—using software, CD-ROMs, Internet
Activity area	Interactive materials for investigation
Water area	Art and science work where a tap and sink are required
Learning centre area	A focus on a strand, a theme, or a skill
Personal storage area	Bags, lunches, and other personal items
Listening area	Headsets for listening to recordings
Quiet area	Students who have become distressed or frustrated, and require time and space to regain their composure

Inevitably, areas will be shaped according to the space and furniture available, and the teaching and learning preferences of the teacher and students. One way is to move the areas around the room and consider each arrangement in light of the ten factors influencing the layout of the classroom (see previous page). Some areas may be adapted or merged and new areas created. Although many permutations may be tried, it is unlikely that a plan can avoid potential for friction. If teachers are aware of this potential, however, it can be managed. Some areas may require boundaries to maximize their effectiveness; e.g., a mat to mark an instruction area. Areas will often serve multiple purposes. The instruction area, as the largest open space in the room, may be appropriate for small-group meetings and limited physical activities such as stretching.

Ms. Bellatoni: Grade 4 Class Plan**Figure 5.5 Draft plan for classroom arrangement**

Furniture and features can often be adapted to meet the needs of students. For example, most young students don't mind sitting on the floor, whereas some older students may find it demeaning. Some teachers will simply pull their chairs across to instruct or read to their students, yet others have rejuvenated a large old armchair and endowed it with all sorts of powers to motivate their students. Visiting other classrooms, viewing teacher resource books, and watching home improvement shows will provide inspiration for areas with theme and character, making them attractive and multi-dimensional yet functional. For example, a listening centre becomes an octopus or a spider studio, or an old sofa is signposted, "For Literature Lizards Only" and accompanied by a cartoon of a reptile reading. The idea is to give areas prominence and atmosphere by decorating according to a theme, designating boundaries with furniture, and creating a sense of privilege in the use of that area.

A listening centre



Organizing Wall Spaces

Planning of floor areas can be complemented by a “wall view” that focuses more on display and storage spaces. Each wall can be considered as having a high space, extending roughly from the top of a teacher’s raised hand to the ceiling, a middle space, from the same hand to around the waist or knees, and a low space, continuing down to floor level. Using the backs of bookshelves, doors, or pianos can create more display space.

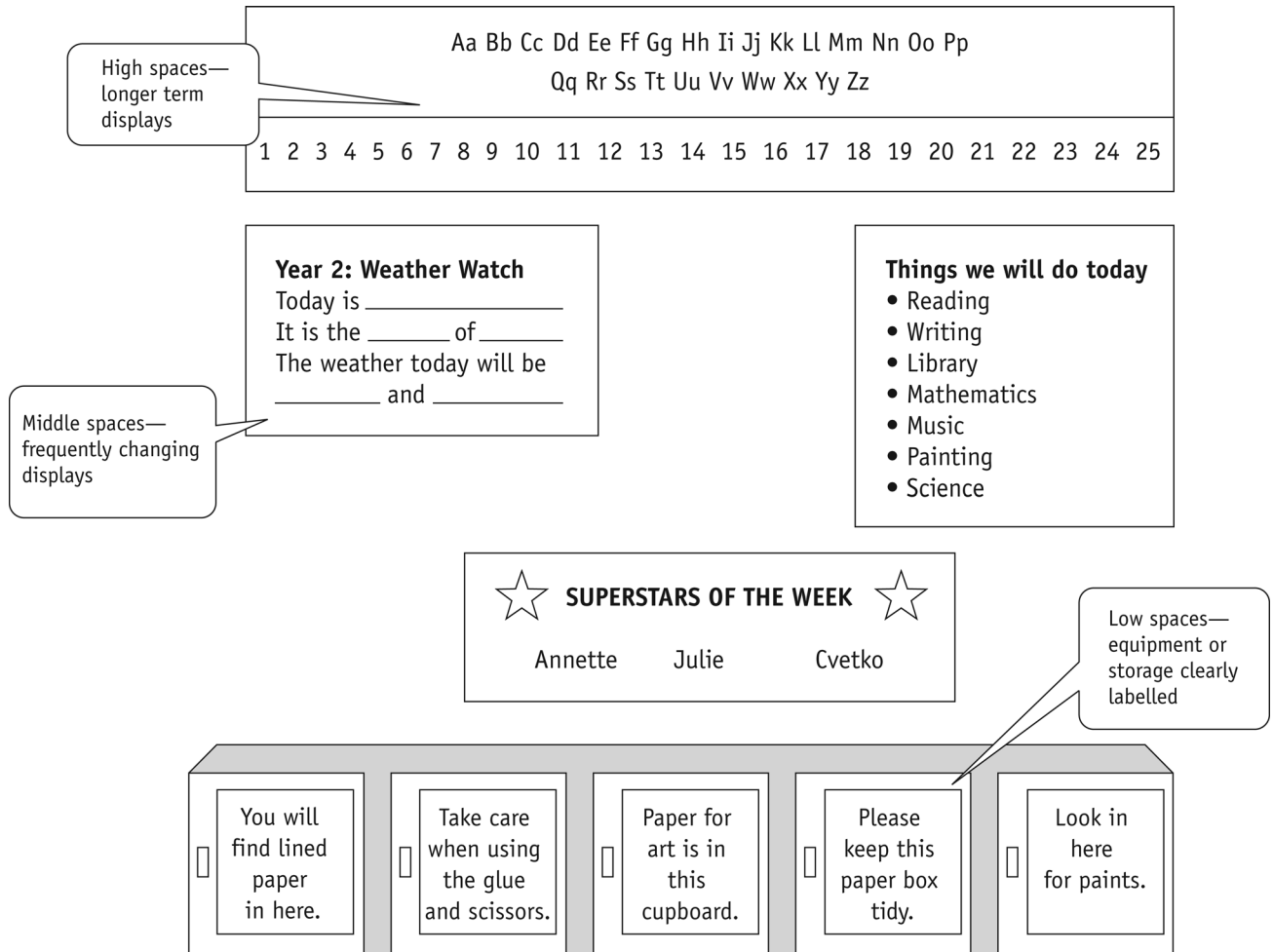


Figure 5.6 Typical use of a classroom wall

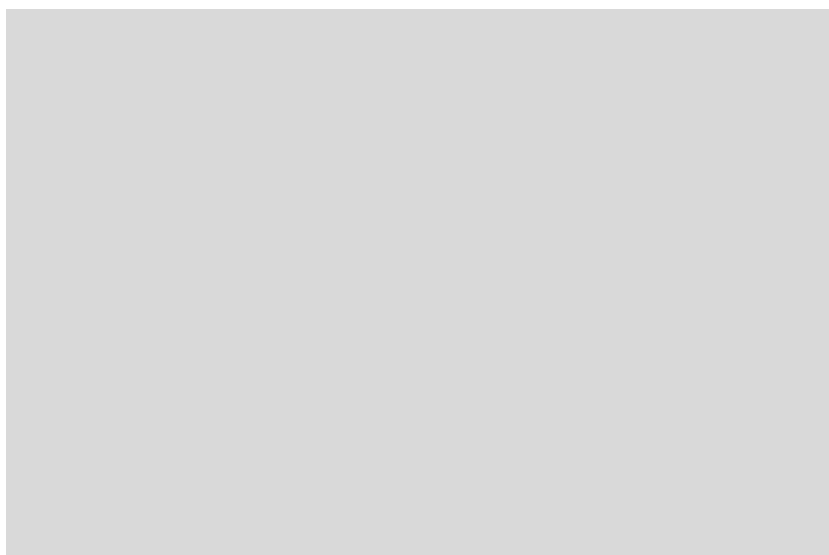
It makes sense that the high spaces are used for longer term displays because many of these spaces are hard to reach. These spaces are also distant from the eye, so they require any lettering to be large, bold, and clear. High spaces can sometimes include the ceiling, which can be used to anchor artifacts such as mobiles.

The middle spaces are suited to frequently changing displays and resources (such as books) since they are most accessible to the teacher and students. While areas for computer work and hands-on

activities may have charts on display that show procedures to be followed, it is valuable to dedicate space to the representation of ongoing learning. For example, the computer area could have a flip-chart on which students can write about their discoveries.

Low spaces can't always be seen by students (except perhaps when they are seated on the floor) but, being easily accessible, are suited to storage. Having storage spaces such as cupboards, boxes, tubs, buckets, and shoe-bags clearly labelled encourages students to be responsible for managing classroom resources. Once activity areas are established it is sometimes possible to locate relevant resources nearby, resulting in smoother lesson transitions.

Ideally, the bird's-eye-view plan of floor areas and the plan of wall spaces will complement each other so that the activity that occurs in an area is supported by appropriate displays and resources. For example, meeting areas are perfect places for the display of calendars and weather charts, schedules, and job rosters. Meeting areas and small-group areas also need flexible display space for demonstrations of print concepts, literacy skills, and activities like "Word Sorts." Chalkboards and overhead-projector screens are suitable for quick changes. Flip-charts and easels enable a permanent record to be kept. Conventional display space is useful for rearranging cards of brainstormed words into structured overviews or collaborative mind maps. Pocket charts and sentence makers can also be adapted for this purpose. Again, logistical factors will limit how compatible floor areas and wall spaces can be. The more cohesion possible, the more effective a classroom's physical environment will be.



Effective use of classroom wall space

The Classroom Culture

This section of the chapter looks at ways teachers can create and enhance the teaching and learning environment for their students with a focus on the development of a constructive classroom culture.

Nurturing a constructive classroom culture is critical to the success of every teaching and learning endeavour. The way teachers and students interact with one another is a pervasive and powerful force that has the capacity to motivate or marginalize students. Although attempts can be made to define classroom culture, its essence lies in how understandings about appropriate behaviour are enacted. Rapport, empathy, and sincerity between students have their origins in values and attitudes. While teachers can model these qualities, the nurturing of a constructive classroom is unlike the logistical planning associated with arranging the physical environment. It is an ongoing response to the developmental, individual, and cultural behaviours of students. Reflective teachers pick up on the tone and nature of student comments in their classroom. They think about why students are misbehaving, how a student has reacted to feedback, and whether students have become bored with lesson content or duration. This ongoing reflection, combined with a commitment to an active, purposeful learning program, is the foundation of a constructive classroom.

Several cornerstones to creating a constructive classroom culture are discussed under the following headings:

- Recognizing and Celebrating Individual Differences
- Clarifying and Supporting Expectations
- Maintaining a Core of Routines
- Negotiating Aspects of the Classroom

Recognizing and Celebrating Individual Differences

There is no message of greater importance to a teacher than “Know thy students.” By being aware of a student’s individual characteristics, developmental abilities, and cultural background, a teacher is able to build rapport through conversation, understand student anxieties, and anticipate social and academic difficulties. It is not always necessary to implement formal measures to build knowledge about students. Much information will accumulate through conversations with the students, and through similar conversations with parents, fellow teachers, and the students’ siblings. Often, previous reports will indicate grades and achievements, attitudes, and sometimes specialist diagnostic

information. All of this information needs to be considered in light of personal interactions with a student, which will help build an awareness, rather than label the student.

The following ideas can help build that awareness of a student's individual characteristics, developmental abilities, and cultural background. This information can be used to create a learning profile for individual students and eventually a class profile.

- Ask students to confidentially record the names of the two classmates they would prefer to sit near. Use the data to produce a sociogram of friendships in the classroom. The analysis of the sociogram can assist teachers to make decisions about seating arrangements. Discuss the need for seating plans to be flexible and conducive to a positive learning atmosphere. Ensure that students get the opportunity to work with and be seated near a variety of peers. Seating arrangements should be altered on a regular basis.
- Observe or survey students to discover their dominant learning styles. Informal observation will often reveal students' strengths and weaknesses in visual, auditory, kinesthetic, interactive, or print-oriented learning styles.
- Be aware of the concentration span of the majority of students. Generally, a student can focus for as many minutes as their age.
- Include self-descriptive activities such as a personal poem, a coat of arms, or a "Star of the Week" poster.
- Create displays that include students' names alongside home and community achievements.
- Invite students, their family members, and friends to talk or write to the class about their talents and accomplishments.
- Use the *First Steps* Maps of Development to record a student's development in literacy.
- Invite students to create bilingual or bidialectal writing when appropriate.
- Read and use texts that reflect students' cultural backgrounds.
- Take time to interact with all students on an individual basis.
- Get to know each student as a person, including his or her interests and family background.

Clarifying and Supporting Expectations

All too often, what we expect from students is exactly what we get. Clarifying and supporting expectations of work standards and behaviour is pivotal to classroom management. Teachers who communicate high expectations to students and provide the support

necessary to achieve these expectations are more likely to have students with high rates of academic success and who demonstrate appropriate behaviour.

Students misbehave for many reasons, and all students will misbehave at some time. Effective teachers have strategies for preventing misbehaviour and responding to it when it happens.

Students are less likely to misbehave if they

- feel valued and respected
- have a sense of belonging
- are involved in purposeful and challenging learning experiences at an appropriate level
- see the relevance of their learning to life outside of school
- feel empowered
- know their boundaries
- know what is negotiable and what is non-negotiable

Teachers clarify and support their expectations of behaviour in several ways. Perhaps the most obvious is through personal relationships. Teachers who develop strong personal relationships with students communicate to students that they are respected and valued as individuals. Effective teachers look for students' strengths and weaknesses rather than attaching a label. These teachers create an environment where students have a sense of belonging. Teachers can support the sense of belonging by demonstrating an interest in students' personal lives and by ensuring that classroom culture encompasses all students and encourages positive interactions.

The way teachers and schools structure and organize learning communicates their expectations to students. The following questions may serve as a stimulus for reflecting on the way learning is structured and organized in the school or class.

- Is a rich and varied curriculum provided to meet the needs of the students in the academic, personal, and creative areas?
- Is the level of difficulty appropriate for students?
- Is multicultural content encouraged?
- Are the cultural backgrounds of students acknowledged and celebrated?
- Is the context of the teaching making sense to students?
- Are different learning styles and multiple intelligences being addressed?
- Are critical thinking and inquiry encouraged?
- Are questions framed to elicit higher order responses?

- Are collaboration and cooperation encouraged?
- How are students grouped?
- Do students have the opportunity to work with a variety of other students of differing ability, social, age, or cultural groups?
- Do assessment practices promote reflection, critical thinking, and problem-solving?

Finally, effective teachers communicate expectations by motivating students and encouraging them to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour. These teachers are more likely to engage students in activities that connect to their interests and strengths, and build from where they are. In this way they are fostering intrinsic motivation. They also encourage students to participate in decision-making processes in the classroom and the school to build responsibility and ownership of learning.

Maintaining a Core of Routines

Key aspects of a supportive classroom environment are stability and predictability. Routines can range from having typical times for certain activities to using the same procedures for moving into groups, yet these routines serve the purpose of providing students with social cues and expectations about how things are done. Routines are supported by physical features, such as the logical location and storage of resources in clearly marked containers, shelves, or cupboards, and regular reminders about accepted procedures. Where problems arise, class meetings provide a forum to solve the problem collectively by brainstorming solutions and trying out preferred options.

Most classrooms have routines for the following:

- entering and leaving the classroom
- beginning and concluding the day
- preparing for and returning from breaks
- moving into pairs or groups
- contributing to group discussions
- using and cleaning up resources
- handing in work
- handing out work
- moving to other classrooms or other parts of the school
- beginning regular activities such as SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) or physical education
- finishing tasks
- participating in whole-school gatherings
- responding to potential emergencies

Where a routine is being taught or is unlikely to be remembered, it makes sense to have students help to generate a routine chart. For example, students could brainstorm all the things they need to do before they enter the room at the start of the day, and write these on a large chart to be displayed just outside the classroom door. By regularly referring to the chart and questioning students about it, it is likely that they will understand, value, and follow the routine.





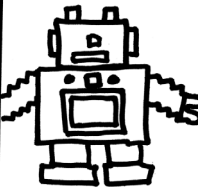
TODAY IS Tuesday				
				
Make a model	The big blocks	The writing table	Play with the games puzzles	The book box

Figure 5.7 A classroom routine chart

Negotiating Aspects of the Classroom

Negotiating aspects of the curriculum, including topics of study, and processes of classroom management such as rules, roles, and responsibilities, provides students with a sense of ownership and the opportunity to share in the decision-making processes and construction of knowledge. However strong the desire to negotiate aspects of the classroom with students, there will always remain some aspects that the teacher considers to be non-negotiable. Teachers should decide which aspects of the classroom can be negotiated and which should remain under their control.

When students are involved in the negotiating process, engagement, exploration, and reflection are promoted. Most teachers throughout the world are required to follow a curriculum and work towards a set of desired outcomes and expectations. They are also expected to maintain standards of acceptable behaviour often set at the school level. However, within these constraints there is room to negotiate.

Negotiating “When”

Many teachers are expected to cover certain required content in the course of the year. This may take the form of broad topics of study or lists of specific objectives. Whatever the form of the content, students can be given some choice in when they will study it.

The teacher and students can negotiate

- the order in which the topics will be covered
- the time by which certain activities are to be completed (For example, the teacher may organize a series of activities to be completed over a period of time, and the students choose which to tackle first, second, and so on.)

Negotiating “What”

For those teachers whose curriculum provides specific topics of study, such as magnets as a focus for science, there is still scope to negotiate with students. (See Figure 5.5 on page 82.)

Four questions can assist the teacher and students in focusing on the problem, question, or topic to be studied.

- What do we already know about magnets?
- What do we want and need to find out about magnets?
- How will we go about finding out?
- How will we assess our accomplishments when we have finished?

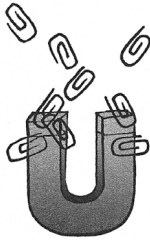
Negotiation of this type helps teachers determine where students are at, thereby fostering learning that builds from students’ existing knowledge and ideas. It acknowledges that students already possess a certain amount of knowledge about the topic and can save time by not covering aspects students already know.

Teachers can also negotiate with students the rules, roles, and responsibilities that will govern their working relationship in the classroom. Students can be asked to brainstorm possible rules for inclusion as class rules and then be given the opportunity to discuss the merits of each before finally coming up with an agreed-upon class list. Negotiated rules work well when

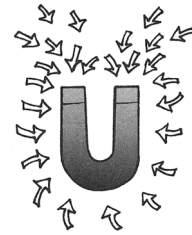
- they are few in number—a maximum of five
- a rationale for each rule is discussed—explain why the rule is necessary
- ambiguous terms are explained—discuss the meaning of the words used in the rules; for example, talk about what the terms *quiet*, *putting your hand up*, or *showing respect* mean in the context of the classroom
- they are stated positively—“Raise your hand if you need something” rather than “Don’t call out.”

NEGOTIATED SCIENCE PLAN

What We All Decided



MAGNETISM



WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW

- There are lots of different-shaped magnets.
- Magnets pick up some things and not others.
- You can do tricks with magnets.

WHAT WE WANT TO FIND OUT

- What kind of magnets do we have in our home?
- Are some magnets stronger than others?
- Do magnets pick up all metal objects?
- What does *attract* mean?
- What does *repel* mean?

INVESTIGATION GROUPS

People we've chosen to work with:

Group 1: Maryanne, Denise, Ather, Peda, Suzi

Group 2: Tamara, Russell, Lakshmi, Sam, Freda

Group 3: Feni, Cvetko, Arnah, Millie, Rosco

Group 4: Mitchell, Chantelle, Tara, Mitra, Brendon

Group 5: Sean, Lillico, Brooke, Danny, Matthew

Group 6: Elisha, Faik, Warren, Marie, Ahmed

ORDER OF OUR TOPICS

WEEK 1 What do magnets attract?

WEEK 2 Which magnet is stronger?

WEEK 3 Different types of magnets

WEEK 4 Magnetic force will go through things

WEEK 5 Magnetic poles

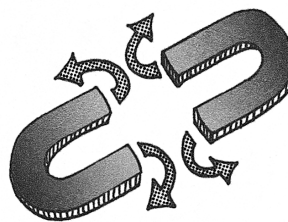


END-OF-TOPIC PRESENTATIONS

Show us what you have learned about magnets through one of these:

Demonstration and Oral Presentation

Make a Model



Make a Recording

Chart with Drawings

Figure 5.8 Sample negotiated science plan created by a Grade 3 class

Using class meetings to negotiate plans for the organization of the physical environment, such as use of floor areas and wall spaces, sends strong messages about the shared responsibility for managing the classroom. This negotiation and collaboration is ongoing.

Negotiating “How”

Once the topics have been chosen and the investigation begun, the teacher and students can negotiate about how the learning will be represented when it is completed. Students will need experience of representing learning in different ways before being asked to choose for themselves. They could

- produce a book
- make a video clip
- complete a PowerPoint presentation
- make a recording in conjunction with an illustrated text
- create a poster or chart
- build a model
- devise a board game

Students can also be involved in establishing the criteria upon which judgments will be made about their representations.

For example, students may have been working together to design a PowerPoint presentation. The teacher and students can create a rubric where they negotiate which aspects of the project are to be assessed and how they will assess levels of achievement.

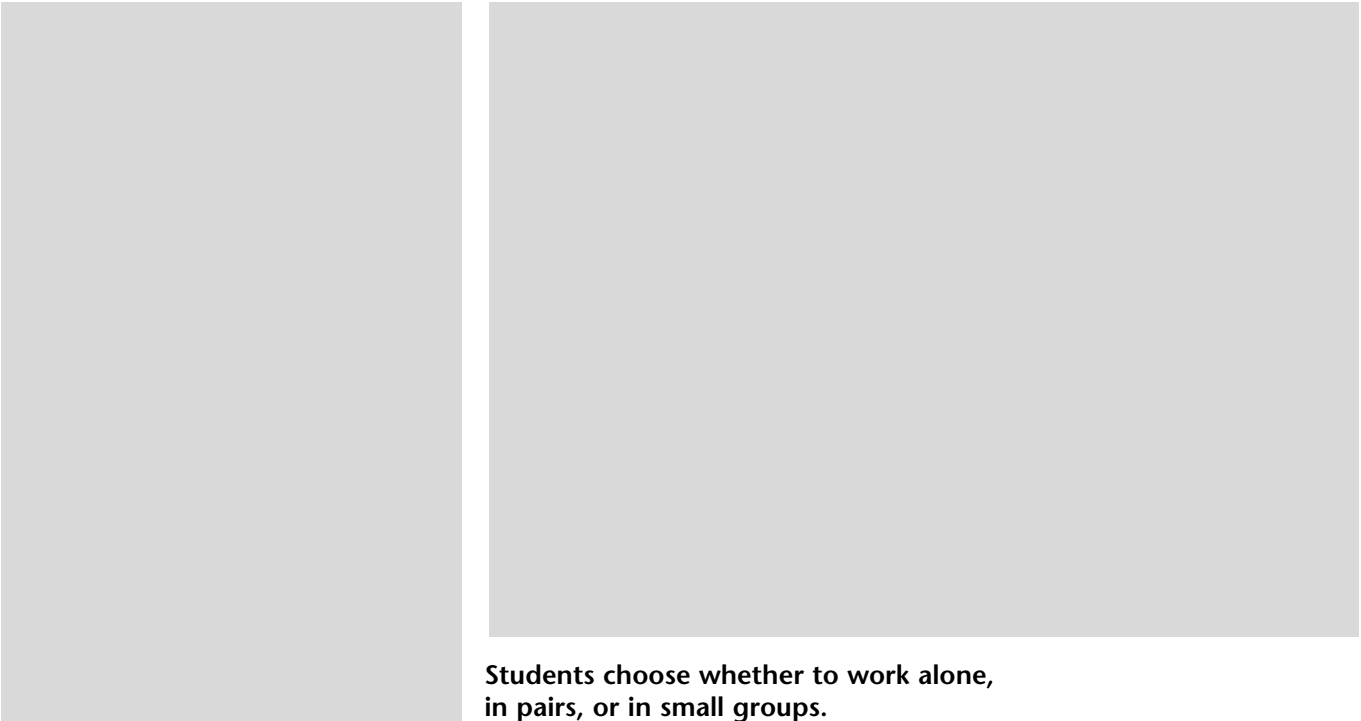
Assessment of Our PowerPoint Presentations					
		Mark Awarded			
		1	2	3	4
Aspects Assessed	Graphics	Graphics do not appear to be related to the theme.	Graphics are related to the theme but include many stereotypical images.	Graphics are related to the theme but include some stereotypical images.	Graphics are related to the theme and avoid stereotypical images.
	Spelling and Grammar	There are many errors in spelling and grammar in the edited version of the presentation.	There are some (4–5) errors in spelling and grammar in the edited version of the presentation.	There are a few (1–3) errors in spelling and grammar in the edited version of the presentation.	There are no spelling or grammatical errors in the edited version of the presentation.
	Sound				
	Content				
	Layout				
	Navigation				

Figure 5.9 Sample of a negotiated assessment rubric

Negotiating “With Whom”

Teachers can negotiate with students whether they will work as individuals, in pairs, or in small groups. Whatever the grouping, a clear expectation about the divisions of labour needs to be established before work begins. This discussion could include who will perform each task, the responsibilities of the individual group members, and the consequences for those who fail to meet their responsibilities.

Classrooms need to be set up so that students are able to develop socially, academically, and emotionally. When positive classroom environments have been established, there is more likelihood that students will gain the necessary skills to become thoughtful, contributing members of the wider community. When implementing *First Steps* it is important that teachers establish a positive teaching and learning environment where individuals are valued, the curriculum is appropriate to the needs and strengths of students, and effective teaching and learning practices are implemented.

Two large, empty grey rectangular boxes are positioned side-by-side, occupying the lower half of the page. They appear to be placeholders for images or diagrams related to the text above.

Students choose whether to work alone, in pairs, or in small groups.

CHAPTER 6

Assessment and Evaluation: Theory, Principles, and Practices

Definitions

Effective teaching and learning stems from effective assessment and evaluation. Teachers who focus on data collection as a source of valuable information to enhance learning can be successful in supporting a range of students in one classroom. In order to do this effectively, classroom assessment practices need to be valid, educative, explicit, fair, and comprehensive—in short, reliable.

- ***Valid***

The assessment needs to happen in real and meaningful contexts and to focus on the particular outcomes chosen.

- ***Educative***

The assessment needs to be educationally sound and the student should learn from the experience; e.g., the teacher provides feedback on a specific aspect so the student can concentrate on improving in that area.

- ***Explicit***

The assessment criteria are stated clearly so the students know what information is being gathered; e.g., tell the students that you will be questioning them about the reading strategies they were using.

- ***Fair***

The assessment used should enable each student to demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of the outcomes or expectations, using individual strengths; e.g., visual learners may choose to draw diagrams while print-oriented learners may choose to write.

- ***Comprehensive***

A range of information should be collected in different situations over time. Information may come from observations, student products, and conversations.

The terms *assessment* and *evaluation* are often used synonymously. As our understanding of the facets of assessment has grown, so too has the number of assessment terms in common use today. Listed below are definitions of these assessment terms, as well as a definition of evaluation.

Assessment is the process of gathering data—from the beginning of a unit of study through its conclusion. Teachers gather and record information continuously in a range of ways, including observations, conversations, and student work samples (e.g., notes from a reading or writing conference, drafts, journal entries, published pieces, graphic organizers).

Evaluation is a judgment made on the basis of a student's performance in relation to an identified standard, for example, a student's overall performance as stated in a report card grade.

Assessment as learning refers to the student self-monitoring personal learning goals and making adjustments or changes in response to feedback from the monitoring process. Ongoing throughout the learning process, this form of assessment may occur when a student assesses his or her performance against a class-designed rubric.

Assessment for learning is ongoing throughout a learning unit, is based on a variety of information sources, and is used to inform instruction. A critical component of assessment for learning is that both students and the teacher know at the outset the outcomes students are expected to learn. These learning goals are expressed clearly, and may be the result of both student and teacher input.

Before beginning a learning unit, teachers make diagnostic or initial assessments of students' prior knowledge, skills, and strategies that relate to what will be taught in the learning unit.

Throughout the unit, teachers monitor student learning, modifying or adjusting instruction in response to their observations in order to better support the needs and progress of individuals and groups of students (formative assessment). Students are provided with regular feedback, verbally or in writing, that is timely and specific and that is intended to help students move their thinking and learning forward.

Assessment of learning (summative assessment) takes place at the completion of one or more learning units. Student learning/performance is assessed based on standards related to specific goals or expectations for the unit; in evaluation, the teacher may integrate or synthesize data from several learning units and "judge"

it with reference to a somewhat more generic standard. This judgment includes the assignment of a letter or number symbol to represent the most consistent level of performance (e.g., 80%, Level 3; B+). The evaluation is based on comparing the student's achievement against a standard. Results are communicated to the student and parents.

Successful Assessment and Evaluation

Effective teachers

- have a **clear purpose** for all assessment and evaluation processes used
- collect information in an **ongoing** way in a range of **authentic contexts**
- use a **wide range** of appropriate **tools and methods** to gather information
- use a **collaborative approach** to collect information about students
- create systems to **record** and **manage** data
- **make adaptations** to assessment and evaluation processes when necessary
- take time to **analyze** and **evaluate** the information gathered and make judgments about future teaching

Clear Purpose

Although there is a range of reasons for conducting literacy assessment in classrooms, the prime purpose should be to provide teachers with information that will help plan relevant and meaningful literacy instruction. This supports the view that teaching is an ongoing process of reflection and that curriculum decisions are driven primarily by students' needs. Valuable time spent on data collection must provide teachers with information that will enhance learning in classrooms.

Assessment can be used to

- determine students' interests, strengths, and phases of literacy development
- inform decisions about how best to support students' literacy development
- monitor student development
- provide a tool for reflecting on and improving teaching
- provide information about students that can be shared with others

Ongoing Assessment in Authentic Contexts

The most valuable type of assessment information is collected on a continuing basis. Assessment and evaluation should not be something that happens only at the beginning and end of a topic, semester, or school year. The process of collecting data about individuals, small groups, or whole classes of students can be incorporated into a regular school day. Powerful assessment takes place when teachers observe students at work during regular classroom activities. Data gathered on an ongoing basis, while students interact with learning experiences that are part of the regular classroom plan, provides teachers with useful data from a range of contexts. Consider the multitude of classroom events that may provide authentic contexts for the collection of data about literacy development. These could include shared, modelled, and guided literacy sessions, retellings, drama, poetry reading, Readers Theatre, reading response activities, library visits, independent reading time, and literacy events across the content areas. Essentially, every learning experience will reveal something about a student's performance. Assessment is largely the art of knowing what to record, when, why, and how.

Range of Tools and Methods

It is important that teachers develop a repertoire of tools and methods for collecting data about students' literacy development. A balance of observation, conversation, and analysis of products is essential. This multifaceted approach to assessment, including a range of tools, can assist teachers in determining which methods of data collection are providing the best information.

Collaborative Approach

A collaborative approach to assessment involves and values input from a range of sources, including the student, parents or caregivers, peers, and teachers.

Parents and caregivers are a rich source of information and often provide unique insights into the literacy development of their children. Involving parents in the assessment of students' literacy development can provide an additional dimension to the data collection process in any classroom. It is critical that classroom teachers value parent input and encourage them to share information in both formal and informal ways. A variety of suggestions about how teachers have involved parents and caregivers in the assessment process (including sample line masters) are provided within this chapter.

Given time and support, students of all ages are also capable of providing worthwhile insights into their own literacy development. There are many ways of encouraging students to be part of the assessment process. Learning journals, logs, work samples, and surveys are examples of useful tools that can be used.

Systems to Record and Manage Data

Gathering and recording information about many students at one time can often be overwhelming and unclear. Many teachers design innovative processes and formats in an attempt to make the process more systematic and manageable. The *First Steps* Maps of Development provide a framework to assist teachers in recording and managing the data collected about individuals or groups of students. The Maps of Development are not a data-collection tool within themselves, but are an excellent framework for recording and making sense of an array of information. Identifying students on the Maps allows teachers to compile information and create a common language across a school to identify the development of each student and discuss with others. Once information is recorded, these maps help teachers to make informed decisions about the future teaching and learning needs of students.

Teachers also design innovative ways of storing *First Steps* Individual Profile sheets.

- Hanging folders in a filing cabinet are sometimes created for each student.
- Profile sheets are sometimes attached inside individual student portfolios.

Adaptations

Teachers need the flexibility to use a range of data-assessment tools across the classroom. The tools selected will depend on the changing needs of the student population. It may be necessary to collect more data about students who appear to have special needs. More detailed information about these particular students will help teachers focus on how best to support their development. It is not imperative that teachers use the same forms of assessment for each student if the ongoing focus is on fairness, validity, comprehensiveness, and instructional planning.

Analysis of Information

Effective teachers take time to analyze any information gathered about students' literacy development and use it to make judgments about future teaching. Simply collecting and then recording data

about literacy development does not necessarily mean the data is providing the teacher with anything useful. Most data collected still requires some form of analysis to clarify its meaning and possible implications.

Analyzing information enables teachers to identify strengths and needs, look for patterns or discrepancies, identify developmental phases and, most important, design learning plans. This is often a challenging task for teachers. The *First Steps* Maps of Development assist teachers with both the analysis and the planning of appropriate learning experiences for the whole class, small groups, or individual students. The use of indicators and phases will highlight strengths of individual students and significant developmental signposts that have been reached. The Major Teaching Emphases at each phase will support the process of selecting appropriate future learning experiences. Major Teaching Emphases linked to each phase of development have been created to support where students are, to challenge their current level of development, and to support identified needs.

A Process for Assessment and Evaluation

Figure 6.1 represents a process for planning and implementing effective assessment and evaluation. It also suggests a way of incorporating the use of the *First Steps* Maps of Development. Focus questions, such as those below, provide a framework for decisions that may need to be made.

- What information is needed?
- What are the most reliable and valid ways to collect the data and from whom?
- How can the data be collected?
- How can the data be recorded?
- What can be done with the information?
- How can the information be shared with others?

The remainder of this chapter will support teachers in answering these types of questions in an informed and open way. Ideas for reporting and sharing information with others are also included. Further information specific to Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Viewing can be found in the Map of Development book for each strand.

A Process for Assessment and Evaluation

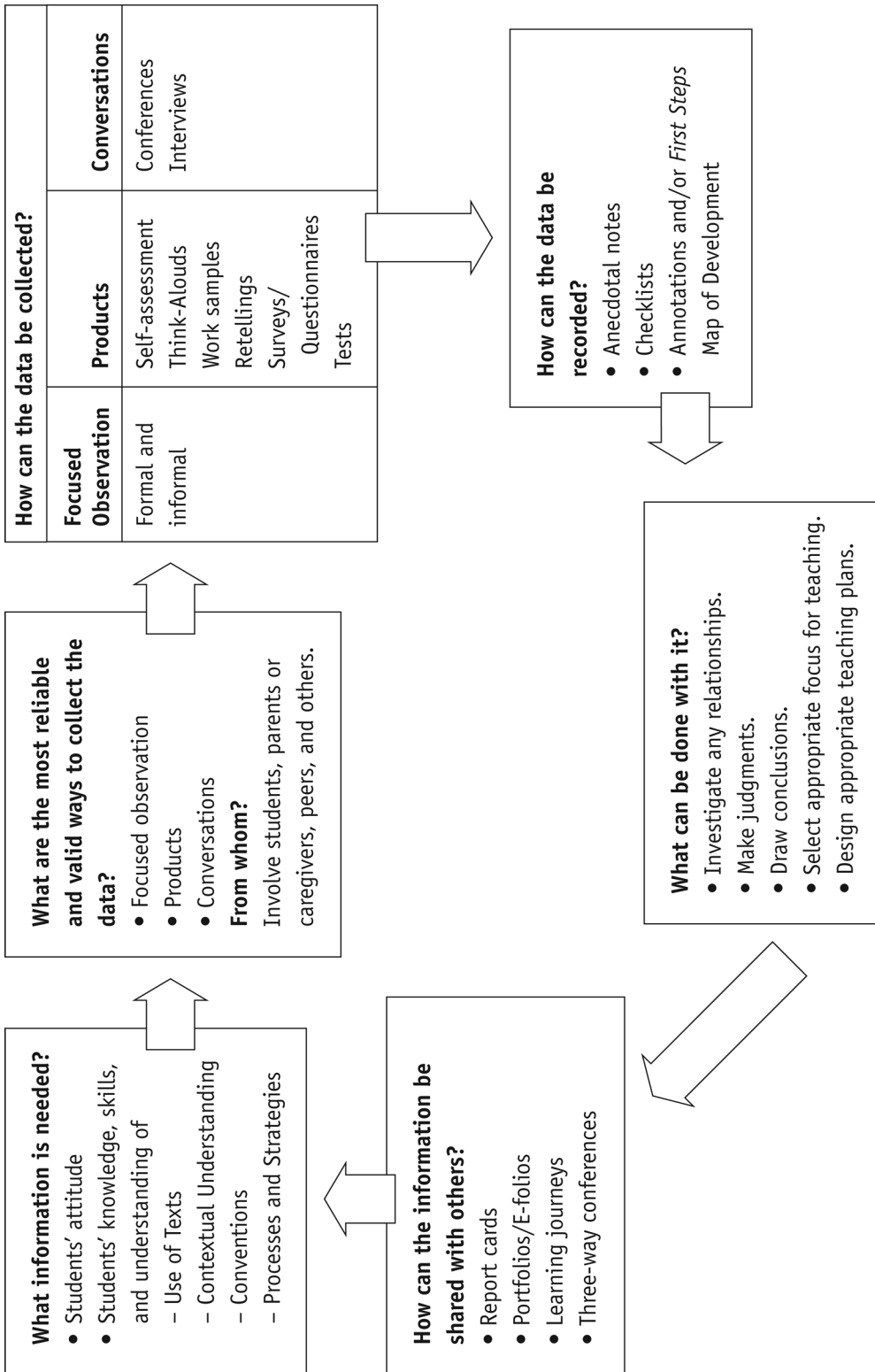


Figure 6.1

What Are the Most Reliable and Valid Ways to Collect Data?

There are several ways to collect data in the classroom. The way data is collected should provide valid, educative, explicit, fair, and comprehensive information. Assessment can be streamlined in the classroom by working smarter to eliminate time-consuming methods that may provide little information. The following pages provide a range of suggestions for collecting data in the form of focused observation, products, or conversations. All examples can be used across multiple literacy experiences and as part of daily classroom events. It is important to develop reliable processes for assessing and to involve students, peers, parents or caregivers, and teachers when collecting data.

Focused Observation	Products	Conversations
Formal and informal	Self-assessments Think-Alouds Work samples Retellings Surveys/ Questionnaires Tests	Conferences Interviews

Figure 6.2 Collecting data

Focused Observation

The ability to STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN is a fundamental skill of any effective classroom teacher. Formal or informal observations of student behaviour in the natural learning environment can form the basis of a comprehensive classroom data-collection process. Formal observations are planned and focus on predetermined criteria and students. Informal observations are unplanned, but often reveal what students can do in a range of different contexts.

Teachers need to decide what information should be recorded during formal or informal observations. Initially, anything that seems significant is acceptable. However, if observational records are going to be useful at a later date, it is critical that teachers become skilled in knowing exactly what to look for. Focused observation

is more powerful than observation alone. The *First Steps* Maps of Development provide teachers with the necessary support to help focus their observations on significant behaviours related to literacy development.

Focused observation encompasses not only knowing what to look for, but also concentrating on one student or particular students at any one time. Classroom teachers do not have the time to observe and record information about all students, every day. By selecting five or six students to focus on over a short period of time, such as a day or a week, each child is observed systematically throughout the course of a month, semester, or year.

Developing high-quality observation skills takes time and practice. An excellent model developed by many schools implementing *First Steps* is to organize “observation buddies” or pairs of teachers to support each other in the observation process. It is an ideal opportunity to closely observe students when another teacher is taking responsibility for teaching the class. This arrangement frees the observer to watch and listen to students and to gain a deeper understanding of the processes and strategies being used.

Products

The assessment of both process and product—assessment for learning—is important when making decisions about supporting students’ literacy development. As well as using focused observation in a classroom, teachers also need to consider what further information can be gathered from students’ oral, written, or visual work products. Teachers can assess student products that have been created during the process of learning, not only the final products that are a result of learning—assessment of learning. For example, it is just as important to collect planning sheets and draft writing samples as it is to collect published writing products. The *First Steps* Maps of Development provide teachers with the necessary support to analyze selected work products.

Observation and analysis of students’ products such as self-assessment forms, Think-Alouds, work samples (including multimedia creations), retellings, surveys or questionnaires, and tests all provide insights into literacy development.

1 Self-Assessment Products

Student self-assessment—assessment as learning—is a critical part of developing a student’s responsibility for his or her own learning.

Self-assessment procedures can also provide teachers with insights into the student's literacy development that otherwise may not be apparent. It is critical that line masters are modelled and provided for students as frameworks for recording information and reflections. With teacher support and guidance, students can develop the metacognitive skills necessary to assess their own learning. A variety of tools can be used to encourage students to assess their learning. These include student logs, goal-setting frameworks, and journals.

• Log Formats

The simplest form of self-assessment is the student's log to record work completed.

RECORD OF BOOKS READ—SEMESTER ONE		
DATE STARTED	TEXT TITLE	DATE FINISHED
Mon Sept 10	Unreal—Paul Jennings	Tues Sept 18
Thurs Sept 20	Journey—Patricia MacLachlan	Tues Sept 25
Thurs Sept 27	Undone—Paul Jennings	Mon Oct 1

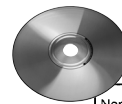
Figure 6.3 Simple student log

Logs can be extended to reveal individual interests, preferences, attitudes, or understandings. Students are not only asked to record completed work, but also to reflect on some aspect of the task.



Name: <u>Rebecca J.</u>		Date: <u>Dec 11</u>	
Reading Log 2			
Date	Text Title and Author	Text Type	Comments
Dec 11	Land Slide by Colin Thiele	Book	It was excellent and it gives a look at what it would be like to live in a log ^{in a landslide}
Dec 14	Unreal by Paul Jennings	Book	I really liked this book. I want to read more books by Paul Jennings.

Figure 6.4a Reading log sample



Name: <u>Bhavin</u>	Date: <u>October 23</u>
My Writing Log	
Date: <u>October 23</u>	
Completed: <u>October 26</u>	
Purpose: <u>Should children do homework?</u>	
Form: <u>Exposition</u>	
Comment: <u>My grammar could have been better. My points were clear.</u>	
Date: <u>October 29</u>	
Completed: <u>November 1</u>	
Purpose: <u>How does a bike move?</u>	
Form: <u>Explanation</u>	
Comment: <u>I might have left some information out. I should use more detail.</u>	
Date: _____	
Completed: _____	
Purpose: _____	
Form: _____	
Comment: _____	
Date: _____	
Completed: _____	
Purpose: _____	
Form: _____	
Comment: _____	

Figure 6.4b Writing log sample

My Writing Progress Chart

[illegible]

Figure 6.5 Writing progress chart

- **Other Formats**

It is also important to encourage students to think metacognitively about learning processes and strategies, personal strengths, and areas for improvement. A multitude of commercially produced line masters are available in all areas of literacy. Teachers use such line masters as a basis for adaptation to meet their own students' particular needs. This ensures that the line masters are directly related to the context of the classroom and students.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Self-Assessment—Transitional Phase

Look What I Can Do



My Reading Behaviours

I Can

Not Yet

Sometimes

Consistently

- State the main idea and provide details from the text to support it
- Discuss information that is stated in a text
- Select information from a text for a specific purpose
- Link ideas both stated and implied, for example, tell about cause and effect
- Use the library system and search engines to locate and select suitable texts for a specific purpose
- Check the currency and relevance of information for a specific purpose
- Tell when authors are trying to make me think about something in a particular way
- Tell why my interpretation of a text may be different from someone else's
- Recognize devices that authors and illustrators use to construct meaning, for example, word selection and visuals
- Challenge and discuss author's choice of content in a text, e.g., validity, accuracy, credibility
- Speculate on the reasons why an author chose to represent a character or person a certain way
- Recognize a bank of words in different places, including less common words and subject-specific words
- Know some different sounds for the same letter combinations, for example, *rough, dough, plough*
- Correct myself if I make a mistake
- Use strategies such as reading on, rereading, using syllables to work out words I don't know
- Use my knowledge of text form, purpose, structure, organization and language features to assist when reading and completing tasks
- Use punctuation effectively to enhance comprehension and oral reading
- Use a range of strategies to maintain, monitor, and adjust my comprehension, for example, creating images, determining importance
- Think of things I already know about a topic when I'm reading a text
- Reread if I lose meaning

I Enjoy

- Listening to a variety of texts
- Reading for pleasure
- Reading favourite texts and authors as well as discovering new ones
- Reading to learn about things
- Discussing and comparing texts

Figure 6.6 Student Self-Assessment page, a sample format for reflection

**Self-Assessment Sheet:
Comprehension Strategies**

Name: Georges

Did you have any problems understanding while reading this text?

No, I didn't.

How did you solve this problem?

What strategies did you use while reading?

- word understanding

- reading in my head

Are there other strategies that may also have worked with this text?

- No.

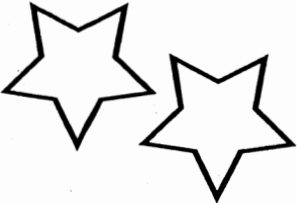
See also "Thinking
About Your Reading"
on the LATL CD-ROM.

Figure 6.7 Teacher-created format on comprehension

"Two Stars and a Wish" provides students with a simple framework for reflecting on positive aspects of their work as well as focusing on areas for improvement. It also provides a simple framework for peer assessment.

Two Stars and a Wish

Two stars and a wish for Maria



1. understand what I
read

2. read quickly

If I get stuck on a
word's meaning ask
someone about it.

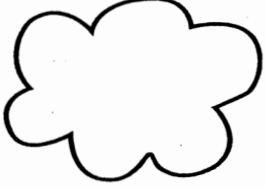
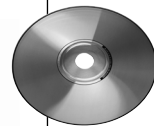



Figure 6.8 "Two Stars and a Wish" reflection framework

• Goal-Setting Frameworks

Personal goal-setting is another form of assessment as learning suitable for all ages. Before students can independently create learning goals, it is essential for teachers to provide ongoing modelling and scaffolding. Helping students to identify achievable goals that are linked to personal and shared targets promotes a sense of ownership. Goal-setting frameworks can provide a focus for beginning goal-setting in the classroom.

Me as a Reader

Name: Albie Date: April 6, 2007

This is how I feel as a reader. (Make this face look like that.)

I like to do these kinds of reading: Adventure and mystery

I like reading when I am in bed at night

I am getting better at reading with expression

My Reading Goal
Now I want to get better at reading fluently

Writing Goals

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

Figures 6.9a and b Frameworks for goal-setting

Rebecca Age: 12

I use these Reading Strategies

- re-read the text
- 5 finger check
- look back on words I don't know
- To check that I understand while I read
- I look for answers to my questions
- I compare the story to my experience

I'm working on these Reading Strategies

- To pay attention to Punctuation.
- check I am understanding while I read.
- ~~Find~~ Find rhyming words
- check my predictions are right.
- To see if the book I choose is not too young for me.
- check to see if I can understand the book.

Figure 6.10 Reading strategies and goals

• Journals

Journals also provide an opportunity for metacognitive reflection. The process of inviting students to reflect and write about an aspect of their literacy can provide further information and insights into individual development. A written conversation between teacher and student may also occur as a result of the journal entries. Young students who are unable to write responses can use drawings, or be involved in keeping a class journal.

Journals can take many forms, each providing a different focus for reflection. The purposes and desired outcomes of using a journal in the classroom may be as follows:

– *Personal Response*

Students make simple records of thoughts and questions about the texts they are reading. Sticky notes make an excellent tool for students to record these thoughts as they read.

– *Dialogue*

A “conversation” in writing is conducted with a peer or teacher. A student writes a response or question about a text and the teacher or peer writes a short response back.

– *Reflection on Specific and General Literacy Events*

Students focus on particular literacy activities, reflecting on the process, feelings, and outcomes of the event. They may also complete entries at the end of a theme, unit of work, or period of time. Students reflect on a series of past literacy events and consider future application of new learning.

– *Metacognitive Thinking*

Encourage students to think about and become aware of their own thought processes when constructing and comprehending texts. “What have I learned?” and “How did I learn it?” are two key questions for students to consider.

Journal Scaffolds

Name: _____ Date: _____

Reading Journal Prompts for Response

- List similarities or differences between the central character in the book and yourself.
- Has anything similar to what happened in the book happened to you? Explain.
- What do you think will happen next?
- What makes you think that?
- What is the problem the central character must solve?
- Describe one of the scenes from the story.
- What is unclear or puzzling about the story?
- Why did the central character behave in the way he or she did?
- Retell the story.
- Compare the text with earlier read books or watched movies.
- What was the turning point in the book?
- What questions would you want to ask the author?




Figure 6.11 Reading response

Dialogue Journal

Student:

I read "The Belonging Place" by Jean Little. I read it to myself alot. I wanted to read it aloud because I loved the way they talked in the olden days. I felt the story was about me because I don't always feel like I belong.

Teacher:

I like the way they talked too! Remember, everyone feels like they don't belong once in a while. You'll always belong in my classroom!

Figure 6.12 Sample entries

_____'s Reflective Journal

Event 1	How did I feel?	What did I learn?
Event 2	How did I feel?	What did I learn?
Event 3	How did I feel?	What did I learn?




Figure 6.13 Framework for reflection

Learning How to Learn in Writing

Choose a piece of writing you have recently completed.

Record the steps you took to complete this piece.

Share your process with a friend, explaining what you did.




Figure 6.14 Framework for metacognitive thinking

Name: Pierre Date: 05-08-07

Thinking About Your Writing

1 I found this piece of writing... Easy Not Too Hard Difficult (circle one)

2 The best part of this piece of writing is The letter but I had a few spelling mistakes

I did this by I did this with some help and talking to other people

3 For the future, I want to work on Not getting so many spelling mistakes

I plan to do this by Practicing my spelling at school and home

Name: Louise Date: 9-19-07

Thinking About Your Writing

1 I found this piece of writing... Easy Not Too Hard Difficult (circle one)

2 The best part of this piece of writing is the planning because you can organize who did what and when and things like that.

I did this by watching the teachers model doing the plan a couple times.

3 For the future, I want to work on Using more descriptive language.

I plan to do this by thinking about how the character did or said something.

Name: Rebecca Lynn Age: 12 Date: 9-18-07

Thinking About Your Writing

1 I found this piece of writing... Easy Not Too Hard Difficult (circle one)

2 The best part of this piece of writing is it was very detailed.

I did this by adding adjectives and verbs

3 For the future, I want to work on structuring my writing correctly so it is easy to read.

I plan to do this by looking at class charts and taking my time.



Figures 6.15a, b, and c Metacognitive thinking samples

2 Think-Alouds

Think-Alouds are articulations of thoughts before, during, and after literacy events. They may be spontaneous reactions to the text by students or may be encouraged or requested by the teacher. The analysis of Think-Alouds can provide a rich source of information about literacy processes and strategies being used.

In the example that follows, the teacher has asked a student to record a Think-Aloud on a sticky note and highlight the particular reference in the text. The students have been taught to code the strategies they are using (T-S is a text-to-self connection, FU-S is employing a fix-up strategy). See *Reading Resource Book* for further information about these strategies.

T-S

Before I even started reading I saw the title and it reminded me of another story!

The Monster Fish by Colin Thiele

Ben lived by the sea. He loved fishing and often went out in the boat with his mum and dad. Once a year the Big Boomer fishing contest was held. There was a prize for the person who caught the biggest fish on a hand line.

Ben was checking his fishing tackle for the contest when the phone rang. His mum answered it. "Your cousin Andy is on his way," she told Ben. "He wants to come fishing with us." Ben's dad rolled his eyes. "That boy is as clumsy as a puppy," he said. "He's sure to fall out of the boat." "He'll be OK," Mum said. "He'll catch something." Dad snorted. "The only thing he'll catch is a cold."

FU-S

I re-read the part where it said 'He wants to go fishing with us.'

Figure 6.16 Student Think-Aloud notes

3 Work Samples

A work sample is anything completed by students in authentic literacy situations from which judgments about literacy development can be made. Work samples can be oral, written, or visual. They provide teachers with valuable information about students' development. It is important to collect a range of work samples from different contexts before making definitive judgments about student progress. These samples may include comprehension activities, writing samples, models, pictures and diagrams, oral presentations, PowerPoint presentations, research projects, and cross-curriculum tasks.

Teachers need to be aware of the learning situation in which the samples were created. Consideration of the level of support provided, the processes and strategies used by the individual student, and the group dynamics involved may all influence the outcome of the product being assessed. Samples can be dated and annotated to highlight the specific learning that has taken place, or that needs to happen. These samples can be selected for inclusion in portfolios, or used as a basis for discussion with students and/or parents to illustrate student achievement.

4 Retellings

Asking students to retell oral, visual, or written texts provides an excellent opportunity for teachers to gather information about

a variety of aspects of literacy development; e.g., comprehension, grammar, spelling, speaking, text structure.

Retelling is a simple activity that is flexible in its use and provides an opportunity for students to transform a text into their own words after reading, listening, or viewing. The retelling procedure requires students to read or listen to a text, organize key information they have understood from the text, and then prepare to share and compare their retelling with others. Retellings can be shared orally, in a written form, as a drawing, or through drama.

The assessment of student retellings will be determined by the focus area the teacher has chosen. Some may choose to focus on text structure or sequence; others may look specifically at the language used or the overall comprehension of the text. Recording sheets can be created to focus the observations on the chosen areas. The following example illustrates a recording sheet created to focus specifically on organization and content of the retelling.

RETELLING RECORD SHEET				
Name _____ Date _____		well developed	partial	not evident
Text chosen _____				
Introduction				
Setting	Tells where the story happens Tells when the story happens			
Characters	Includes all the characters Describes some character traits			
Events	All main events included Events described in order			
Details	Includes relevant details			
Comments				


Figure 6.17 This teacher-made sheet focuses on story content.

5 Surveys and Questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires typically consist of a series of statements or questions about which students or parents are asked to express their agreement, disagreement, or other response.

Surveys and questionnaires can be created and customized to link to a particular assessment focus; e.g., values, interest, emotions and attitudes, confidence, or processes and products.

The Indicators from the *First Steps* Maps of Development support teachers in creating observational frameworks for parents. The following examples illustrate how surveys can be adapted to suit a particular purpose.




Child: Shonelle Date: Nov 15 /07

Parent Questionnaire—Reading

- Does your child imitate the behaviour of experienced readers?
For example, holding a book the right way, turning the pages.
 Always Sometimes Not yet
- Does your child recognize his or her own name or some of the letters from it?
 Always Sometimes Not yet
- Does your child select favourite books to be read?
 Always Sometimes Not yet
- Does your child enjoy listening to stories and ask for them to be read and reread?
 Always Sometimes Not yet
- Does your child like to read at home?
 Always Sometimes Not yet

Figure 6.18 Parent survey—focus on reading



Parent Survey

_____ is a writer!

Watch what your child does when he or she chooses to write at home. Please highlight any behaviours you see and return this survey to school once you have had an opportunity to respond.


My child...

	Yes	Sometimes	No
writes without help from an adult			
thinks and plans before beginning to write			
includes simple punctuation, such as periods			
sometimes makes simple corrections to a piece of work			
rereads writing to see if it makes sense			
is keen to finish the writing task			
tries to spell unknown words			

Other observations or comments:

We value any information you can share. Thank you for your input.

Figure 6.19 Parent survey—focus on writing



Name: _____ Date: _____

Reading Interest Survey

1 What kinds of texts do you like to read?

<input type="checkbox"/> Informational	<input type="checkbox"/> Comics
<input type="checkbox"/> Mystery	<input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Novels
<input type="checkbox"/> Science Fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Poetry
<input type="checkbox"/> Adventure	<input type="checkbox"/> Online
<input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Horror	

2 What is the title of your favourite text? _____

3 Who are your favourite authors? (List as many as you like.) _____

4 Name any text you have read more than once. _____

5 Name any text you didn't like and explain why. _____

6 Give the names of some texts you have at home. _____

7 What are your hobbies and interests? _____

Figure 6.20 Student reading interest survey

6 Tests

Testing is another way of gathering data about a student's literacy development. It is important to remember that a single test, used in isolation, may provide a misguided sense of development. Test results are of more value when used in conjunction with other assessment tools.

There are several types of tests available, including these:

- teacher-made tests
 - criterion-referenced tests
 - standardized, or norm-referenced, tests
- Teacher-made tests can be created to focus on any aspect of students' literacy development that needs to be assessed. These tests can provide a clearer picture of students' literacy development because they can be tailored by the teacher to suit the purpose, audience, and context.
 - Criterion-referenced tests are designed to measure whether or not students have mastered certain skills, so the tests will include only those items that measure the skills in question.
 - Standardized tests are those in which scoring, norms, and administration have been established as a result of former use with a large number of students. The performances of other

students on the test are presented as norms for the purpose of comparing achievement.

If teachers wish to use a criterion- or norm-referenced test to collect information about their students' literacy development, the following factors need to be considered.

- The tests may be “normed” on populations very different from those taking the test.
- The tests may be biased against certain populations of students.
- The tests may be culturally loaded in favour of one culture over another.
- A test in English is inappropriate for a student who has little or no proficiency in the language.
- The tests may contain items that are conceptually unfamiliar to the students.
- Scores alone do not indicate why students performed the way they did or offer teachers suggestions for future directions.
- The tests may not measure what students have been taught.
- The tests may be out-of-date or out-of-step with the current group of students.

Conversations

One of the most important ways to assess students' literacy development is through the use of talk. Unplanned brief conversations or scheduled conferences and interviews with individuals provide teachers with valuable information that may not be collected in other contexts. Teachers who ensure they are speaking to students and/or parents on a regular basis often gain a deeper understanding of the development of individual students.

1 Conferences

There is a variety of conference types involving different audiences and groupings, including these:

- one-on-one conferences—teacher and student
- peer conferences—student and student
- small-group conferences—students and teachers
- three-way conferences—student, teacher, and parent

Each of these conference situations can provide a teacher with a data-collection opportunity; however, the one-on-one teacher–student conference also provides the opportunity for individual instruction.

Effective one-on-one conferencing centres on building relationships

with individual students. Open conversations elicit accurate information that will allow teachers to support each student's needs. For conferences to be successful, students need to know what is expected of them. They need to know what their role is, how the conference will be structured, and what records will be kept. Each student–teacher conference will take its own pathway but a framework for planning is useful.

- **Identify the Focus for the Conference.**

What are you working on?

Where are you up to?

How can I help you?

- **Invite Input from the Student.**

Read a text; share some writing.

- **Offer Praise.**

Talk about strengths.

- **Ask Questions.**

- **Suggest Future Action.**

Offer suggestions.

- **Provide Closure.**

Role of Teacher in Teacher–Student Conferences

Select a particular focus.

Create and use a flexible format.

Introduce new strategies and processes.

Encourage the student to talk.

Provide feedback to the student.

Create a sense of partnership.

Record information after each conference.

Role of Student in Teacher–Student Conferences

Be prepared. Have materials ready and a chosen topic for discussion.

List some things that you are pleased about in your reading, writing, speaking, listening, or viewing. Be willing to discuss these.

Share your previous goals. Discuss any problems you may have had with the achievement of the goals.

Be prepared to set some new goals.



Teacher-Student Conference Record Sheet

Student's Name: Nabe Age: 9
 Conference date: Nov 29/06
 Identified focus: Re-reading when focus is lost.

Praise offered: Great decoding, good Fluency.

Questions raised for discussion: _____
What to do when you lose meaning?
How can you become a better reader?
Tell me what has happened in the story so far.

Suggestions made: To use a clearer/louder voice.
To stop after every chapter to think about what the story is telling her.

Insights about student: Competent reader - decodes well, orally hard to hear
Comprehends well - interesting.

Teacher-Student Conference Record Sheet

Student's Name: Jordan Age: 6
 Conference date: March 5, 2007
 Identified focus: Structure of a recount

Praise offered: Great writing because it had a title; included who, what, when; lots of words spelled correctly; included feelings.

Questions raised for discussion: What did you find most challenging?
Putting my fullstop in the right place.

Suggestions made: Read back over as you are writing to make sure it makes sense; concentrate on 'b' and 'd'.

Insights about student: Jordan is a keen reader but his reading ability is low compared to his writing ability displayed. He is easily distracted by others but an enthusiastic participant.

Figures 6.21a and b Conference record sheets

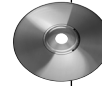
2 Interviews

Interviews are a one-on-one question-and-answer conversation between a teacher and student or a teacher and parent. Depending on the type of questions asked, conducting interviews can provide a wealth of useful assessment information. Interviews are most effective when conducted orally since this allows teachers to ask follow-up questions that help clarify, justify, or exemplify initial responses. Written responses to interview questions are also useful, as they can be taken away and analyzed at a later time.

• Interviews with Students

Interviews with students provide a prime opportunity to listen actively and encourage them to verbalize their thought processes. Planning questions that elicit rich information and encourage the students to do most of the talking is a challenge. Effective interview questions are focused, open, and probing. These types of questions would encourage open and honest answers, have no single right answer, and relate specifically to the type of information the teacher is seeking.

Teachers can design questions to focus on different elements including knowledge, attitude, strategies, or task completion. The purpose and desired outcomes of the interview will govern the types of questions chosen. The following examples illustrate the focus on different elements.

Reading Interview—Focus on Knowledge

Q: Can you tell me what reading is?

Peter: It's when you get a book and you read it, what's inside it.

Q: When you read, what do you do?

Peter: I say the words out loud.

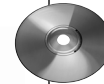
Q: Who reads?

Peter: The teacher, me, everybody.

Figure 6.22 Reading interview record

Student's Name: Aneesa

Date: 29/05/07



Interview Questions on Writing

Are you a good writer? Why do you think that?

I think I am pretty good because sometimes I think of things and sometimes I can't, so that makes me pretty good.

Who do you think is a good writer? Why?

My sister is a good writer because she has a good imagination. My parents have good heads too and I think they've passed it on to us.

When you are writing and get stuck, what do you do?

I let my imagination go crazy and write what comes first in my head that makes sense.

When you don't know how to spell a word, what do you do?

If I get stuck with a word I give it a go or sound it out and then underline it so the teacher knows I can't spell it.

What do you like best about your own writing?

I like my neatness and the way I write it and then I like to look back and be proud of it.

Figure 6.23 Writing interview record

Interview Questions on Writing

Are you a good writer? Why do you think that?

I think I am a good writer because I write with a lot of detail.

Who do you think is a good writer? Why?

I read a lot, so that makes me a good writer, and I put sentences into my own words and put them in my writing.

When you are writing and get stuck, what do you do?

I keep on thinking back to what I have written and make sense of it, then decide what to put next.

When you don't know how to spell a word, what do you do?

I normally write in my spelling journal and then go to the teacher to check it.

What do you like best about your own writing?

I like the way I use exciting words and I put mystery and adventure into my stories. I also write quite neatly.

Figure 6.24 Writing interview record

Name: Luisa Date: _____

Reading Interview—Focus on Attitude

What kinds of reading do you like to do?

I like reading Harry Potter and I like reading fiction more than nonfiction.

Who is your favourite author?

I like Roald Dahl and JK Rowling.

When do you most like to read?

At night before I go to bed and after lunch to settle down.

How often do you read at home?

I read every morning and night is my favourite time to read.

How do you feel when you receive a book as a gift?

I love it! I wonder what the book is about and if I don't like it I leave it in my shelf and forget about it.

How do you feel about going to the local library or a bookstore?

I don't usually go to the library. I go to a bookstore and buy something that sounds interesting.

How do you feel about reading at school?

I love it! I wish we had more time to read at school.

Figure 6.25 Reading interview record

Literacy Interview Questions: Focus on Task Completion

What are you doing?

How are you going to complete the task?

What do you hope the outcome will be?

How will you know you were successful?

Figure 6.26 Literacy interview questions

- **Interviews with Parents**

When conducting interviews with parents, the teacher's questions can be planned to elicit information that will lead to a better understanding of the student and to more effective teaching plans.

Parent–Teacher Interview Questions—Focus on Reading

What type of reading does your child like to do at home?

How often does your child choose to read at home?

How does your child feel about receiving a book as a gift?

What are your family's favourite books? authors? characters? videos and DVDs?

Does your child notice and read print in the environment?

What would you like your child to do as a reader?

What do you think your child needs to do to become a better reader?

How does your child usually respond when he or she has finished reading a book?

Figure 6.27 Parent interview questions

Note: Further information, including examples, about focused observation, products, and conversations within each strand can be found in the Maps of Development.

How Can the Data Be Recorded?

Teachers have devised a range of innovative ways to record the array of information they gather about students' literacy development. The use of computers or handheld electronic organizers (such as Palm Pilots®) often helps teachers streamline the time it takes to record information. Some ways of recording the information, on paper or electronically, are outlined under the following headings:


- Anecdotal Notes
- Checklists
- Rubrics
- Annotations
- *First Steps* Maps of Development

1 Anecdotal Notes

When teachers record short descriptions of observations in the classroom these recordings are often done at the time of the event and are referred to as anecdotal notes. Anecdotal notes are objective factual observations and should help a teacher to recognize and interpret individual patterns of learning over time. Teachers choose to record anecdotal notes in a variety of ways, including observation grids, sticky notes, in notebooks, on index cards, in binders divided into sections for each student, or with the help of multi-media devices. All work equally well and it is highly recommended that teachers experiment with a variety until they discover the best possible process for them and their students. Below are some examples of how teachers have managed the recording of formal and informal observations.

• Observation Grids

Prepared observation grids allow teachers to quickly record any observations of the selected group of students. Multiple copies of the observation grid may be needed if the teacher is observing the same students over an entire week.



Teacher: _____ Date: _____ Focus: _____

Observation Grid

Name	Name	Name	Name	Name
Name	Name	Name	Name	Name
Name	Name	Name	Name	Name
Name	Name	Name	Name	Name

Figure 6.28 Observation grid

• Sticky Notes

Sticky notes are small, can be tucked inside a pocket, and are a versatile resource for recording anecdotal information. Notes about the selected students can be sorted at the end of the day and attached to an individual's folder, book, or card. Computer-label stickers are also an innovative alternative to sticky notes.

AP

Spent entire SSR time with big book from shared-reading session.

RL

For the first time ever, Robert asked to join the writer's circle today.

JB

Brought in a letter written at home for the class post box — for class friend.

Figure 6.29 Sample sticky-note recordings

• Cross-Curriculum Grids

Prepared cross-curriculum grids allow teachers to quickly record any observations of the selected group of students across a range of curriculum areas. Multiple copies of the grid may be needed if the teacher is observing students over an entire week.

[illegible]

Checklist for Report Writing	Always	Sometimes	Not Yet	Teacher's Comments
Purpose The writer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates understanding that there are different types of reports and that the structure of a report depends on the purpose for which it is written demonstrates understanding that reports contain information that is selected, sorted, and synthesized to give the reader/writer information significant to a topic or focus of study 				
Text Organization and Content The writer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses report framework and adapts it to suit purpose and audience Classification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> writes an introduction that successfully classifies and/or generalizes information essential to the subject of the report uses accurate definitions Descriptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes detailed information selected because of its relevance to the subject of the report elaborates on and interprets important information organizes like information into paragraphs that link cohesively in logical order Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> writes a conclusion that accurately identifies the main points Language Features The writer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a formal and objective style demonstrates consistent use of tense (usually timeless present tense); e.g., are, hunt, fly, live, suckle demonstrates consistent use of singular or plural generic participants; e.g., humanity faces increasing... the family is ... uses generic terms successfully; e.g., humankind, mammals, pollutants uses a range of precise subject-specific terms in context uses precise descriptive language uses linking verbs, e.g., has a, is a, belongs to uses appropriate language to compare, contrast, define, or classify, e.g., identical, related, kindred 				

Barrier Game: Checklist of Behaviours				
Name:	Date:			
Class:				
Rating	1: not evident	2: developing	3: fully adequate	
Giving Instructions				
Organizes self for task; e.g., sorting materials	1	2	3	
Gives appropriate instructions that are intelligible, complete, specific	1	2	3	
Uses appropriate vocabulary:				
• naming	1	2	3	
• attribute words	1	2	3	
• location words	1	2	3	
Modifies instructions spontaneously, or at the listener's request	1	2	3	
Checks location of items at end of game and gives feedback to listener	1	2	3	
Receiving Instructions				
Follows instructions	1	2	3	
Scans and locates items efficiently	1	2	3	
Asks for clarification of unclear instructions	1	2	3	
Indicates when instructions have been carried out	1	2	3	

Figure 6.31 Sample checklists

3 Rubrics

Rubrics are descriptive frameworks that feature short statements along levels of performance (typically four). Levels within a rubric can be labelled by using descriptive words—for example, not developed, partially developed, well developed—or by using a numerical system. Teachers and/or students can assess the quality of a performance or assignment against a set of predetermined criteria. They can also use the framework for recording.

Rubrics can be refined by adding levels of achievement as students' skill level increases, or by adding additional criteria for new concepts, skills, or attitudes that students display.

There are many publications and Web sites that offer teachers ready-made rubrics to use with their students. However, for any number of reasons, teachers may wish to create their own rubrics. Teachers can involve students in the creation of the rubrics since ultimately it is their work that is being judged. Generating criteria will enhance students' understanding of the standard of work expected.

Our News-Sharing Rubric: Created by Ms. Yves' Grade 4 Class				
Criteria	SCORE 1 POINT	SCORE 2 POINTS	SCORE 3 POINTS	SCORE 4 POINTS
Choosing a Topic	Gives little thought to topic	Uses the same topics each time, e.g., my dog, my family	Talks about own experiences	Chooses a range of topics that are of interest to the class
Presenting Talk	Often can't be heard by the class	Speaks in short, simple sentences, but can't always be heard by the class	Speaks at an appropriate pace and volume	Keeps the class interested with humour, gestures, volume, and pace
Eye Contact	Doesn't look at the class much	Sometimes looks at the class when speaking	Uses eye contact with the class	Keeps appropriate eye contact with the class at all times
Answering Questions	Usually responds to questions with a <i>yes</i> or a <i>no</i>	Answers questions, but information may be brief	Answers questions with sufficient information	Answers questions clearly and expands on information

Figure 6.32 One class's creation of levels of performance

4 Annotations

Annotations are short judgments recorded about a student's work. These are written by the teacher directly onto the work sample. Annotations may be completed at the time of the event but can also be completed at a later time.

Annotations need to be objective, factual comments and should help a teacher to recognize and interpret individual patterns of learning over time.

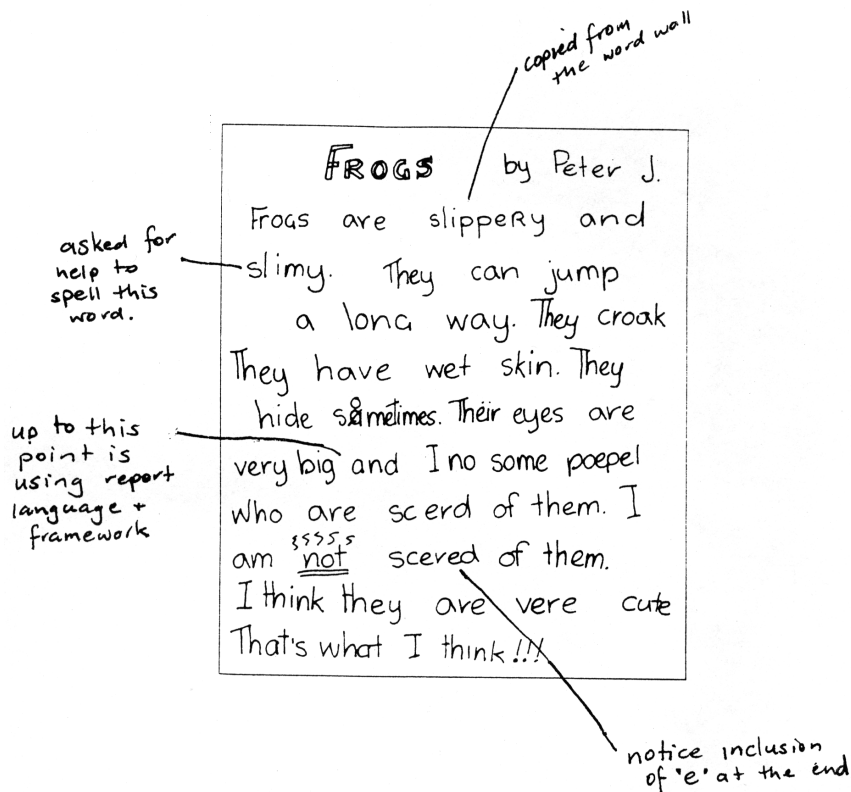


Figure 6.33 Annotated work sample

5 First Steps Maps of Development

The *First Steps* Maps of Development are an excellent framework for recording information about students' literacy development. Some teachers choose to record their observations, outcomes of conversations, or their analysis of products directly onto the Maps of Development. This is done by highlighting Indicators displayed. Other teachers prefer to use other recording methods first; e.g., anecdotal notes or annotations. This recorded information is then transferred onto the Maps of Development. Either way is effective.

How Can the Data Be Shared with Others?

Traditionally, report cards were the most common method of sharing information with parents, other teachers, and the student. However, many teachers employ a variety of ways to communicate valid, reliable, and useful information to others. These include

- report cards
- portfolios and e-folios
- student-teacher-parent (three-way) conferences
- Learning Journeys
- communication books

1 Report Cards

Report card formats are continually being developed and designed by districts and schools worldwide. Report card reform is often a result of teachers identifying a mismatch between the ways they are assessing and evaluating students and the ways they are asked to report information to parents. New report forms are beginning to portray learning in the form of rubrics, maps of development that include behaviours or indicators, outcome statements, or narratives. Newly designed report cards rarely make comparisons of achievement between students, but put an emphasis on documenting individual accomplishments.

2 Portfolios and E-folios

Portfolios provide an excellent alternative or addition to regular reporting formats often used in schools. Portfolios are a collection of student work samples that have been completed over time as part of ongoing daily classroom tasks. Collections usually include some form of evaluative comments by the teacher and student. E-folios offer students the opportunity to showcase their work in an electronic format. Collections of work available in this format reflect the student's growth as a learner, allowing the student and others to view his or her progress.

Collated work samples provide tangible evidence of individual development over time and discourage competitive comparisons being made between students. A picture of what a child has learned can be clearly seen by teachers, parents, and others through portfolio and e-folio collections.

Teachers usually support students in the selection of pieces to be included in portfolios or e-folios. The goal should always be to

illustrate growth in the best possible way. It is recommended to include a balance of process and product work samples.

3 Three-Way Conferences

Three-way conferences allow the teacher, parent, and student all to have input into a discussion about the student's development over time. They provide an ideal opportunity for reporting and sharing information with parents. These conferences can be led by the student and may incorporate a "journey" around the classroom, pre-conference observation of the student in the classroom setting, and the sharing of a portfolio collection.

Note: See Chapter 10: Communicating with Parents for further information on three-way conferences.

4 Learning Journeys

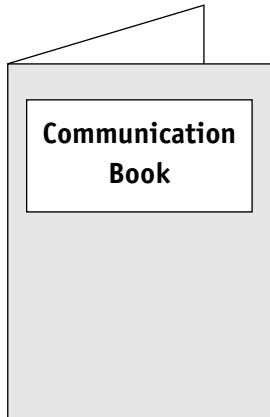
Learning Journeys are a way for students to report learning to others. They provide an opportunity not only to report on what has been learned but also on the way it was learned. Properly executed, a Learning Journey is more than a "show and tell" of work samples. It can provide an opportunity for students to report on

- activities in the classroom, e.g., **Shared Writing**
- games; e.g., **barrier games**
- learning centres or areas; e.g., **science table**
- environmental print; e.g., **cumulative charts**
- independent work areas; e.g., **writing table, reading corner**

Note: See Chapter 9: The Metacognitive Process for further information on Learning Journeys.

5 Communication Books

Communication books have been used successfully as a form of two-way sharing between the home and the classroom. Each student has a personal communication book that allows the teacher and parents to share comments. These may be in praise of a particular achievement, may focus on one area, or may offer general comments about the student. Parents can be encouraged to exchange comments with the teacher, providing information about literacy development in the home setting.



Dear Louise and Bruce,
 Wanted to let you know that Noel made a huge step in his writing today. For the first time, he wrote his own entire story. Noel has done a fantastic job of using invented spelling to retell his story. Please praise him as much as you can about this.
 Thanks,
 Savita

Thanks for sharing this news, Savita! It truly was a great effort. Is it okay if we keep the work at home for a week as Noel's grandmother is coming to visit and she'd love to see it?
 Louise K.

Louise,
 Please feel free to return Noel's work next week. Thanks for volunteering to join us on our field trip to the museum. Is it possible for you to join us on Monday afternoon prior to the trip? I am hoping to work with the children to create a time plan for the day.
 It would be great if you could join us then.
 Savita

Figure 6.34 Sample page from communication book

CHAPTER 7

Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Why Label Teaching Practices?

Effective teaching and learning is made up of numerous behaviours, most so intricately woven in a personal, professional, and contextualized way that making them explicit is a difficult task. As all behaviours are socially and culturally determined, some appear so natural as to need no analysis. However, examining teaching and learning practices can

- be a springboard for critical reflection, leading to the refinement of a flexible and strategic teaching or learning repertoire
- help teachers and students recognize and support different learning preferences and styles
- expose some practices as more culturally appropriate than others
- help teachers to maintain a focus on teaching and learning rather than testing and “busy work”

The teaching and learning practices explained in this chapter exclude telling and testing.

Telling is defined as the verbal delivery of information by the teacher.

Testing is defined as the examination of performance under controlled conditions.

Although commonplace in many schools, telling and testing may be ineffective for teaching and learning unless combined with other practices. Furthermore, the advantages and disadvantages of both are generally well known to teachers. Deciding when to teach, tell, or problem-solve is part of the intricate art of teaching.

Learning and teaching practices are without boundaries. Teachers and students bend, shape, adapt, and blend them to achieve a variety of purposes. Ideally this manipulation and crafting is done strategically. In reality, time, resources, the curriculum, the context, and socio-cultural values influence teaching and learning practices in profound ways. The spontaneity of the classroom means teaching and learning practices frequently merge to the extent that they are

sometimes difficult to recognize. This is a positive process when managed effectively. Isolating individual practices simply serves the purpose of assisting teachers and learners to reflect on the effectiveness of each.

What Is a Practice?

A practice is a socially and culturally determined way of interacting with others in the name of teaching or learning. Many practices are described in collective terms. For example, the term *sharing* is used to describe a wide range of instructional approaches that have something in common, such as Shared Reading and Shared Writing. Sharing is considered a practice because it represents the scaffolding that occurs when a teacher and student engage in the joint construction of meaning. It is applicable to all areas of teaching and learning. Shared Writing, however, is labelled an instructional approach. It consists of a number of widely accepted stages in the joint construction of a text. Of course, whether something is primarily a teaching or learning practice is in the eye of the beholder. When students use a teaching practice such as modelling to share skills with a peer, they rarely do so without deepening their own learning.

Details on specific instructional approaches are to be found in the individual strand Resource Books. For example, Shared Reading is explained in *Reading Resource Book*, Guided Viewing in *Viewing Resource Book*.

Understanding Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Effective teaching and learning practices provide a useful guide for decision-making when linking assessment to teaching. Having identified students on a Map of Development, teachers use the Major Teaching Emphases to direct the choice of learning experiences. The process of selecting instructional approaches or phase-specific activities becomes more strategic when teachers understand the relative strengths and weaknesses of a wide range of teaching practices. Consider the following Major Teaching Emphasis.

Teach the use of conventions of print, e.g., commas, quotation marks.

Given that the Major Teaching Emphasis has not provided a key word like *model*, *analyze*, or *practise*, there is scope for an enormous range of instructional approaches and phase-specific activities to be employed.

A repertoire of effective teaching and learning practices enables a teacher to be strategic about the selection of an activity. If students have had little previous exposure to particular conventions of print, a sequence of modelling, sharing, and guiding may be appropriate. However, if some prior knowledge is evident, problem-solving, using analyzing as a teaching practice, might be more suitable. When teachers and students become familiar with effective teaching and learning practices, they are empowered to employ these strategically in a range of contexts, strands, and curriculum areas.

Some teaching practices are often used in a complementary way, with particular sequences being used to good effect. For instance, modelling, sharing, and guiding have been used prominently in reading as a means of moving students from a very supportive context in which the teacher has a high degree of control (modelling) to a more independent context in which the teacher plays a role that is more about facilitation (guiding).

Examples of Instructional Approaches Focused on in First Steps

- Reading Aloud to students
- Modelled Reading
- Modelled Writing
- Shared Reading
- Shared Writing
- Guided Reading
- Guided Writing
- Language Experience
- Literature Circles

The Gradual Release of Responsibility Through the Use of Teaching and Learning Practices (Pearson and Gallagher 1983)

<div> <div>Role of the Teacher</div> <div>Degree of Control</div> <div>Role of the Students</div> </div>	Modelling The teacher demonstrates by thinking aloud the processes used.	Sharing The teacher provides the direction and invites the students to contribute.	Guiding The teacher scaffolds help and provides support and corrective feedback.	Applying The teacher offers support and encouragement as necessary.
	Students participate by actively attending to the demonstrations.	Students contribute ideas and information. Decision-making is negotiated between teacher and student.	Students do the work with help from the teacher or other sources at predetermined points.	Students work independently. They are in control of the ideas and the information.

Figure 7.1

Combining teaching practices in a strategic way makes sense, and enables teachers to maximize a repertoire of teaching practices. However, to employ modelling, for example, only at the beginning of a unit is to ignore students' need for frequent demonstrations at other key points in the teaching and learning process. While experimenting with the compatibility of effective teaching and learning practices, it is essential that teachers be alert to the versatility of each. What makes a teaching and learning practice effective is its appropriateness for the needs of students in a particular context.

Description of Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

The following Effective Teaching and Learning Practices deliberately involve active engagement by students. Doing something with a text is a powerful way for the students to internalize the learning.

<i>First Steps Definitions of Effective Teaching and Learning Practices</i>	
Familiarizing	raising awareness and activating prior knowledge
Modelling	thinking aloud to show how and why something is done
Sharing	jointly constructing meaning
Guiding	providing scaffolding through strategic assistance at predetermined checkpoints
Analyzing	examining the parts in order to understand the whole
Practising	rehearsing a skill or strategy
Applying	independently using a skill, strategy, or understanding to achieve a purpose
Investigating	finding, analyzing, questioning, and using information for a purpose
Playing	exploring concepts and skills through imagining and creating
Discussing	exchanging opinions about topics, themes, and issues
Innovating	altering or amending an existing text
Transforming	re-creating a text or object in another genre, form, mode, medium, or text product type
Simulating	adopting a role in a hypothetical situation
Reflecting	thinking about the what, how, and why of experiences

Figure 7.2

Familiarizing

Purpose: To raise awareness and activate prior knowledge

Description

Familiarizing, sometimes referred to as immersing or exposure, is a generic term used to describe the way in which teachers introduce students to an area of learning. Generally, familiarizing involves students reading, listening to, or viewing specific subject matter. The discussion to activate prior knowledge following this exposure is also included. More examples of the subject matter are sometimes collected, compared, and displayed by both teacher and students over time, building up an awareness of features of the learning focus. Many other experiences of a preliminary or preparatory nature, including field trips, fit under the heading of familiarizing.

Key Features

- Includes a range of receptive experiences
- Builds knowledge
- Activates prior knowledge
- Exposes students to a variety of texts that have something in common
- Builds an awareness of examples of texts in daily life
- Involves ongoing discussion of examples in daily life

Using Familiarizing in the Classroom

Although familiarizing could be accurately described as awareness raising, it is a mistake to consider it a passive teaching and learning practice. Reading, listening, and viewing are active socio-cultural behaviours. There is a greater need for the student to become actively engaged when an activity is undertaken to familiarize, because it is through this engagement that the student will gain an understanding of the features of the focus. For example, a teacher keen to familiarize a class with the features of interviewing may arrange to view a video of a famous person being interviewed. It is inevitable that, in enjoying the experience, many students may focus on the content of what the star has to say, rather than the nature of the questions and comments of the interviewer. Reviewing and pausing may be required to help students distance themselves from the content of the text and engage with the interviewing techniques. Students may then be requested to collect examples of interviews for use in further activities such as deconstructing the text.

Modelling

Purpose: To demonstrate the thinking processes behind how and why something is done

Description

Consider any skill that we teach to another person in everyday life, such as working on a computer or driving a car, and think about the key teaching practice that is used. It is modelling. The proficient person shows the learner what to do, often talking the learner through the steps. Although it is possibly the oldest and most popular teaching practice in the world, modelling can vary greatly in its effectiveness according to its execution. Much hinges on whether the demonstration is explicit, whether it has a clear focus, and whether it includes targeted Think-Aloud statements that provide learners with an insight into the complex cognitive processes that underpin the skill.

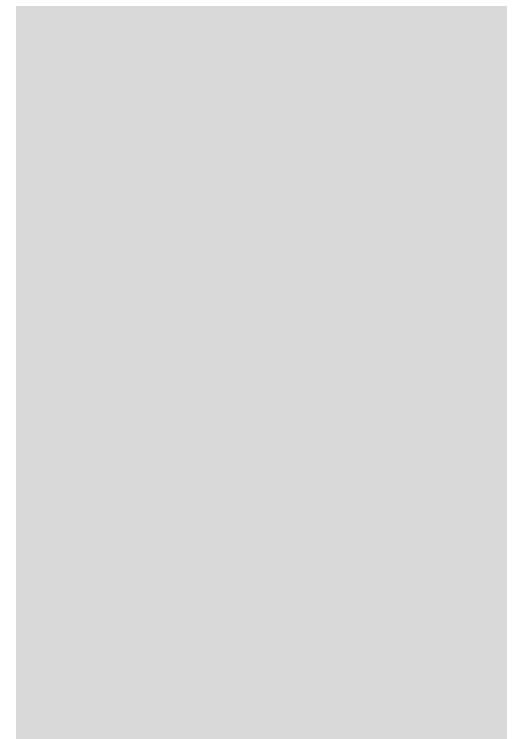
Before students are expected to apply any new learning, it is critical that they are actively involved in multiple demonstrations. In learning situations it is appropriate for the proficient person to conclude demonstrations with the comment, “Now you have a go.”

Key Features

- Brevity (5–10 minutes, depending on students’ attention span)
- Locus of control with the teacher
- Clear Think-Aloud statements
- Singular or limited focus
- Repetition
- Connection between modelling sessions

Using Modelling in the Classroom

Think-Aloud statements are central to the success of modelling. It is often the case that statements declare the *outcome* of the thinking when it is the *process* of thinking that is the critical aspect. For example, a modelled reading lesson designed to teach the skill of self-correction could include the following:



Modelling a craft

Text on chart or board: Some fish canneries print a “dolphin-friendly” label ...

Teacher (reading): Some fish canaries print a “dolphin-friendly” label ...

Hang on, that doesn’t sound right ... fish canaries? Let me check that. I’ll break that word up — fish can-neries ... oh, maybe it’s like a factory where they put the fish into cans for food or pet food ... now that makes more sense.

Teacher (rereading): Some fish canneries print a “dolphin-friendly” label ...

The explanation provides much more insight into how the self-correction is arrived at than the following statement, which does not outline the leaps in logic behind the decision-making: “Now, by self-correcting I know that word is *canneries*, not *canaries*.”

The practice of modelling is so pervasive that often students learn significantly from implicit modelling. Teachers sometimes find it difficult to crystallize the focus of a modelling session. For example, a teacher modelling how to identify an unknown word will almost certainly also be modelling a love of reading, and may be tempted to talk about the content of the text. An awareness of this tendency is useful. However, for planning and teaching purposes it is most effective to concentrate on a particular focus.

Sharing

Purpose: To jointly construct meaning

Description

Sharing the accomplishment of a learning task is a cooperative and supportive way of engaging learners. In this effective teaching practice, the teacher leads the demonstration of the understanding or skill. The teacher pauses at predetermined points and responds to learner prompts, thus including the learners in the task. The teacher might ask a question and encourage the learners to assist or respond to a learner-initiated query. All contributions receive a positive response. Sharing involves the teacher and learner as collaborative participants in a joint exercise, whereas modelling involves the teacher as an expert demonstrator with students as observers.

Key Features

- Interaction focused on the joint achievement of a clear purpose
- A teacher-managed blend of modelling, student input, and discussion
- Negotiated decisions about the text
- A short time span (generally 10–15 minutes)
- Text visible and accessible to all
- A single or limited focus
- Targeted feedback
- Connection between sharing sessions



Using Sharing in the Classroom

Shared reading session

In sharing, the learner is like a passenger on a tandem bike, observing the skilled cyclist (the teacher), listening to that person's Think-Aloud statements and joining in at appropriate times. The task is shared, not necessarily because each participant has an equal workload, but because they negotiate direction and participation. Although conventionally used in reading and writing, sharing is a teaching and learning practice that can provide useful scaffolding for students in speaking and listening, and, with a little adaptation, also in viewing. Through negotiation and collaboration the process of comprehending or composing is shared by the teacher and students. The teacher usually leads the dialogue with probing questions to stimulate comprehension or creation of the text, providing advice only when it is required. Some Shared Writing practices differ on who holds the pen, but ultimately what is important is who provides the direction for the comprehension or creation of the text.

Guiding

Purpose: To provide scaffolded support through strategic assistance at predetermined checkpoints

Description

Guiding is a practice that involves the teacher explicitly scaffolding a task. This could be through removing distracting or difficult elements, dividing the task into more manageable parts, or providing strategic assistance at key points. The student maintains control of the process, but is able to request assistance at any point.

Key Features

- Frequent support and opportunities for teacher–student interaction
- Frameworks that scaffold the task; e.g., **note-taking templates**, **questioning patterns**
- Decisions made by students
- Targeted feedback supplied at predetermined stages
- A singular or limited focus for each student–teacher interaction

Using Guiding in the Classroom

Guiding differs from sharing in that the student is performing the task. To continue the bike analogy, guiding involves the student riding a bicycle of his or her own, while being carefully watched by a mentor who monitors the distances travelled and steadies the wobbling cyclist when necessary. In guided procedures and activities, the task may be structured by the teacher to include opportunities for assistance, but the completion of the task is controlled by the student.

The degree of guidance will be dependent on the student, the context, and the nature of the task. For instance, in Guided Reading, the teacher may choose to have students in a small group reading short sections of the same text, stopping periodically to clarify, question, and predict. However, more independence could be apparent in the Guided Writing instructional approach. Students may use plans or other frameworks to complete an individual task in which the teacher provides feedback at regular intervals throughout the writing process.

Writing a Biography

Introduction: Who, when, where

Major events in order

Conclusion (worth of the person)

Planning frameworks provide appropriate support for some students when they begin writing independently in a new form.

Figure 7.3 A framework used in Guided Writing

Analyzing

Purpose: To examine the parts in order to understand the whole

Description

Analyzing is a powerful and pervasive practice involving the problem-solving, evaluating, and classifying activities that require students to break texts into parts to understand their relationship with the whole. Text deconstruction, reconstruction, and graphic representations of texts are examples of analyzing tasks.

Key Features

- A focus on the relationship between parts and whole (letters within words, sentences within paragraphs, paragraphs in written texts; colours, objects and positioning within visual texts)
- A focus on the attributes of language features, often through classification
- An open-ended search for patterns and features

Using Analyzing in the Classroom

The human brain is geared to search for and identify patterns. The use of analyzing practices is a very effective way of teaching and learning for deep understanding. However, not all texts or text parts have recognizable patterns. For example, although some paragraphs begin with a topic sentence that sums up the main idea, followed by supporting detail, many do not. Teachers and students, when analyzing, need to be aware of the fluid and diverse nature of language, and also of the limitations of applying understanding about patterns to new contexts. The predominant features of a narrative text in a Western society, for instance, may not be apparent in a narrative generated in another culture.

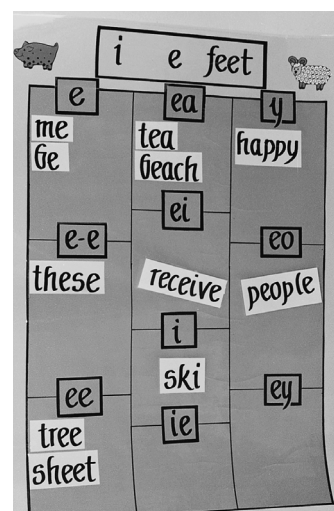
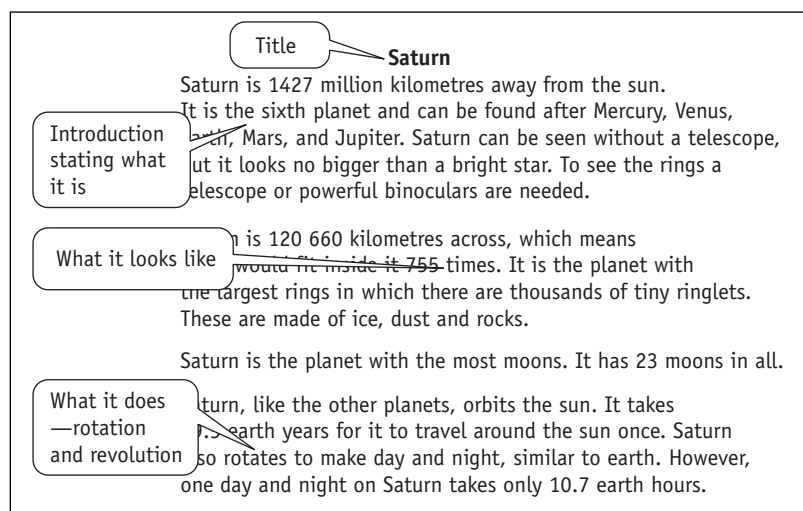


Figure 7.4 Analyzing a text to determine the framework

Word-sorting chart

Practising

Purpose: To rehearse a skill or strategy to promote proficiency

Description

Practising is the term given to all activities in which a particular skill is being rehearsed. Completion of a story map or a punctuation exercise is practice. Practising means that a skill or strategy has been given emphasis in an activity, sometimes by isolating it from whole texts. Effective teachers ensure that a practice activity is preceded by modelling, sharing, or guiding, and supported by structures that scaffold the task. For example, students completing a cloze task already know that a number of words can make sense in the space and, more important, are familiar with a range of strategies to work out what word would make sense in the context. Exercises in which a skill is being practised without support, or where the emphasis is placed on the outcome, as opposed to process, are effectively tests of prior knowledge.

Key Features

- A focus on the process of rehearsing a skill or strategy with the idea of promoting proficiency
- Support in the form of prior teaching or targeted feedback
- Prior discussion about the use of strategies

DAY ONE: PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

1 Print your list words into your pad.
Put a circle around the tricky part in each word.
Example: w h (a) t
* * * *

2 Print each word again.
How do the letter shapes look?
Use your coloured pencil to show them.
Example: w h a t
* * * *

3 See if you can make some new words by changing a letter.
Example: w h a t → t h a t

Figure 7.5 Sample practice activities, focus on spelling

Using Practising in the Classroom

The effectiveness of purposeful practice can usually be gauged by the degree of similarity between the procedure or activity, and the independent application of the skill. For example, a teacher wishing to help a student acquire a bank of sight words will need to decide

whether the use of flashcards mimics the contextualized act of reading more effectively than any other practice method. Although reading and writing are complex acts made up of numerous behaviours that could benefit from practice, some of these behaviours can become distorted or irrelevant in isolation.

It is important that students understand how and why the activity fits into the bigger scheme of things. The teacher may, for instance, discuss with them how Assisted Reading (see *Reading Resource Book*) can help develop fluency and expression, or how completing a cloze activity provides an opportunity to practise writing sight words.

Applying

Purpose: To use independently a skill, strategy, or understanding to achieve a purpose

Description

Applying refers to the contextualized and purposeful use of reading, writing, speaking and listening, or viewing. Such acts are whole and focused, with a purpose and audience, and generally involve the student making ongoing decisions independently. Applying practices are normally seen as an end point in a teaching cycle because they represent full student independence. Access to teacher advice is not denied, yet neither is it planned or structured in a way that indicates reliance. Applying practices are commonly used by teachers as pseudo-assessment tasks. When structured appropriately they can reflect how a student performs without assistance. However, a range of applying tasks is necessary for a teacher to form sound judgments and conclusions.

Key Features

- Minimal teacher support for the student
- Application of learning to a different context
- Need for the student to address factors of context, such as authentic purpose and audience

Using Applying in the Classroom

Applying practices are deceptively difficult to organize. Students assigned independent writing tasks appear to be applying their skills, understandings, and attitudes. Yet contextual factors, such as the selection and refinement of topic, or the choice of purpose and audience are sometimes omitted. For students to be truly applying their skills, teachers need to find opportunities in school that replicate the multiple demands of literacy events in real life.

Students are applying their knowledge when they

- choose from a range of known forms in response to a task
- use what is learned from the jointly negotiated writing of a text when writing in that form independently
- apply what is learned in one context to a different context; e.g., using strategies demonstrated in Guided Reading when reading a science book
- make use of what is learned from working with one text when working with another

Investigating

Purpose: To find, analyze, question, and use information for a purpose

Description

Investigating occurs when the teacher prompts students to gather information beyond their current knowledge. Researching, hypothesizing, and inquiring are synonymous with investigating. This may involve interviewing members of the community, drawing information from the Internet, or comparing articles from newspapers. Traditionally, investigating practices have consisted mainly of projects in other curriculum areas, involving the collection of facts and information. However, investigating practices have more recently been used to assist students in more versatile ways. For example, students using texts retrieved from the Internet have questioned authors' motives and the persuasive techniques they have used, rather than simply gathering information.

Key Features

- A clear question or hypothesis to be tested
- Use of a range of spoken, written, and visual texts

Using Investigating in the Classroom

Investigating practices generally fall into two categories. The first involves searching for examples of texts or text components to find patterns and make generalizations. For example, a teacher might ask students to collect business letters to investigate the format used. This investigating gradually unfolds into analyzing as students compare parts of the letter layouts. The second category includes the research of a particular topic for a purpose. Students might search for information about the leading lifestyle diseases in the nation to answer a focus question generated during health studies. This type of investigating relies heavily on note-taking and the synthesizing of information, requiring substantial teaching of these skills.



K-W-H-L Framework

Name: Sandy M. Date: _____

K	W	H	L
What do I <u>k</u> now?	What do I <u>w</u> ant to find out?	How can I find out what I want to learn?	What did I <u>l</u> earn?
Spiders have 8 legs. • Spiders make webs. • Redback spiders are poisonous.	• How do spiders make webs? • What is the web made of? • How many poisonous spiders are there?	• Check in library for CD-Rom or books about spiders • Find a website about spiders	
What should I do first?			
What did I do well? What strategy was successful?			

Complete at conclusion of investigation

Figure 7.6 Using a K-W-H-L chart as a framework for investigating

Playing

Purpose: To explore concepts and skills by imagining and creating

Description

Learning-based play involves the learner exploring concepts and skills by imagining and creating, trying out ideas, and reflecting on successes and difficulties. It can involve experimentation with text forms in a play corner, or contributions to a class speaking-and-listening game. Students frequently draw on their experiences of play and use them in their literacy behaviour.

Key Features

- A language-rich and literacy-rich environment that stimulates experimentation
- Time and opportunity to explore

Using Playing in the Classroom

Learning-based play is of great value to young students. As they interact with one another, they are engaged in social practice. When they work with literacy resources, they are engaged with the social practice of literacy. For example, in the class “restaurant” the “customers” can be seen studying the menu, the “waiters” are writing the orders, and the “chef” is listening to the orders and giving instructions on how to cook the food. When students are involved in such spontaneous play, they respond with increased engagement and persistence because they are motivated to do so.

Discussing

Purpose: To exchange opinions about topics, themes, and issues

Description

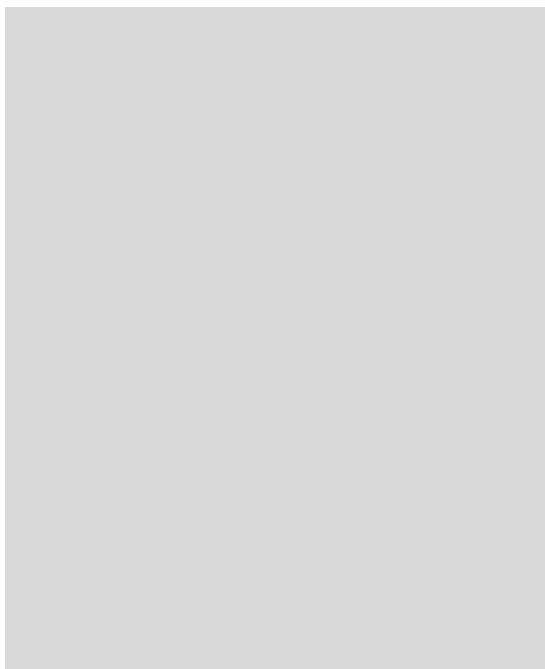
Discussing, what we often refer to as purposeful talk, involves the exchange of opinions about topics, themes, and issues, and the reshaping that occurs when these are shared in groups or as a whole class. It differs from students’ responses to questions that are closed or require specific answers. Students’ responses to texts may differ according to their prior experience and knowledge.

Key Features

- Open-ended questions to stimulate discussion
- Use of group discussion processes such as turn-taking, role-adoption, and response routines
- A shared focus—what is being discussed for what reason

Using Discussing in the Classroom

Effective discussion results from a caring and collaborative classroom culture, supportive group dynamics, agreed-upon group processes, and a shared focus. The qualities of a caring and collaborative classroom, as described in Chapter 5: Establishing a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment, ensure that students feel confident about contributing opinions and receiving feedback. However, it is not unusual for a small group of speakers to dominate discussions or for some students to be reluctant to share their thoughts. It is the teacher’s role to nurture group dynamics that are balanced and supportive. This can be done by teaching the processes for discussion (see *Speaking and Listening Resource Book*).



This small group is engaging in a focused discussion.

These processes include turn-taking, adoption of roles, and routines for responding. Finally, a shared focus is important to productive discussions. Open discussions serve a valid purpose in enabling students to share feelings and brainstorm ideas, but discussions without clear aims are rarely helpful in the context of a planned curriculum. **Literature Circles** (see *Reading Resource Book*) and **Author's Circle** (see *Writing Resource Book*) provide opportunities for students to engage in meaningful discussions.

Innovating

Purpose: To alter or amend certain features of an existing text

Description

Innovating involves altering or amending an existing text to create a new one. Innovating implies that the structure of the original text is maintained, but new content is used. Text Innovation is the obvious example, yet many other activities that do not carry this label exist. For example, when a group of students parody a TV quiz show for an assembly item, or put new words to an existing popular tune, they are innovating.

Key Features

- Enjoyment and analysis of the conventions of a text
- Discussion about patterns, features, or conventions to be adapted
- Presentation, publication, or performance of the innovated text

Using Innovating in the Classroom

Innovating is a powerful teaching and learning practice because it gives students permission to copy existing texts in an appropriate way. The challenge for students is to find the patterned aspects of a text that make it appealing and perhaps unique. In doing so they use analysis to become aware of the structure of the text and the features that make it work. Innovating is a way of scaffolding that allows students to use the work of authors as a foundation to experiment with the parts of a text they can manage.

Text Innovations on Nursery Rhymes

Hush little baby, don't make a noise
Papa's going to buy you a box of toys.
If that box of toys gets old,
Papa's going to buy you a bar of gold...

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
What is in the cookie jar?
Chocolate chip or sugar spice,
Peanut butter—oh, they're nice!
Twinkle, twinkle little star,
What is in the cookie jar?

Text Innovations on "Alligator Pie"

Alligator cake, Alligator cake
If I don't get some, my heart is gonna break
Give away my French fries, give away my shake
But don't give away my alligator cake.

Stegosaurus steak, Stegosaurus steak
If I don't get some, I'll have a tummy ache
Give away my chocolate, give away my cake
But don't give away my Stegosaurus steak.

"Alligator Pie" is one of Dennis Lee's most well-known poems. It is from a book that shares its title with the poem.

Transforming

Purpose: To re-create a text or object in another genre, form, mode, medium, or text product type

Description

Transforming refers to the re-creation of a text in another genre, form, mode, medium, or text product type. This will be successful only if the student has some level of control over the structure and features of the new text.

Key Features

- An authentic purpose for transforming a text
- Prior teaching of the conventions of the two different forms, modes, or media
- Reflection about perspectives created by the new form, mode, or medium

Using Transforming in the Classroom

The process of transforming a text is a most effective way of demonstrating thorough comprehension. However, most

Text product type, or format, refers to the way in which an author chooses to produce a text. For example, text product types for a biography could range from a film documentary to a book.

transformations are more difficult than they look. At the very least the student needs to be able to comprehend the original text, particularly grasping its structure, features, and content. The consequent challenge is to re-create the meaning of the original text in a different way. For example, a student asked to dramatize a scene from a literary text will rely heavily on understandings about dramatic techniques.

Teachers often use activities such as Readers Theatre, Read and Retell, or dramatization as opportunities for students to transform texts. Transforming helps students develop a deeper understanding of the text as they re-create it in different ways. For example, written texts can be re-created as visual or oral interpretations.



Figure 7.7 The fairy-tale “The Three Little Pigs” has been transformed into a newspaper story.

	Original Text “The Three Little Pigs”	Transformed Text “Pigs Outsmart Wolf”
Genre	literary	informational
Purpose	to entertain	to retell
Form	narrative	recount
Mode	written	written
Text Product Type	picture book	newspaper report
Medium	print and visual	print

Simulating

Purpose: To adopt a role in a hypothetical situation

Description

Whenever students are asked to adopt a role or imagine themselves in a particular setting or set of circumstances, they are involved in simulating. This practice helps students learn about alternative viewpoints and reflect upon attitudes. Simulating sometimes involves performance, as in a debate where a student must assume a standpoint; a role-play where students act out a situation; or Readers Theatre, where a student may read a part in character.

Key Features

- Adoption of a role or perspective
- Creation of texts from a specific viewpoint
- Justification and substantiation of opinions and perspectives

Using Simulating in the Classroom

Simulation is particularly effective in helping students reflect upon their attitudes. However, an essential part of all texts, both literary and informational, is the perspective and roles of key characters.

By adopting and reflecting upon the roles of key characters, students are in strong positions to understand complex texts. Teachers can help students to look at situations from different perspectives by asking questions such as these: “What would you have done in this situation?”; “If David had given the money back to George, how would the story have changed?”; “How would you have handled the pollution spillage if you had been the fire chief?” Having students form groups with allocated roles allows them to explore many topics from different perspectives.

An article in a local newspaper about selling animals at local pet stores has ignited debate among people who support pet stores and those who want to stop them from selling animals that may have come from mills. This issue has raised lively debate in the classroom and has provided an opportunity for the teacher to use simulation in a meaningful context.

- The teacher has put the students into groups to discuss the problem.
- Each group was allocated a role (pet store owners, animal rights activists, a shelter worker, and a customer considering buying a pet from a pet store) and is to look at the issue from that perspective.
- Each group brainstorms the problem and solutions as seen from the allocated point of view.
- The class meets as a whole group at the conclusion to discuss the different perspectives.

Figure 7.8 Description of a simulation activity

Reflecting

Purpose: To think about the what, how, and why of experiences

Description

Reflecting involves analyzing and making judgments about what has been learned and how that learning took place. For this to be successful, students need the opportunity and structures to allow them to think metacognitively about what they have learned. While some students are strategic in their use of processes and the monitoring of their learning, other students need to be explicitly taught these skills. Reflection enables students to become aware of, monitor, and evaluate their learning processes and strategies.

Key Features

- Thinking about what was learned and how it was learned
- Making judgments about the effectiveness of the strategies employed
- Making future decisions based on those judgments

Using Reflecting in the Classroom

Reflection often happens at the end of a lesson, but it can also occur during the lesson. By reiterating what has been learned, teachers can reinforce important learning. For reflection to be successful there must be something to reflect on. Explicitly stating the purpose of the lesson before beginning can provide the stimulus for the reflection at the end. Reflection can empower students as they focus on what they can do and what they know (see Chapter 9).



Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Self-Assessment—Transitional Phase

Look What I Can Do

My Reading Behaviours I Can	Not Yet	Sometimes	Consistently
• State the main idea and provide details from the text to support it			
• Discuss information that is stated in a text			
• Select information from a text for a specific purpose			
• Link ideas both stated and implied, for example, tell about cause and effect			

Students can use this sheet to reflect on and make judgments about their reading processes and strategies.

Figure 7.9 Part of a reflection sheet for Transitional readers

CHAPTER 8

Classroom Planning and Grouping

Using *First Steps* for Long-Term and Short-Term Planning

What Is Planning?

Planning is the preparation for teaching. It involves making decisions about outcomes, content, instructional approaches, practices and learning experiences, and about the selection of resources and assessment tools that will be used. This chapter focuses on how to use the *First Steps* materials to plan for the achievement of long-term and short-term outcomes for a range of students.

Planning is

- a continuous process which occurs before, during, and after any learning situation
- driven by ongoing assessment of student behaviours
- preparation to meet the needs of whole class, small groups, and individuals
- flexible and subject to change because it reflects what is happening in the classroom
- reviewed regularly and updated as appropriate
- represented by a working document that is written primarily for the benefit of the teacher

Why Plan?

Purposeful planning makes a difference to teaching. It enables teachers to

- ensure that there is coverage of the outcomes, standards, and curriculum set by the education system
- address the needs of all students in the classroom
- maximize teaching time and efficiency by having resources readily available
- create links across the curriculum so that learning can be reinforced across all subject areas
- maximize the use of support and substitute teachers and programs
- share resources, ideas, and workload with other grade-level teachers if collaborative planning occurs
- feel confident because they are organized and prepared

Considerations for Planning

- Be aware of student needs and individual differences—profiling on the *First Steps* Map of Development will assist in identifying these.
- Be thoroughly familiar with the content to be covered and outcomes to be achieved.
- Have a repertoire of effective teaching and learning practices (see Chapter 7).
- Know about the physical aspects of the school—what equipment and resources are available.
- Consider appropriate assessment tools (see Chapter 6).

Levels of Planning

Planning looks very different for each teacher in every classroom. There is no single right way to plan. Planning is often talked about as though it is one document; however, in reality planning is a process that is represented by several documents, each serving a different purpose, covering various time spans, and with differing amounts of detail. All documents relate to each other and generally each level deals with a shorter time span and provides more detail of classroom activity than the previous one. The amount of documentation used in Long-Term Planning, Short-Term Planning, and Daily Planning will vary from teacher to teacher.



Figure 8.1

Prepared formats are a useful way of recording information in a compact, concise, and easy-to-read way. Effective teachers make use of pro-formas at all levels of the planning process. Pro-formas need to make sense to the person using them and be user friendly for others, such as supply teachers. All examples shown in this chapter and those for each strands CD-ROMs focus on using *First Steps* to support literacy planning at all levels. They have worked well for the teachers who have created them, but should be adapted to suit individual needs and preferences.

Long-Term Planning

Long-term planning gives cohesion and sets the direction for the year's activities, and as such provides an overview. Teachers begin the year with some general knowledge about the strengths and needs of their students and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they must or would like to teach. The yearly overview allows for this information to be recorded. Teachers of the same grade level benefit from planning collaboratively and sharing ideas, tasks, and resources. By its very nature, long-term planning needs to be carried out early in the school year.

Long-term planning includes a range of elements:

- the teacher's beliefs about literacy learning and teaching
- a class profile of student needs and strengths—*First Steps* Maps of Development from the previous year would be an excellent starting point.
- outcomes or expectations to be worked towards—these often come directly from the curriculum frameworks that the province has outlined.
- a list of cultural activities or special events or celebrations that either the school or class will be involved in during the year; e.g., a history focus selected for a unit of work leading up to **Remembrance Day**
- an overview of integrated units of work—teachers can base these on a particular topic, theme, season, or genre. (This overview plan allows for integrating literacy across other subject areas, and it allows time to collect relevant resources, plan field trips, and involve parents and other community members.)
- details of classroom organization, including layout and timetable
- ways of assessing and collecting data

A Teacher's Long-Term Plan

Integrated Planning Program Overview		Theme/Unit: Novel - Rowan of Rin	Grade: 6
Specific expectations focused on			
CURRICULUM AREA OUTCOMES			
LANGUAGE ARTS	MATHEMATICS	MUSIC	
<p>Reading: 1.1, 1.4, 1.6, 2.1, 4.2</p> <p>Writing: 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2-3.8, 4.2</p> <p>Oral communication: 8.7, 3.2</p> <p>Media literacy: 3.4, 4.2</p>		<p>SE: Create an accompaniment for a story, poem, or drama presentation</p>	
<p>Shared Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rowan's journal, recount events, and emphasises the story unfolds <p>Mapping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - chn create their own map of Rin <p>Keys: legends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - practise reading maps <p>Music, Music & Instruments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use technology pieces to investigate sounds, types of music - review + produce musical instruments - evaluate instrument + create wood music for a scene from the novel - investigate water music - design, make, and evaluate instrument (class performance) 	<p>LEARNING EXPERIENCES</p> <p>Writing - Magic Verse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - chn to work in groups to write a verse - explore rhyme/rhythm through riddles in novel <p>NOVEL - ROWAN OF RIN</p> <p>Places to live</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discuss why people of Rin live where they do - look at maps and where people live - map location, including waterways, mining, farming, cities - choose a European country + map the same - compare and contrast with Rowan of Rin <p>Narrative Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - chn plan + write a narrative - make comparisons between narratives read in Shared Reading and cooperative reading; discuss common features + make grid to compare - sequencing - rearrange jumbled sentences + paragraphs to make a story - sentence expansion - use adjectives/adverbs to expand sentences - plan and write narrative - focus on one section each session 	<p>PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valid Educative Explicit Fair Comprehensive <p>Student Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-assessment of musical instrument - reflection on technology process - self-assessment of group work for magic verse <p>Teacher Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative - First Steps continua - Technology Access - Musical instrument - Mapping - skills, semantic grid - Co-operative reading - First Steps continua 	<p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubric Checklist Self-assessment Peer assessment Project Observations Test Artifact/work samples Journals Photos/videos/recordings
PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING		LITERACY FOCUS	RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to learn Connection and challenge Action and reflection Inclusivity and difference Motivation and purpose Independence and collaboration Supportive environment 	<p>Writing - Narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhyming Words (P+T) Paragraphs (main idea)(C) Varied sentence beginnings (Ex + Ea) Homonyms/homophones (P) Soft words related by meaning (T) Expanding sentences (Ea + c) Editing Goal setting Reading - Co-operative reading (narrative focus) Discussion manager Character development Settings 	<p>Code Breaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - text introduction, synonyms, antonyms, more interesting words <p>Investigator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cause/effect, change an event, what is the affect, gender stereotypes <p>Illustrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prediction, character, collage drawings that related/are important to character, family tree <p>Viewer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - view visual text to see relationship b/w mood + music Speaking + Listening - listen for sounds, music types 	<p>Rowan of Rin by Emily Rodda</p> <p>LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRESENTATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kid Pix, PowerPoint, Hyperstudio, Authorware PUBLISHING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word, Creative Writer, Printmaster, digital camera INFORMATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWW, CD-ROM, library, videos COMMUNICATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone, fax, e-mail, snail mail, video conference, digital camera
<p>Key: Spelling → P = phonetic Writing → Ex = Experimental Ea = Early T = Transitional</p>			

Figure 8.2 Overview of an integrated unit of work

Short-Term Planning

Short-term planning involves the elaboration and more specific focusing of information from the long-term plan. Short-term planning* usually covers a four-to-six-week period, although the length of time is entirely a teacher's choice. Figure 8.3 illustrates the elements that may be included. Teachers consider

- the selection of outcomes and Major Teaching Emphases
- the content, theme, or topic (entry point)
- a selection of sequenced teaching and learning experiences for a whole class, small groups, and, if necessary, individuals
- the resources to be used
- the assessment tools to be used

Teachers decide whether the short-term plan might focus on a particular theme or topic, text form, school or community event, or an identified common need as an entry point. Short-term planning enables teachers to consider how literacy can be taught across the curriculum. Students can see the relevance of what they are learning if the connections between curriculum areas are made explicit. For example, if the health curriculum deals with the issue of smoking, the literacy planning for that period could focus on writing to persuade, reading articles about smoking to gather information, and participating in a debate. This is an ideal way of implementing literacy across the curriculum.

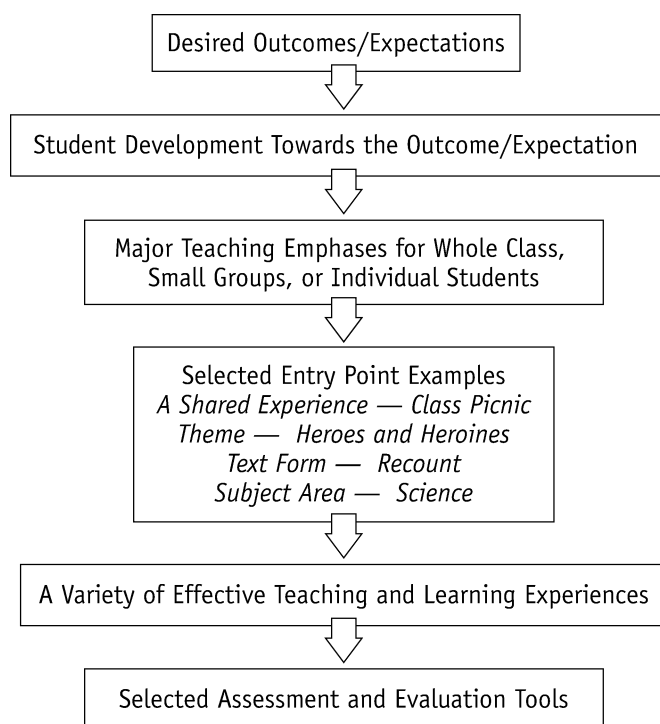


Figure 8.3 Elements of a short-term plan

*See CD-ROM for a range of short-term planning line masters.

Considerations for Short-Term Planning

There is no single correct way to go about short-term planning. However, the following questions can be considered:

- What are students' needs, strengths, and interests?
- What outcomes do I want students to be working towards?
- Which Major Teaching Emphases are going to be the focus of this planning period?
- What are my expectations?
- Is curriculum content being covered?
- Can I incorporate a topic from another subject area?
- What effective teaching and learning practices will I use?
- What learning experiences will students be involved in?
- What resources do I need to support these learning experiences?
- What texts, multimedia, and human resources do I need to organize?
- What data will I collect to provide information about students' development?
- Will I share any information and with whom?

Short-Term Classroom Plan			
Date: May – June Class: Grade 4 Teacher: A. Johnston			
Long-Term Goals	Major Teaching Emphases: <i>First Steps</i> Writing Map of Development	Teaching and Learning Experiences	Resources
<p>Student Outcomes: Select long-term goals from curriculum documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have an important effect on the ways in which they view themselves and the way they live. Students use the conventions of Standard English with understanding and critical awareness. Students select from a repertoire of processes and strategies by reflecting on their understanding of the way language works for a variety of purposes in a range of contexts. Students listen with purpose, understanding and critical awareness in a wide range of situations. Students speak with purpose and effect in a wide range of contexts. Students view a wide range of visual texts with purpose, understanding and critical awareness. Students read a wide range of texts with purpose, understanding and critical awareness. Students write for a range of purposes and in a range of forms using conventions appropriate to audience, purpose, and context. 	<p>Whole Class Teaching Focus: <i>Early</i> Establish a "Reports" reading and writing centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read, write and discuss reports Involve students in <p>Select MTEs from the phase the students are in. Consider students' needs and the curriculum when making a selection.</p> <p>Small Group Focus: <i>Experimental</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model and jointly construct reports. Build, and frequently refer to, lists of high frequency. Model the use of periods, capital letters. Teach phonological/graphophonic knowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hearing different sounds in words 	<p>Whole Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build students' awareness of the language of reports. Brainstorm and categorize information students know about a specific topic, e.g., frogs. Use digital camera to take photos on class excursion to the river. Download Involve the activities Create categories Read and structure Teach students to summarize information Encourage students to collect samples of reports from outside the environment. <p>Select teaching and learning experiences to support the MTEs. Think about which content area the topic/theme works best in.</p> <p>Small Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jointly construct descriptive sentences from photographs of animals. Display with pictures. Involve students in "String Writing." Ask questions to develop the language of reports when students bring items to school, "What does it look like? Where does it live? What does it do?" Play "Odd One Out" and "Riddles" using animal names to develop phonological awareness (see <i>First Steps Reading Resource Book</i>—Chapter 5 Conventions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> variety of reports from school and local library big books and other materials from the school resource centre flip-chart paper chart paper sentence and word-card strips students' writing folders picture cards photographs of animals, e.g., frogs, butterflies digital camera

Figure 8.4 Short-term plan—focus on writing

Weekly or Daily Planning

This documentation is often described as the “daily work pad,” though it is usually prepared for a week in advance rather than day by day. In this document the specific plan of action for each lesson is written in sufficient detail to enable the teacher to organize resources and teach confidently.

While all teachers are aware there is no typical school day, effective teachers find there is a need for planned organization for their week and day with enough flexibility to deviate from routines. It is important that there is a balance of

- explicit teacher instruction and independent student activity
- working as a whole class, in small groups, and as individuals
- effective teaching and learning practices

Some school systems have a recommended time allocation for each subject in the curriculum. The timetable can address such allocations by indicating separate sessions or showing a large, daily block of time that allows for the integration of numerous subjects, such as the various strands of literacy.

Grade 5: Fall Timetable					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00	Reflection and Goal-setting Math	Gym Movement Moments Math	Gym Movement Moments Math	Gym Movement Moments Math	Gym Movement Moments Language Arts
RECESS					
10:45	Language Arts	Language Arts	Language Arts	Language Arts	Math
LUNCH					
1:00	Science	Social Studies	Library French	Science	Social Studies
RECESS					
2:00	Phys Ed	SSR*	Phys Ed	SSR	Phys Ed
2:30	Health	French	Science	French	Science

Figure 8.5 An example of a weekly timetable for Grade 5

*SSR refers to Sustained Silent Reading

Planning the structure of the day is an important step. Teachers need to organize the day so it flows. Students need to see the connections between what they have learned in a writing session (for example) and how they can apply this knowledge in other curriculum areas. Teachers should also consider a mix of differently paced sessions that will help students reflect and re-engage with each task.

In the learning program there needs to be a balance of teacher-designed activities and blocks of time for students to pursue their own interests. Ensure that students have opportunities to use literacy for their own authentic and meaningful purposes.

Teachers need to encourage students to take responsibility for what they are learning. If they have taken part in negotiating what they are to learn, or have set their own daily or weekly goals, students feel they have some control over their learning. When students make decisions about what they will read or write or how they will respond to an oral or written text, they are able to develop a sense of ownership that is vital if they are to become engaged in learning. Students need to see the purpose of their learning and how it applies to their daily lives.

Planning on a weekly or daily basis helps to ensure that the needs of individuals and small groups are met. If the students have difficulty with a concept or strategy one day, then the teacher can plan to repeat the teaching the next day, possibly using a different piece of text.

For example, during Modelled Reading a teacher had modelled the use of question marks, using a big book. It was evident during the session that students did not have a clear understanding of the use of question marks. The teacher adjusted the daily plan and the following day remodelled the use of question marks with a new text. The students' needs continued to drive the planning for the following days.

Planning for Individuals

There may be occasions when the needs of particular students are not being met by the program provided. Students who are gifted or who have a learning disability may need a specific individual plan written for them. For plans to be truly responsive to the individual's needs, often a team consisting of the teacher, parents, the student, and other support services may need to be involved.

Section of a Daily Work Plan: Grade 8

Major Teaching Emphases: Read, write, and discuss a range of text forms (historical recounts), focusing on purpose, audience, text structure, and language features.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11–12	<p>Expectation: Identify purpose and audience of a historical recount.</p> <p>Whole-class activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm what students already know about recount writing. Shared reading of historical recount—"Dawson City Seven" by Don Reddick. Discuss purpose of historical recounts. <p>Small-group activities Group 1 (with teacher) Use small copies of "Dawson City Seven." Answer explicit questions. Model how to find the key word in the text that leads to the answer. Group 2 (Ind)—Use the Dawson City Web site. Complete a retrieval chart by selecting information to fit under given headings.</p> <p>Whole-class sharing In groups of 3, list 3 explicit bits of information found in reading the selection. Relate back to purpose of a historical recount.</p>	<p>Expectation: Identify the use of the past tense in historical recounts.</p> <p>Whole-class activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm what students know about gold being discovered in the Yukon. Group information (card cluster). Shared reading of text "Klondike: The Last Great Gold Rush, 1896–1899." Discuss purpose and audience. Who would be the audience? <p>Small-group activities Group 1 (Ind)—Make a list of things in the text (from print and visuals) that were used then but not used now. Group 2 (with teacher)—Look at the language features that indicate something happened in the past.</p> <p>Whole-class sharing As a whole class, share the information on how authors indicate something happened in the past. Begin class list of language features and visuals.</p>	<p>Expectation: Identify main events of a historical recount.</p> <p>Whole-class activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm what students know about Pierre Berton. Shared reading of text "I Married the Klondike" by Laura Thompson (Pierre Berton's mother). Discuss main events. <p>Small-group activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In pairs, list the main events in the recount. Choose 5 main events and put in sequence. <p>Whole-class activity Show how events can be recorded as a timeline. Have pairs record their events as timelines.</p> <p>Whole-class sharing In groups of 4, share the main events chosen—justify choice.</p>	<p>Expectation: Identify time connectives of a historical recount.</p> <p>Whole-class activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modelled reading of recount—"Killing Frank McGee" by Don Reddick. Type section of text from "Frank McGee" onto overhead. Mark words in the text that are time connectives and linking words. Begin class chart of time connectives and linking words. <p>Small-group activity Divide class into 3 groups (random selection). Give students one of the 3 books studied earlier in the week. Working as individual or pairs, make a list of the time connectives and linking words in their books.</p> <p>Whole-class sharing Add time words to class chart.</p>	<p>Expectation: Identify the framework of a historical recount.</p> <p>Whole-class activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit text—"Dawson City Seven" by Don Reddick. Use the text as a model to elicit the structure of the text. Use labels to attach to each part of the text. Discuss the purpose of each part of the text. <p>Small-group activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give out copies of a printed historical recount and students work in small, heterogeneous groups to attach labels to each part of the text. Using the labels the students have generated, create a class framework for a historical recount. Give students an envelope containing a cut-apart recount and have them use the framework to put the text together again. <p>Whole-class sharing Reform the class and discuss the framework. Refine the framework as needed.</p>

Figure 8.6 Section of a daily work plan—focus on literacy

Knowing how the student is currently performing in school will help those involved in the planning team address areas where the student has an identified educational need. The plan needs to define the goals for a predetermined period, the actions and services needed to help the student, and a method of evaluating the student's progress.

The plan created is a working document that is flexible enough to respond to the changing needs of the student. The plan may be implemented for a specified length of time or until the outcomes are achieved. It may be implemented for a particular period of each school day such as the reading lesson or the literacy block. This allows the student to continue working with the rest of the class for the remainder of the day. The individual plan should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure the most appropriate support is provided at all times.

Sample Plan for a Primary Student

Individual Education Plan (IEP)			
Name: William Grade: 2 Date: Sept. 15, 2007 Review Date: Nov. 30, 2007			
Current First Steps Phase: Experimental Goal: to improve language skills in each of the four strands of literacy			
Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - likes to listen to stories - responds well to highly structured environments - motivated to read - has shown great improvement in writing letters independently 			
Areas That Need to Be Strengthened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expressive language skills - receptive language skills - attention skills - literacy skills 			
Grade	Learning Expectations	Instructional Strategies	Modes of Assessment
K-1	Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - retell stories in proper sequence that have been read by and with the teacher, using pictures in the book and/or props Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communicate ideas in writing, for example, draw personal experience and write about it in a simple sentence Speaking and Listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an understanding of appropriate listening behaviours (e.g., look at the speaker) - share personal experiences, using appropriate vocabulary and details Media Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communicate ideas verbally and non-verbally about a variety of media materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - plenty of shared reading experiences - opportunities to listen to stories on tape and follow along with book - discussions - teacher-directed tasks - interactive and independent writing - prompting - modelling - reminders to expand and revise - discussions - modelling 	Teacher observations Anecdotal notes One-to-one conferencing Work samples

Figure 8.7 Plan for an individual student with language impairments

Planning Across the Strands

Planning across the strands of literacy allows the content and strategies that will be taught to be integrated across the whole literacy block. For example, linking reading and writing together can allow students to read and research a topic during reading and use this information to write a report during writing.

One challenge for teachers in literacy planning is to ensure that students experience a balance of all four strands. Many teachers try to integrate the strands in an attempt to make learning more meaningful and at the same time to relieve some of the pressures of time.

Integrating Two Strands of Literacy



Strands: Reading and Writing	Class	Teacher	Planning Period
Focus: Novel — <i>Charlotte's Web</i>	Grade 5		

Major Teaching Emphases		Major Teaching Emphases		Whole-Class Activities	Assessment
<p>Whole Class: <u>Trans</u> Phase</p> <p>Strand: Reading</p> <p>Environment and Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Foster students' enjoyment of reading <p>Use of Texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to teach students to analyze texts and identify explicit and implicit information and ideas <p>Contextual Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss how readers may react to and interpret text differently depending on their background knowledgeDiscuss how authors and illustrators have used devices to target specific audiences <p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to build students' sight vocabularyTeach students to identify the role of language features in a variety of texts (literacy) <p>Processes and Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to build students' knowledge base of cues (world knowledge)Consolidate known comprehension strategies and model additional strategies	<p>Whole Class: <u>Trans</u> Phase</p> <p>Strand: Writing</p> <p>Environment and Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Foster students' enjoyment of writing <p>Use of Texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to read, write, and discuss a range of text forms focusing on language features and text organization <p>Contextual Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Jointly analyze how writers convey meaning for differing purposes and audiences <p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to involve students in constructing and manipulating sentences to enhance meaningContinue to enrich students' vocabulary <p>Processes and Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teach students to independently use a range of planning and organizing strategiesContinue to develop students' use of spelling strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Select words from the novel and have students predict the story line. Share and record predictions.Provide opportunities for students to read the novel.As a whole class, introduce Literature Circles. (See <i>First Steps Reading Resource Book—Chapter 2</i>.) Establish and introduce the roles of the members. Initially give students role sheets to help them identify what the roles entail. Provide students with sticky notes and teach how to use these for discussing the story.Use pages 122 and 123 of the novel and have students complete a Readers Theatre presentation.Then have students select a character from the script and conduct an interview of that character.Have students answer questions at the conclusion of several chapters. Include a range of literal, inferential, and evaluative questions. Also have students list some questions they have for the author.Have students complete a "Stop, Think, Feel, Share" at various points in the story.Begin an interesting/difficult/unusual words chart identifying words from the story, e.g., hullabaloo, salutations, pummelled, buffeted.Use the collected words to create word clines, word sorts, and other word level activities.Comprehension strategies—connecting—discuss how readers make connections to the text to create meaning, sensory imaging—create drawings of parts of the book, discuss the images evoked. (See Zimmerman and Keene.)Build knowledge cues—farming, raising animals for meat. Look at issues from different points of view—rural/city; allocate students different roles—farmer, butcher, cook, environmentalist, vegetarian, etc.Have students begin a reflective journal where they enter questions, comments, or confusions.Have students retell a chapter of the book. (See Brown and Cambourne.)Use a Plot Profile to list and rate events in a chapter/story. Discuss the organization of the text—introduction, problem/resolution, ending, and relate to chapters and to the text as a whole.Use Charlotte's quote from Chapter 12—as a springboard for investigating the media. Students choose an article from the local paper to analyze the use of language. Discuss target audience and how language is used for the audience.Use the argument between Wilbur and Templeton in Chapter 21 as a springboard for writing a narrative. Create an argument as the conflict of a narrative and then work forward and backward to create the context. (Major writing task)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collect role sheets and analyze written comments.Assess Readers Theatre interpretation of the text.Collect major writing task and assess using the narrative writing rubric.Student self-assessment—reading strategies, logs.Fluency checklistRecord or question and answer sessions (from Guided Reading). <p>Instructional Approaches to Reading to Be Included</p> <p>Modelled Reading</p> <p>Guided Reading</p> <p>Literature Circles</p> <p>Independent Reading</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Practices to Be Included</p> <p>Familiarizing, Transforming</p> <p>Reflecting, Modelling, Sharing, Guiding</p> <p>Analyzing</p> <p>Practising, Applying</p>	<p>Resources</p> <p><i>Charlotte's Web—White</i></p> <p><i>First Steps Map of Development</i></p> <p><i>First Steps Reading Resource Book</i></p> <p><i>Revisit, Reflect, and Retell—Hoyt</i></p> <p><i>Reading Reminders—Burke</i></p> <p><i>Novel Workshop 1—Pyne</i></p> <p><i>Mosaic of Thought—Zimmerman and Keene</i></p> <p><i>Strategies That Work—Harvey and Goudvis</i></p> <p><i>Literature Circles—Daniels</i></p> <p><i>Read and Retell—Brown and Cambourne</i></p>	
Major Teaching Emphases		Major Teaching Emphases		Small-Group Activities	
<p>Small Group: Early Reading Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Familiarize students with the devices authors and illustrators use to influence the construction of meaningTeach students to identify explicit and implicit informationModel word-solving strategies such as reading on and rereading	<p>Small Group: Early Writing Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage students to consider the needs of the readerInvolve students in sentence manipulation—expanding and reducing sentencesContinue to build word banks—interesting wordsTeach a range of spelling strategies—focus on visual patternsContinue to build graphophonic knowledge—same sound can be represented by different letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">These students will participate in many of the whole-class activities listed above but will also have additional time and the following activities to cater for individual needs.Involve students in small-group guided reading sessions using a variety of books.In small groups, conduct "Reciprocal Reading" sessions focusing on the reading strategies of predicting, clarifying, summarizing, questioning. Ensure students are given an opportunity to answer a variety of questions (literal, inferential, evaluative, etc.).Involve the students in word sorting—same sound different letters—create cumulative chart of patterns found.Select sentences from text and students' writing and use as a basis for expanding and reducing. Involve students in physical sentence manipulation.Scaffold writing tasks by providing a framework from which to plan.			

Figure 8.8 Here is a good example of a CD-ROM format that will change as it is actually used.

Integrating Four Strands of Literacy

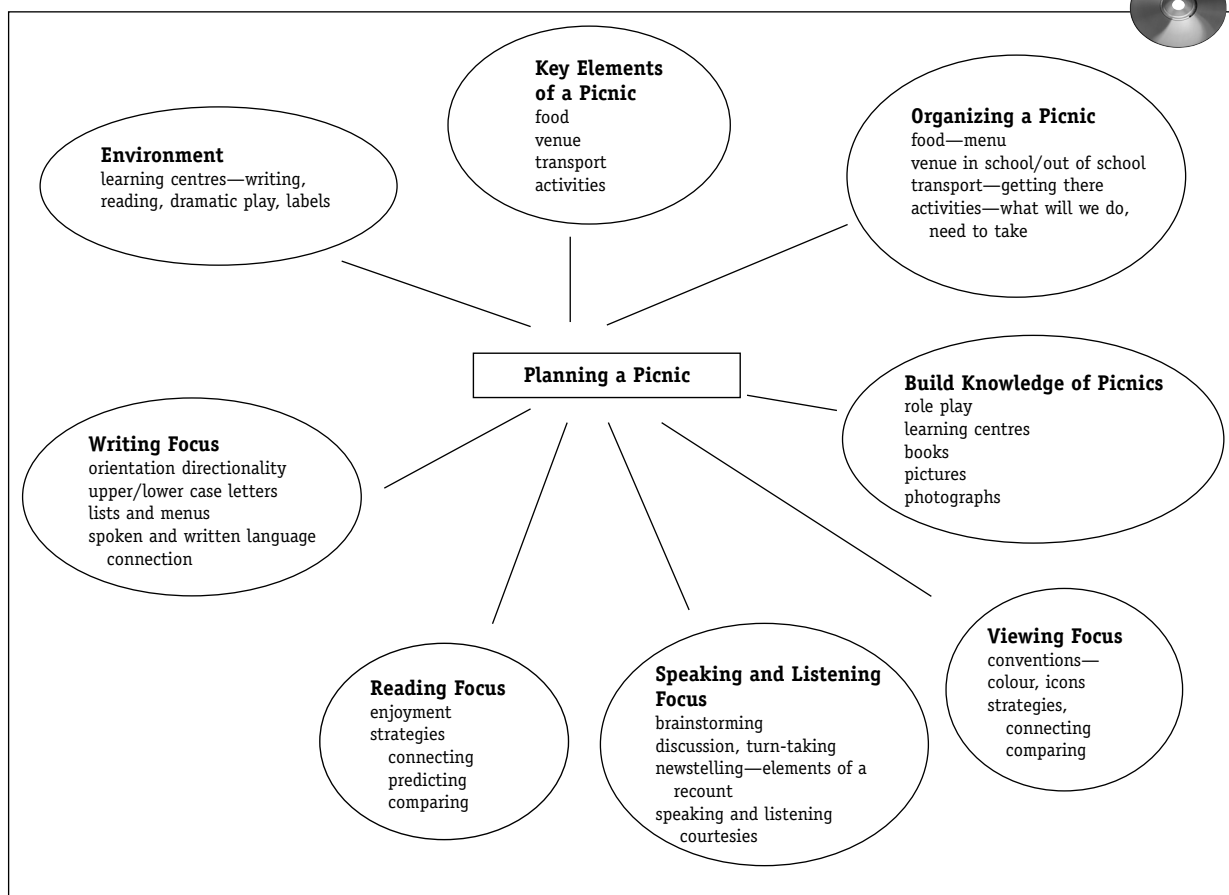


Figure 8.9

Organizational Structures for Individual Lessons

The level of documentation for each lesson will vary from teacher to teacher. Teachers may carry much of the finer detail in their heads or have set routines that have been documented in the long-term plan and used on a regular basis. Effective lessons are

- tailored for a specific group of students
- adapted to meet a range of student needs and abilities
- designed to involve all students in purposeful activities

Grouping Considerations

A comprehensive approach to teaching literacy needs to ensure that throughout the course of the day and week, students have the opportunity to work with different peers in a range of different-sized groups. It is important to provide opportunities to learn literacy as part of the whole-class group as well as in small groups, with partners, or on an individual basis.

Whole Class

During these sessions a shared context is created. Explicit teaching, class sharing, or development of a learning community may take place.

Small Groups or Pairs

Cooperative and flexible small groups and partner work allow explicit teaching to occur that effectively meets the needs of all students. These groupings assist students to develop collaborative learning behaviours.

Individual

Students need opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning by working independently on self-selected or teacher-directed tasks. This time allows teachers to monitor individual progress and provide additional support as needed.

The greatest challenge for teachers is to design a model that will allow them to plan and manage a balance of whole-class, small-group, and individual teaching and learning experiences. There is no single organizational model that will provide the perfect balance for all students. It is therefore important for teachers to examine different suggestions for organizing groups during the literacy time, and adapt structures to meet their particular needs. The organizational structure that is suitable for a particular day may be changed the following day due to differing needs.

Some ways of organizing the class groupings are as follows:

<p>Teacher works with whole class.</p>	<p>Teacher works with small group, while rest of class works independently.</p>	<p>Students work in pairs. Teacher moves among pairs, helping as needed.</p>
<p>Students work in groups. Teacher works with one group or rotates around groups.</p>	<p>Students work individually. Teacher works with individuals.</p>	<p>Teacher works with most of the class while a small group works together independently.</p>

Figure 8.10 Class groupings

Flexible Grouping

It is important that grouping is flexible and that all students are exposed to different language models, interests of other students, and varied social situations. Flexible grouping allows students to work in different kinds of groups depending on the intended learning outcome or expectation. For example, all students who are in the same phase on a *First Steps* Map of Development might be grouped together to work on a particular strategy. Once that strategy has been learned the group dissolves. Teachers need to

- plan how the groups are going to be set up
- decide what size groups would be most appropriate for the particular activity
- decide how long students will stay in an assigned group

The following table (Figure 8.11) lists some of the ways in which groups may be formed. Teachers need to decide on the learning objective for the session and select the most appropriate grouping to achieve that objective.

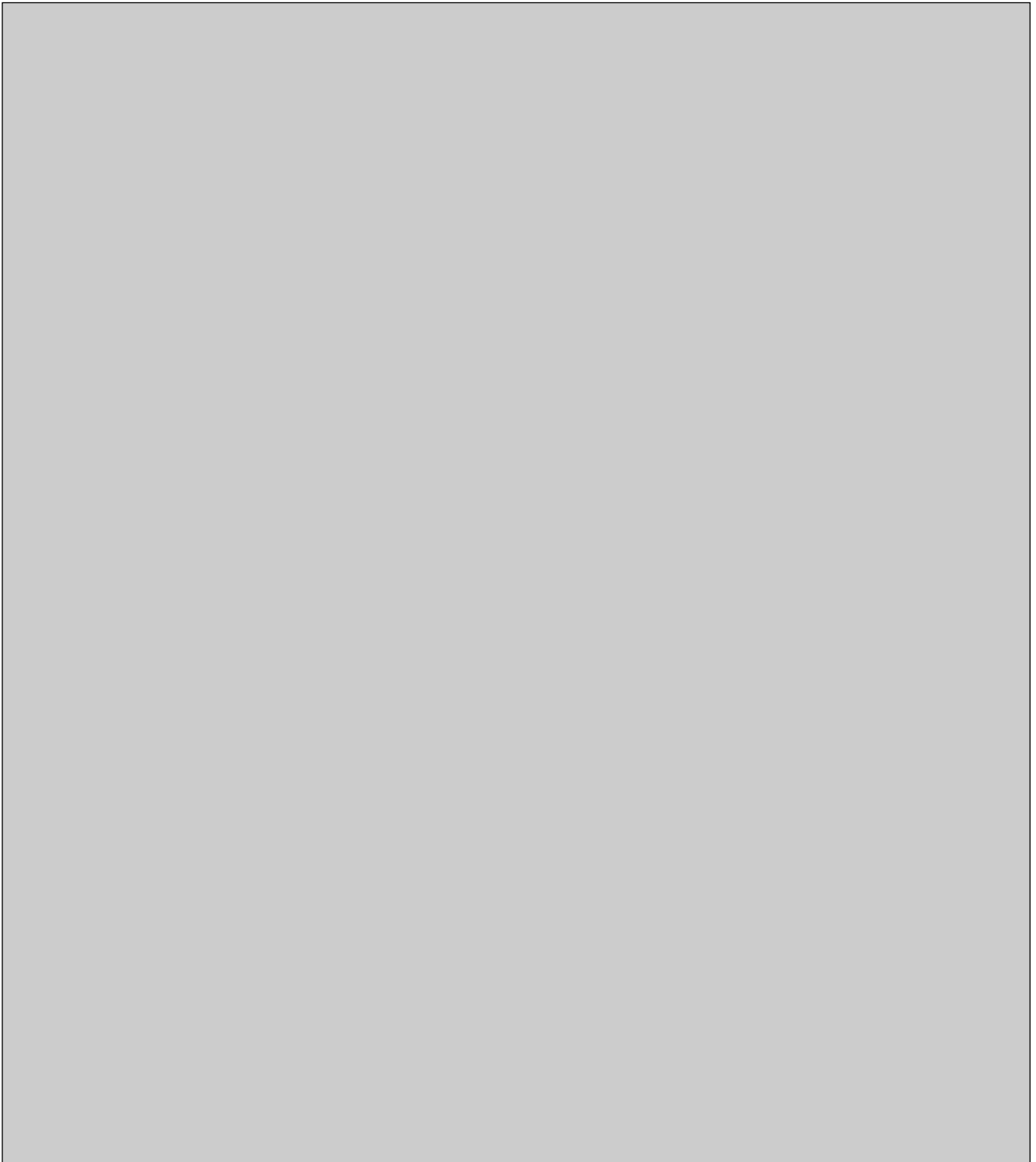


Figure 8.11 Adapted from Opitz, 1998

Lesson Structures

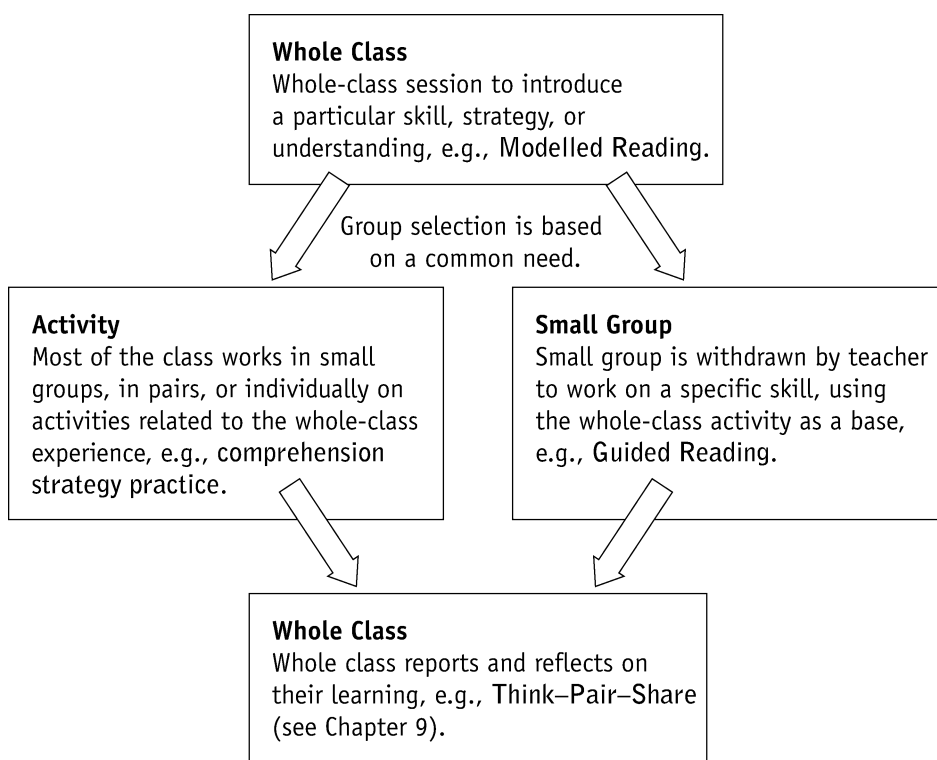
When teachers are planning for individual lessons they need to take into consideration the grouping arrangements that best meet the needs of students.

The structure and grouping within each lesson will also vary depending upon the purpose. A lesson often includes whole-class, small-group, and/or individual activities followed by whole-class reporting and reflecting.

There are countless variations in group sizes and grouping arrangements to achieve specific ends. The following examples illustrate five ways in which literacy lessons could be structured.

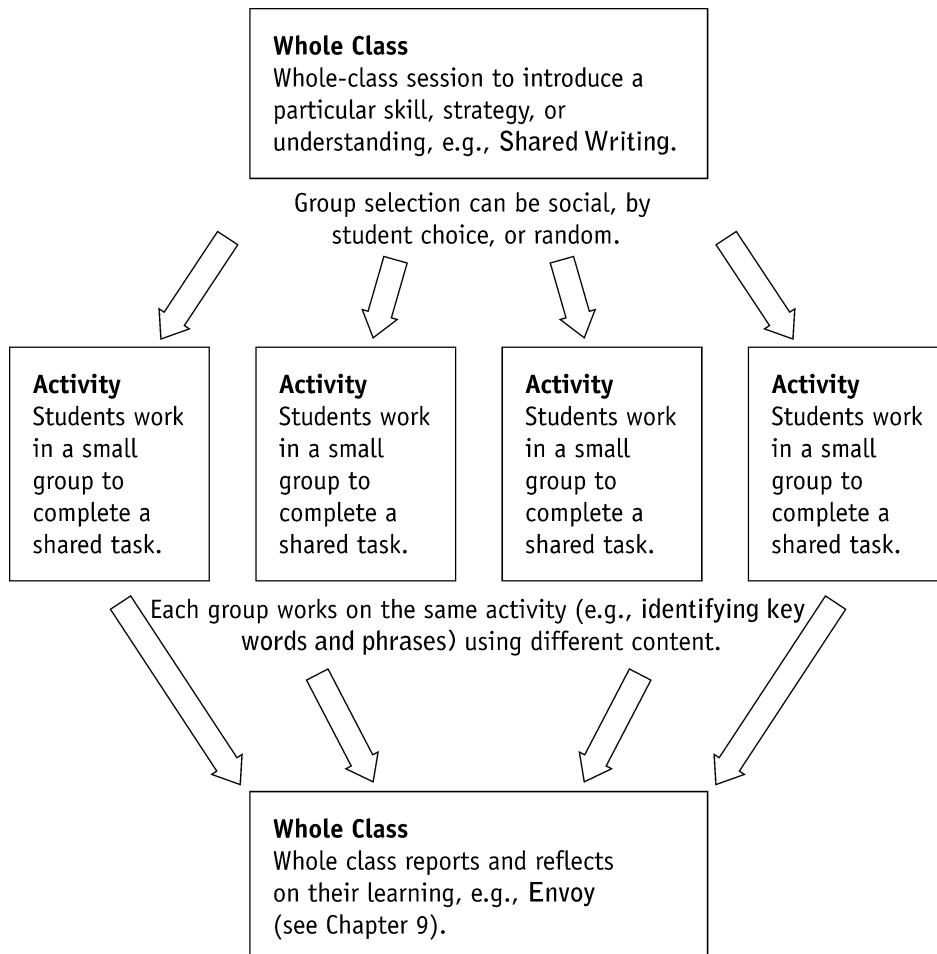
Example 1

In this organizational structure, following the whole-class session, most of the class works on a related activity. The teacher works with a small group whose members have a common need.



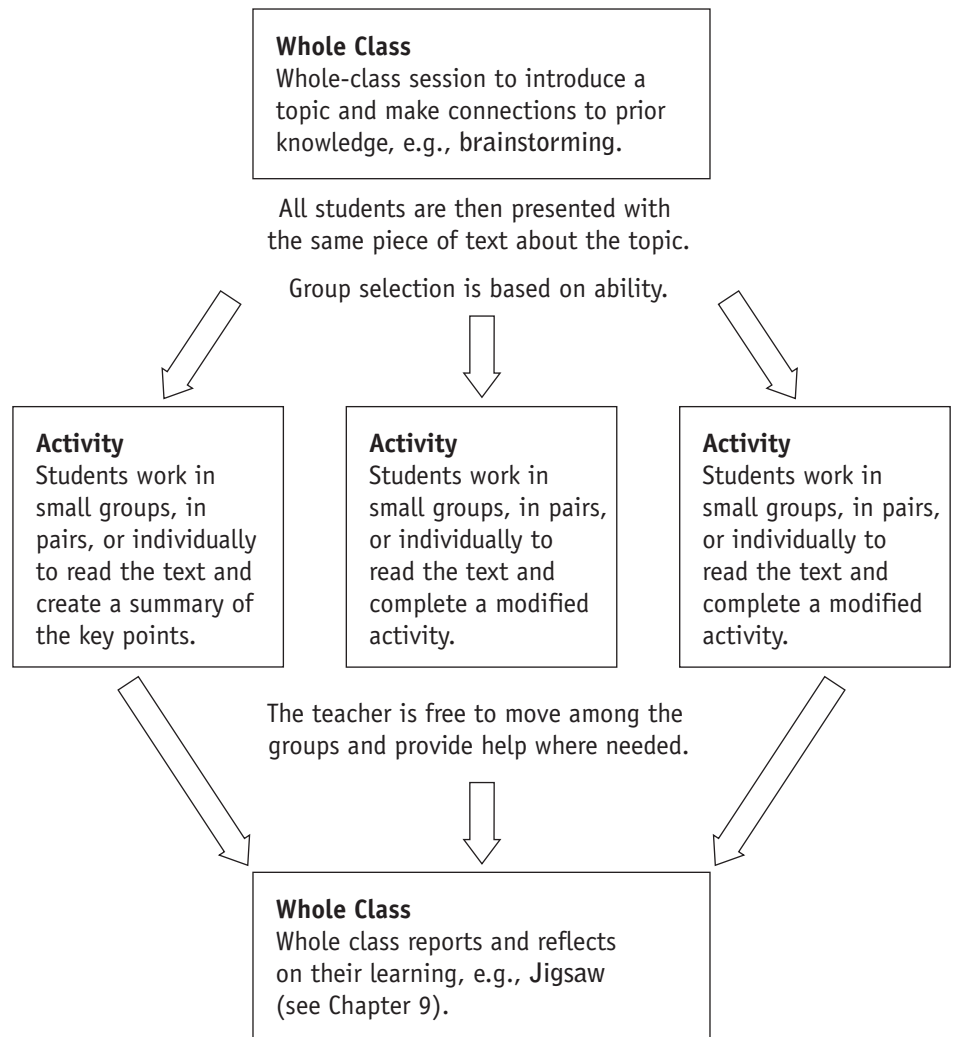
Example 2

In this organizational structure the whole-class session is followed by the formation of small groups.



Example 3

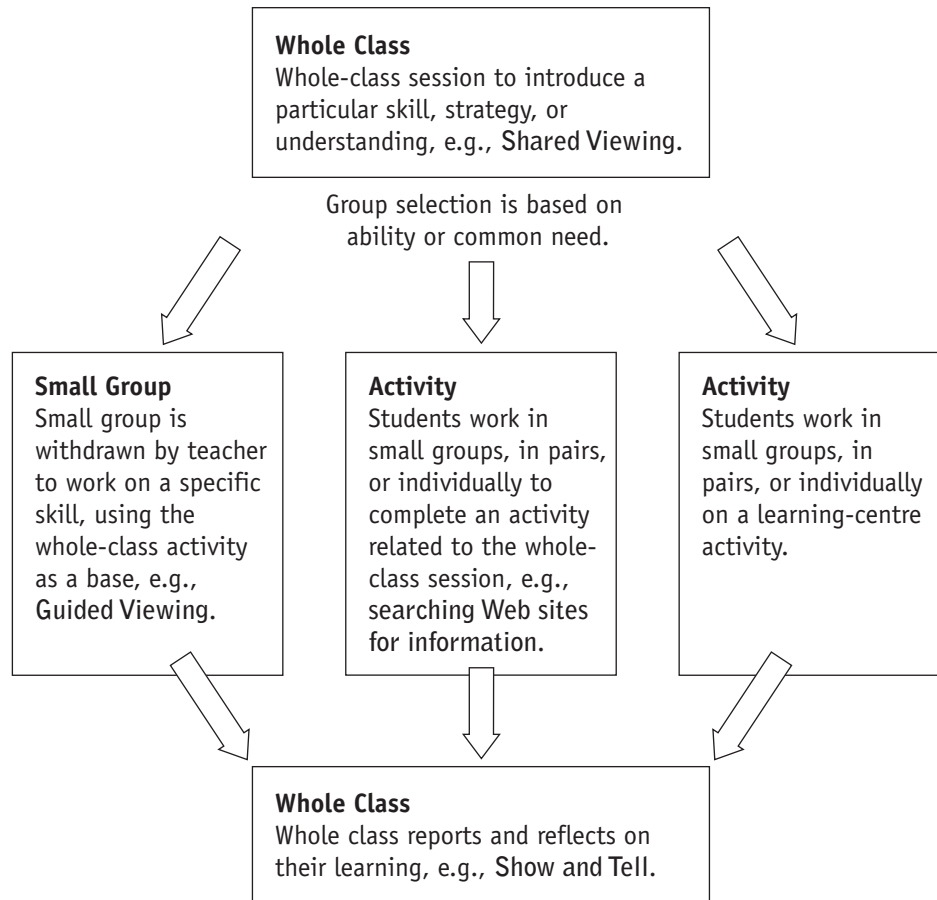
This organizational structure is appropriate when all students in the class need to access the same piece of text. Each set activity allows students to access the text at different levels, but when students report and reflect they have gathered similar information. It is an organizational structure that can easily be carried over to curriculum content areas where students may be working from a textbook.



Example 4

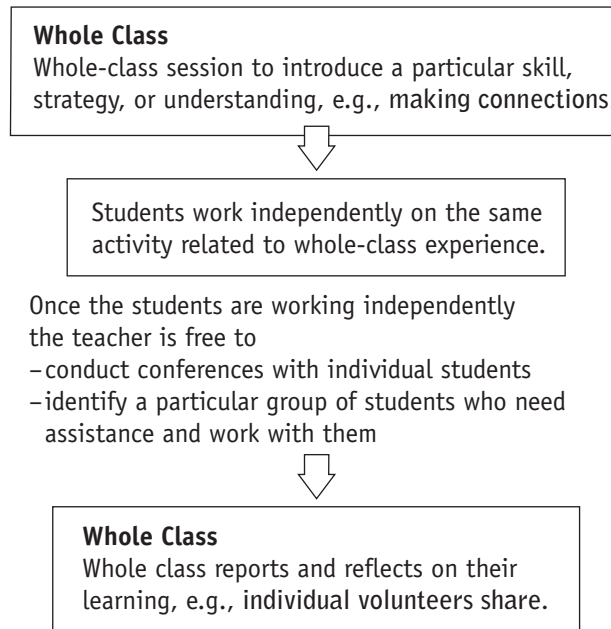
In this organizational structure the class works in three groups. The teacher works with one group during the session while the other two groups work independently on a set activity or at a learning centre.

This structure is likely to be repeated for three days so the teacher has the opportunity to work specifically with each group.



Example 5

In this organizational structure, when the whole-class session finishes, each student works independently on an activity related to the whole-class experience.



Working with Groups

Group Management

The ideal classroom has students organized in a variety of grouping arrangements so all needs are being met. However, working with one group of students is not productive if the remainder of the class is constantly interrupting and calling for the teacher's attention. It is essential that all students know how to work independently and what procedures to follow when the teacher is busy with another group. It is well worthwhile spending time at the beginning of every school year teaching students the procedures that are to be adopted. Brainstorm with the class what they can do to avoid interrupting the teacher and the focus group. Create a class chart that reminds students of their options.

When I Need Help I Can

- ask the nominated person at my table
- skip that question or word and try the next one

When I Finish Work Early I Can

- check back through my work
- read a book
- work at a learning centre (no more than four persons at a time)

It is advisable to begin the year with the class working as a whole so there is time for students to become accustomed to general classroom procedures. It also allows time for the teacher to become more aware of students' capabilities and needs. Start small when organizing groups.

A possible transition towards successfully using small-group work is described below.

The teacher

- works with most of the class while a few students work independently
- works with most of the class while some students work with partners
- works with most of the class while one small group works independently
- works with most of the class while two small groups work independently
- decides where explicit teaching or support is needed while several groups work independently

There is no specific time frame within which this will occur; it may take weeks or even months, but the time spent reaching this end will be worthwhile.

As well as being able to work independently, students will need to learn the strategies to enable them to work cooperatively in a variety of group situations. Learning to cooperate is a long-term process. Teachers need to take time to explicitly teach the cooperative strategies, and to provide time and opportunities for students to practise and receive feedback. Implementing group-management strategies is important to encourage cooperation.

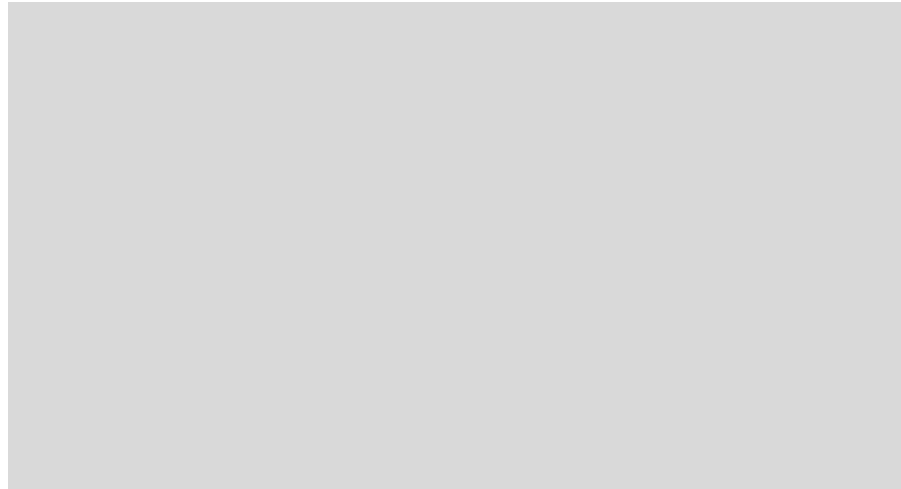
Assigning Roles

Teachers may assign roles to individual students to facilitate the participation of all group members and to help structure the actual discussion. There is a range of roles that could be assigned.

- Recorder—records group decisions, asks questions to clarify what people mean
- Reporter—reports the ideas and decisions to the class
- Encourager—makes sure everyone is participating, offers praise and encouragement
- Manager—collects any resources that are needed, explains and clarifies the task, summarizes where the group is up to, has contact with the teacher if needed

Each role needs to be introduced by

- showing the role in operation; for example, using role-play or fish bowl strategy (see Glossary)
- building a Y- or T-chart about what the role “sounds like,” “looks like,” and “feels like” (see Chapter 9)
- providing opportunities to practise



Students in group discussion wear name tags to identify the roles recorder, encourager, manager, and reporter.

Numbering Off

Students in the group count off to identify the order in which they will speak. This works especially well when students are making lists; e.g., a list of questions, a list of possible solutions. Numbering off eliminates the difficulty of deciding who goes first or last.

Structuring Responses

Each group member is given the opportunity to make one comment or ask one question in response to the opening statement of the other group members. For example, member 1 makes a statement—members 3, 4, and 1 respond; member 2 makes a statement—members respond, and so on.

Key Communicator

If the group comes to a problem and needs to speak to the teacher, only the designated person is permitted to call for the teacher’s attention and seek help.

Effective group management in any classroom is a long-term process, not a single event. Teachers will develop their own approach to group organization and management within the classroom and will use methods that work successfully for them and their students. Methods and approaches may need to be altered each year.

CHAPTER 9

The Metacognitive Process: Reflecting, Representing, and Reporting

Learning how to learn—that is, developing a repertoire of thinking processes and strategies which can be applied to solve problems—is a major goal of literacy education. The challenge for educators in the information age is to teach students strategies that will not become obsolete. The metacognitive process empowers students to be aware of themselves as learners and to control and improve their own literacy. Those teachers who teach students the use of this process promote learning.

Metacognitive thinking is an interwoven process of

- reflecting (thinking back over the strategies used or the content learned)
- representing (demonstrating the learning)
- reporting (sharing information with others)

Metacognitive thinking is pivotal to the *First Steps* resource. It is through this process that students are able to make their learning meaningful. The process of metacognition can be modelled and introduced as early as Kindergarten.

Supporting Metacognitive Thinking

The effectiveness of metacognitive thinking and practice depends upon a number of contributing factors. Teachers can strive to

- create a positive classroom climate that encourages acceptance, tolerance, risk-taking, and an awareness of thinking
- organize the classroom environment to facilitate metacognitive thinking; e.g., provide opportunities for students to work independently and in small groups
- ensure administrative support and school-wide commitment so metacognitive thinking receives status, and time is allowed for students to employ, practise, and refine the strategies
- ensure that whole-school structures and ethos are in place to

support metacognitive thinking; e.g., **encouraging cooperation rather than competition**

- assist students to develop a metacognitive thinking vocabulary of terms such as *strategy*, *goal*, and *reflect*
- establish and share goals (both process and content) before lessons begin (the extent to which these goals have been achieved forms the basis of the reflection)
- provide specific, positive, and corrective feedback on strategy use or evidence of metacognitive thinking skills being employed
- provide meaningful content for reflection by integrating the teaching of metacognitive thinking with all areas of the curriculum
- model metacognitive strategies so students get insights into how and why these are applied
- teach the skills and strategies necessary for students to work cooperatively
- allow for different learning styles by encouraging students to represent their learning in a variety of ways

Students need to

- be encouraged to take responsibility for, and ownership of, their own learning
- be encouraged to participate in class decision-making sessions; e.g., **brainstorming**, **class meetings**, **group work**
- be provided with clear expectations
- be allowed opportunity and time to practise and develop metacognitive thinking strategies in meaningful contexts
- develop independent work habits
- have a range of strategies to apply when they encounter difficulties

Teaching Metacognitive Thinking

If students are able to select a strategy that is most appropriate for a task, monitor their thinking, and evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies at the completion of the task, they are being metacognitive.

For this to occur, teachers will need to teach students what is involved in being metacognitive.

- The process of metacognitive thinking will need to be modelled many times. Modelling will be more successful if teachers focus on one or two aspects of the process at a time and over a series of lessons. As part of modelling, it is important that teachers explain not only how strategies are used but also why particular strategies are useful or appropriate.

- The students will need opportunities to practise metacognitive thinking in many contexts. As part of a reflection session at the end of a lesson, for instance, teachers can ask students which strategies they used, how successful the strategies were, and what they could try next time.
- The teacher will need to provide students with explicit feedback and acknowledgment of their attempts to be metacognitive; e.g., by asking targeted questions.

Teacher: Kim, I noticed you were reading on in Guided Reading today. Why did you choose to use that strategy?

Kim: *Well, I came to a couple of words that I didn't know, and I wanted to see if there were any clues in the rest of the sentence to help me.*

Teacher: Did that strategy work for you?

Kim: *Well, it helped me with one of the words but not with this one (points to "oasis").*

Teacher: Can you think of anything else you could have done?

Kim: *I tried to sound it out, but that didn't help either.*

Teacher: Show me what you did.

Kim: *oa—s—i—s.*

Teacher: Mmm, I see. Do you remember in our discussion before we began reading, we talked about the deserts of the Sahara, and Paul mentioned the special name we give to places in the desert where water is found?

Kim: *Oh, that's right, an oasis. Mmm ... if I had tried using the letter names of the "o" and "a" it might have helped.*

Teacher: Yes, that might work. Or you could remember some of the words we discussed before reading and make a prediction about which one it was likely to be.

Figure 9.1 Transcript of teacher prompting reflection on learning

By reflecting on learning in this manner, teachers are encouraging students to be aware that strategies can be applied in many situations. As part of the metacognitive process, teachers can give students an opportunity to think about how particular strategies can be applied across other curriculum areas. In this way, teachers are not just equipping students for school; they are equipping them with life skills they can apply in other learning situations.

Metacognitive Thinking Vocabulary

Students need to understand the meaning of certain terminology such as the following, and be able to use it in context.

Terms	Definitions
articulate	being able to describe what is being done
feedback	information given to a learner to direct, improve, or control future learning
goal	something one strives to reach, a target, as in “My reading goal is to read three chapter books in six weeks”
effective	successful, something that worked well
ineffective	not successful, something that didn’t work well
negotiate	to reach agreement through discussion and consensus
reflect	to think back over a learning experience, task, or product to ascertain its effectiveness or otherwise
report	to share information with others
represent	to demonstrate learning
self-assessment	making judgments about one’s progress and/or achievement
self-talk	asking questions or making comments to oneself, verbally or internally
strategy	a plan of attack, knowing what to do and when to do it
successful	accomplishing what was intended

Figure 9.2

The Metacognitive Process

This process consists of three interwoven aspects—reflecting, representing, and reporting.

Reflecting on the Learning

Reflecting involves analyzing and making judgments about what has been learned and how learning took place. For this to be successful, students need the opportunity and structures to allow them to stand back and think of what they have learned. It is

through reflection in literacy, for instance, that explicit understandings about textual, grammatical, phonological, and spelling systems can be refined.

Reflecting enables students to

- become aware of the processes and strategies they are using
- monitor the use of their processes and strategies
- take control of how, when, why, and to what extent those processes and strategies are applied
- refine their processes and strategies
- critically evaluate the success of their processes and strategies

Representing the Learning

Representing thinking in concrete and active forms helps students to externalize and generalize their thoughts. Representing can be a means of learning as it helps students understand new information and/or learning.

Following on from the reflection process, it is often helpful if the teacher demonstrates how to make thinking concrete by writing a key word or two, drawing a picture, or constructing a simple graphic such as a flow chart or Venn diagram. Students then need to be given opportunities to represent their learning in a way that is meaningful to them.

Recognizing Different Learning Styles

It needs to be remembered that students in the class have many different learning styles and there is no single way of representing learning appropriate for all learners. Students can be shown various representations to enable them to choose the one that is most appropriate for their learning style and the task at hand. Students need to become aware of their own learning style or preferences. It is important to provide opportunities to discuss why one representation is more effective than another and to explore others' styles or preferences. (See Figure 9.3 on the following page.)

Representing Learning



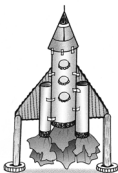

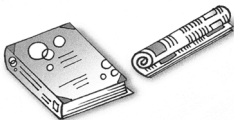
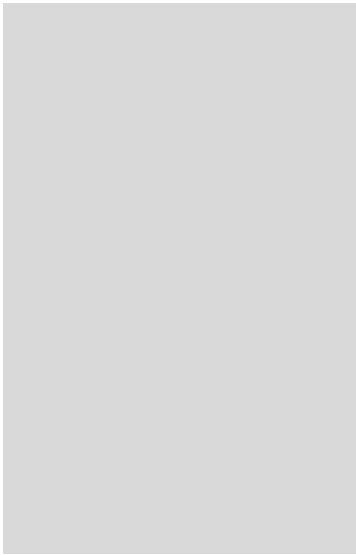
Types of Learners (by Style)	May Prefer to Represent Learning Through
Visual learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highlighting texts • creating pictures, diagrams, charts, videos, or maps • writing notes in different colours
Auditory learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in group discussions • recording digitally • putting their ideas to music
Kinesthetic learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dramatizing or acting out • building a model • devising a game to demonstrate a concept
Interactive learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing group projects • peer tutoring • participating in group discussion
Print-oriented learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading, printing, and drawing • constructing story maps, flow charts, or newspapers • devising questions at different levels; e.g., using Bloom's Taxonomy

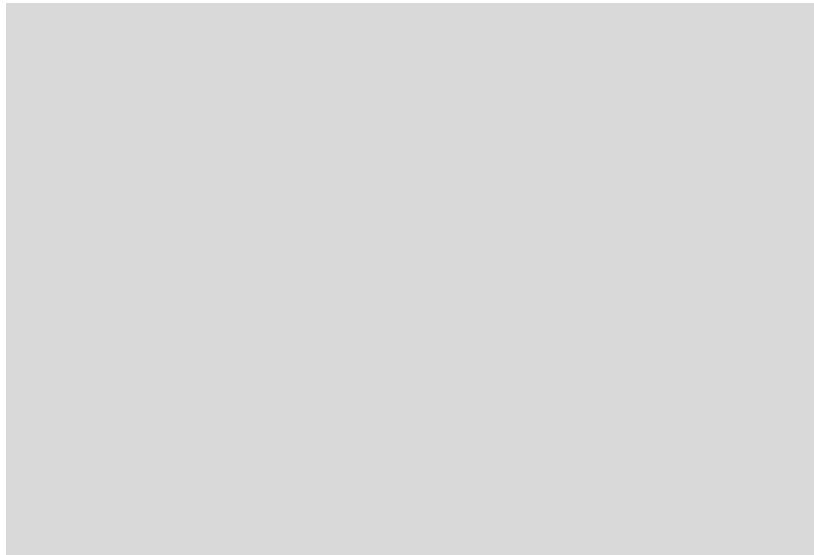
Figure 9.3

Reporting the Learning

Students often clarify their thinking and understanding by talking. It is through reporting to others that students refine, consolidate, and extend their learning. Students need the opportunity to work in a variety of groupings and to report on both learning processes and products. Reporting does not need to be a “formal” presentation performed before the whole class at the end of every lesson. It can simply be turning to a partner and stating what strategy was used to spell a word in writing, or what was enjoyable or challenging about the activity just completed.



Sharing information



Showing a piece of work

Reflecting on and Representing Learning

There are many different ways students can be encouraged to reflect on and represent their learning. The type of activity chosen will depend on

- the time available
- the time span; e.g., a single lesson or a whole unit of study
- students' familiarity with the activity
- the purpose
- the number of students involved; e.g., whole class, small group, partners
- the learning styles of students

The activities listed under “Five-Minute Reflections” are probably more suited to reflection or representation sessions after a single lesson. They are brief but can still be highly effective. Other reflecting and representing activities may take longer and involve students reflecting on many aspects of their learning. These may be used at the end of a unit of study. It is acknowledged that students have different learning styles and while the activities listed may appear to be focused on writing, there is no reason why teachers could not vary the activities by having students complete them orally or using a visual representation; e.g., drawing or making a model.

Strategies for Reflecting and Representing Learning

- 1 “Five-Minute Reflections”
- 2 Goal-Setting
- 3 Self-Questioning
- 4 Think–Pair–Share
- 5 Reflective Questionnaire
- 6 Cumulative Charts
- 7 Learning Charts
- 8 Concept Maps
- 9 Venn Diagrams
- 10 Learning Logs
- 11 Look What I Can Do
- 12 T-Charts
- 13 Y-Charts
- 14 K-W-H-L Framework

1 “Five-Minute Reflections”

- Give students a few minutes to think about something they have enjoyed or puzzled over during the day. Share with others.
- Use an aid such as a puppet. Let students tell the puppet about something enjoyable they have done or learned during the lesson.
- Model the process of metacognitive thinking at least once a day. Modelling of the metacognitive process may include
 - an attitudinal element; e.g., I did a good job at ...
 - strategies being used; e.g., I read to the end of the line
 - knowledge and understandings; e.g., A period is used at the end of a sentence.
- At the end of the day, encourage students to think about a special event or achievement at school that they can share with their family.
- Encourage students to get started with metacognitive thinking by answering simple questions such as these:
 - Who did you work with?
 - What did you enjoy?
 - What was difficult?
 - What was easy?
 - What did you learn?
- During any lesson, stop and ask students to think of a question that comes to mind. Have students put their question to the group or class. For example, during a reading task, stop at predetermined places and have students ask each other a question about the reading strategies being used.

- Have students keep a learning log or reflective journal. As a quick reflection, stop the lesson at strategic places and ask students to write in their journals. Their jottings may include questions they have about the text they are reading or writing, the strategies they are using, or the way they are working.
- Ask a question about a specific aspect of learning. The group members then “Whip Around” the circle with thirty seconds each to comment on the question. For example, the teacher may ask, “What helped your group work successfully today?” Students in the group respond swiftly in turn.
(Adapted from S. T. Hill 1990)
- Students can use charts available in the classroom as a basis for reflection; e.g., a T-Chart on effective group work.
- Encourage students to keep a simple journal that consists of sketches, drawings, photographs, artifacts, or words about aspects of their learning.

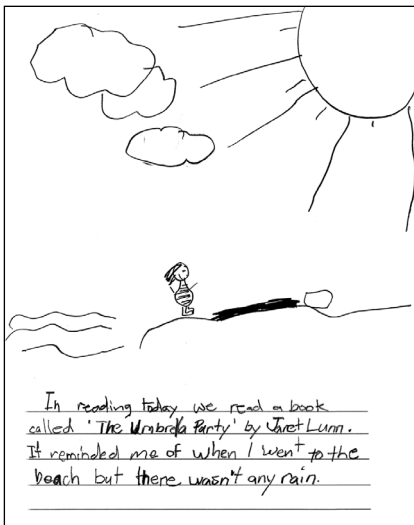


Figure 9.4 Text-to-self connection

- Introduce students to a number of different ways in which learning can be represented. Networks, branching tree structures, chains, pyramids, and explosion charts are just some of the ways. These representations will need to be introduced and modelled over time in appropriate contexts.
- “Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down”: This activity can help both teacher and students reflect on how the lesson is progressing. At various points during the lesson the teacher can stop and ask, “Who’s with me?” or “Who understands?” or “Who’s keeping up?” Students give the thumbs up if the answer is yes and thumbs down if no. The teacher is able to see who needs help or whether to modify the pace of the lesson if it is progressing too quickly or going too slowly.

2 Goal-Setting

Being able to set goals and reflect on whether they have been achieved or not can be very empowering for students.

To enable students to set and monitor appropriate learning goals, teachers need to provide scaffolding and guidance in this process. The significant factor that underlies successful learning is the degree to which students have identified, adopted, and reflected on their own goals for learning through problem-solving. Once the goals have been determined in this way, students can map the learning pathway and monitor their progress towards the achievement of the goals.

Teachers can assist this process by

- modelling goal-setting in daily lessons
- planning and implementing action plans to achieve the goal
- celebrating the achievement of goals

Modelling Goal-Setting

- When introducing students to goal-setting, it is recommended that teachers work at the whole-class level before asking students to set small-group or individual goals. Teachers and students can work together to identify goals that will have benefits for all students in the class; e.g., “Our class goal is to raise our hands when we want to talk to the teacher,” “Our goal is to help the teacher remember our names.”
- Learning goals, while being aimed at the achievement of outcomes/expectations or major objectives in the long term, need to be formulated around specific skills or understandings that can be achieved over a short time span. When students are first introduced to goal-setting, there can be a tendency to adopt “motherhood statements” as goals. While these statements are highly desirable in their own right, they are difficult to achieve in the short term. Students need to understand that goals should be small, concrete, attainable, and measurable. The statements from the Student Self-Assessment phase pages in the *First Steps* Maps of Development can provide some guidance for teachers as they help students to set goals.
- Teachers can begin the goal-setting process by modelling and discussing effective and ineffective goals before asking students to construct their own. A quick and easy way for the teacher to do this is to write on the chalkboard an effective or ineffective goal at the beginning of each lesson and discuss whether the goal is specific, achievable, and so on. When set in this way, the goals can provide a focus for reflection at the end of the lesson: “Let’s look at the goal for the lesson. Did we achieve it?”

Planning and Implementing Action Plans

- Encouraging students to record their goals is often useful. Students are able to reflect on and update their goals regularly and they can observe their progress.
- Clarifying a goal is often a lengthy tactic, but it is an important step in the process. One way of clarifying a goal is to articulate it for others, perhaps through Think–Pair–Share.
- To focus attention on the goal, the teacher and students can jointly construct criteria that make the goal explicit. Using these criteria, students are then able to assess their individual achievement towards the goal.

My Goal for Reading	
Goal: To use headings and subheadings to locate information in texts	Yes or No
I know that headings and subheadings are usually printed in a different, larger, and bolder font.	
I know that underneath a heading or subheading I will find more detailed information about the topic.	
I can find chapter headings on a Contents page.	
I can use headings and subheadings in an Index.	
I can skim headings and subheadings to gain an overview of the information in a chapter.	
I scan headings and subheadings to help me locate information I need.	
Have I achieved my goal?	

Figure 9.5 Negotiated criteria for selected goal

My Goal for Reading			
Goal: To retell the story of a picture book			
Name: _____	Always	Sometimes	Not Yet
I can say where and when the story happens.			
I can give the names of the most important characters.			
I can describe these characters so others know lots about them.			
I can say what happens at the beginning of the story and what happens next.			
I can put things that happen in the story into the right order.			
I can say what happens at the end of the story.			
Did I achieve my goal?	Yes	Not Yet	
To improve my work I can:			

Figure 9.6 Negotiated criteria for selected goal

Celebrating the Achievement of the Goal

It is important that students and teachers recognize when goals have been achieved and celebrate that achievement. Using “Two Stars and a Wish” is a good way of reflecting positively on the achievement of a goal and indicating a future direction (see Chapter 6).

3 Self-Questioning

Careful self-questioning can help students reflect on and improve their learning. To help students develop self-questioning strategies the teacher will need to model the process of self-talk so students can see the relationship between the thinking and the plan of action.

For example, the teacher may begin by saying: “I wonder if this would be the best way of ...” or “How can I find out this information?” The teacher will also need to make explicit the reasons why one strategy was chosen over another. “I think I will use ‘Have-a-Go’ to spell this word because I’m not sure of the spelling of the /ee/ sound in *achieve*.”

Any one of the following questions can provide a useful starting point to develop students’ self-questioning. These can be used for quick reflection at the end of a lesson or for a more considered reflection at the end of a unit or theme.

- How did I do that?
- What was I thinking when I did that?
- Why did I choose that strategy?
- Did I understand what I was doing?
- Was I able to work independently?
- Is there anything I still need to find out?
- Could I explain the steps I took?
- What would I do differently next time?

4 Think–Pair–Share

Think–Pair–Share allows students to think about a topic or issue, or reflect on learning and then share their thoughts with a partner. It therefore involves reflecting and reporting. Using Think–Pair–Share allows students to express their ideas in a non-threatening way and involves all students, not just the vocal few. Students can be paired with different partners to let them work with as many others as possible.

- Arrange students in pairs and explain the topic or issue to be discussed. It may also be necessary to revise appropriate speaking and listening behaviours at this point.
- Allow students some thinking time to process their information.

- Pairs sit closely, face each other, and take turns sharing their ideas. The listener can question the speaker to avoid any confusion.
- Pairs may then contribute ideas to small groups or alternatively the teacher may select several students to share with the whole group.
- Ideas may be recorded in chart form depending on the purpose of the lesson.
- Have students review their roles as speaker and listener by offering each other positive or constructive feedback.

5 Reflective Questionnaire

A Reflective Questionnaire provides a framework for students to reflect on their learning. The questions can be varied to suit the students or the context.

- What are the main things you have learned in this topic, unit, or lesson?
- What helped you learn?
- How does what you learned in this topic, unit, or lesson relate to what happens in real life?

6 Cumulative Charts

A Cumulative Chart is a representation of the growing understandings of the whole class in specific areas. It is constructed as a direct result of the regular reporting of learning outcomes by individuals or small groups. The chart should be an evolving entity that can be amended or added to as strategies and knowledge are refined and recorded.

The Cumulative Chart can be used as

- a highly focused record of learning that has occurred
- a reference point for all members of the class to use as they read and write
- a clear model of how small specific elements combine to form a cohesive structure or system; e.g., a spelling chart

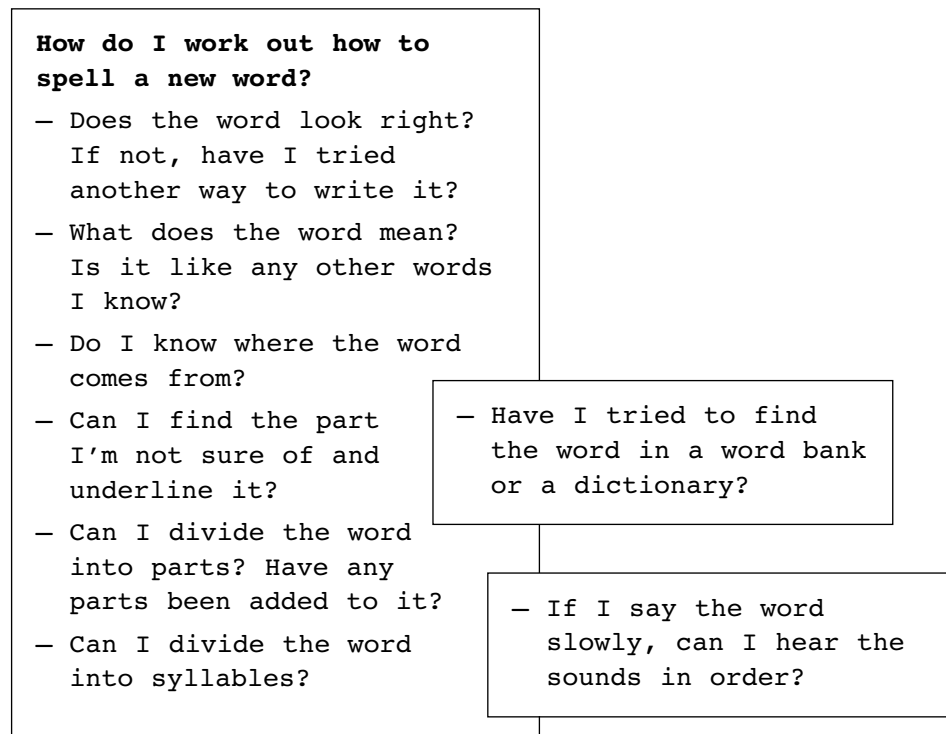


Figure 9.7 A Cumulative Spelling Chart

7 Learning Charts

Learning Charts are another form of cumulative chart that can be used to represent and summarize reflections. The difference is that Learning Charts usually represent two sorts of learning: content and also processes and strategies. When students become confident in distinguishing between the two, the classifications can be used as an organizing framework in their Learning Journals.

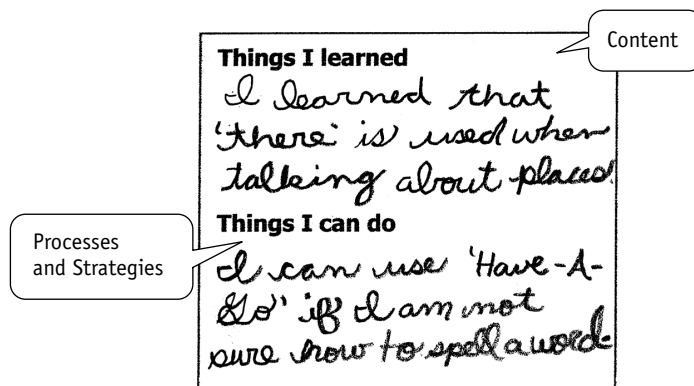


Figure 9.8 A student's Learning Chart

8 Concept Maps

Concept Maps diagrammatically represent what the learner knows about the links and relationships between concepts. Concept Maps organize, enhance, and encourage understanding. They are sometimes called semantic webs, graphic organizers, or mind maps. Concept mapping looks like clustering or brainstorming but goes one step further by stating the relationships between the ideas or concepts.

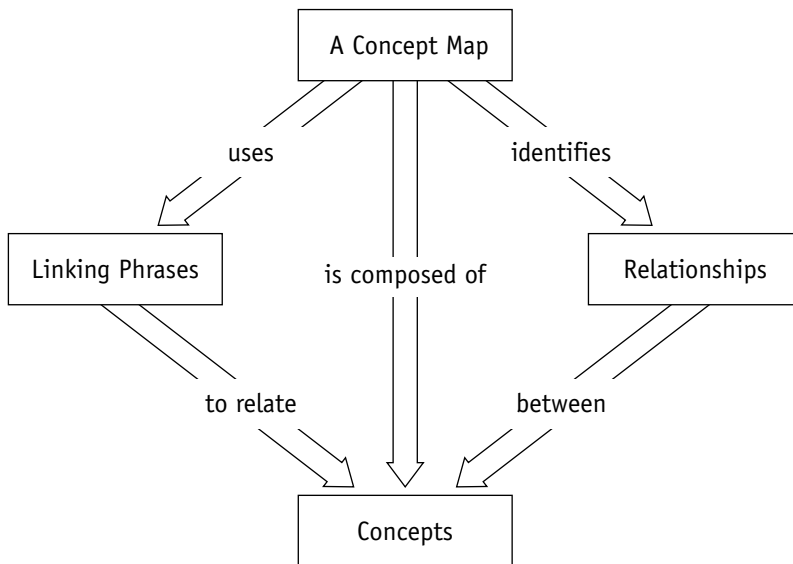


Figure 9.9 Diagram created in Inspiration® by Inspiration Software®, Inc.; www.inspiration.com.

Concept mapping is used most often to represent learning in content areas such as science or social studies. Concept Maps can

- be used to activate or retrieve prior knowledge
- illustrate the links between existing and new knowledge
- encourage divergent and metacognitive thinking
- act as a diagnostic tool for teachers

Constructing Concept Maps

Teachers need to model the process of constructing Concept Maps.

- Brainstorm ideas together. (It will make the next stage of construction easier if the words are written on cards or adhesive notes.)
- Ask the students to group the words. Each concept can be used only once so students will need to carefully consider the placement. Concepts are usually organized from general to specific.
- Draw lines or arrows between the concepts. Label the links between the concepts with words to describe the relationships that exist.

- Linking words or phrases can be used more than once within the same Concept Map. The following words and phrases may be useful.

needs	to	can be	will
helps	with	is a	such as
affects	requires	can	given that

- If appropriate, link examples to the concepts. Connect these with the phrases *such as* or *for example*.
- For younger students with limited writing skills, Concept Maps can be introduced using drawings to represent some aspects rather than words.

(Adapted from J. Wilson and L. Wing Jan, 1993)

Figure 9.10 is a Concept Map representing the following Key Understandings on the topic of endangered species.

- People contribute to animals becoming extinct.
- There are other reasons for extinction.
- There are things people can do to help.

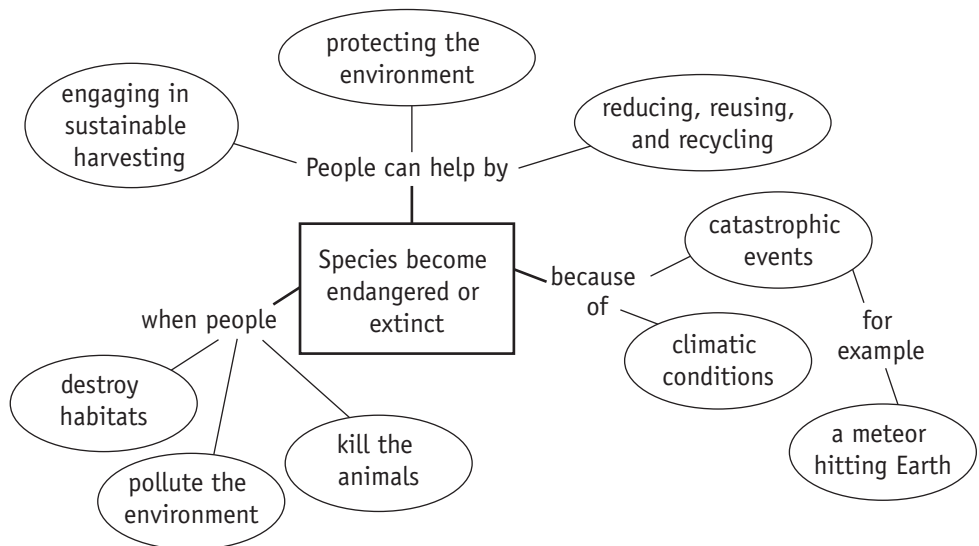


Figure 9.10 Concept Map

9 Venn Diagrams

Venn Diagrams are used to describe and compare characteristics and attributes of things, people, places, events, or ideas. They are a useful tool for comparing what is similar and what is not.

When students first begin using Venn Diagrams, have them compare and contrast two items only.

Example:

Teacher: "Tell me about these words: *chick, cheese, chop, each, eat, tree.*"

Student: "I drew a Venn Diagram showing that some of the words just have ch, some of the words have the /eel/ sound, and *cheese* and *each* have both."

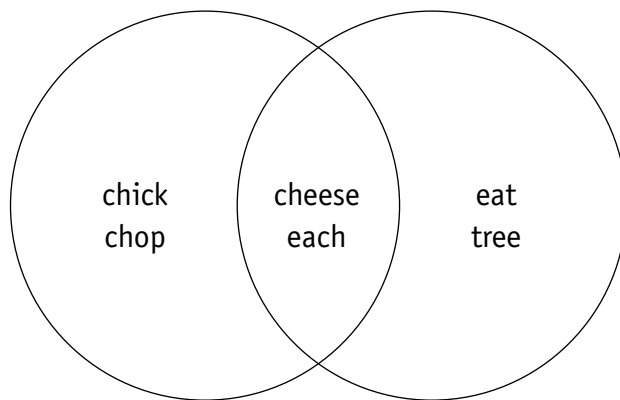
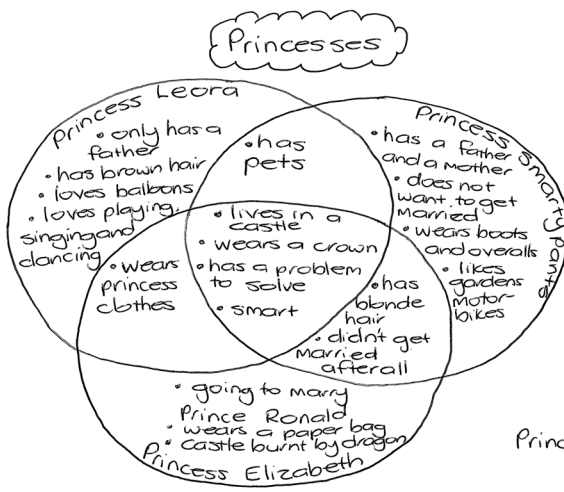


Figure 9.11 Venn Diagram comparing two attributes

As the students become more proficient with the use of Venn Diagrams, more elements can be introduced.

Example:

Compare the princesses from the books *Princess Smartypants*, *The Balloon Tree*, and *The Paper Bag Princess*.



Princess Smartypants by Babette Cole; *The Balloon Tree* by Phoebe Gilman; *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch

Princesses: Princess Smartypants
Princess Leora from "Balloon Tree"
Princess Elizabeth from "The Paper Bag Princess."

Figure 9.12 A student's comparison of three characters

10 Learning Logs

Learning Logs are journals in which students record their growing understandings about the content and processes of their learning. Learning Logs are most effective when they go beyond just a diary of the day's events. They should involve the students in identifying, analyzing, and reflecting on aspects of their learning. Compiling a Class Learning Log can be used to demonstrate the process.

Students benefit from the opportunity and support to think about

- the extent to which they have achieved their goals or the goals of the lesson
- what new things they have learned
- what they have enjoyed
- what has challenged them
- what they still don't understand
- what new things they want to find out

The above criteria can be applied to all subject areas. Teachers can facilitate the transference of learning by providing students with, for example, mathematics journals, reading logs, or science diaries. In order to minimize the overload on working memory, it is recommended that students focus on keeping a journal in one subject area only. This enables them to come to terms with the purpose, format, and entry styles of Learning Logs.

Teachers can use a range of ways to assist students' transition from simply recounting the day's activities to reflecting on the learning.

Providing Guiding Questions or Prompts

Suggestions:

- In spelling/math/reading today I learned ...
- What did you find interesting?
- What questions do you have for the teacher?
- What connections did you make to previous learning?
- In spelling/reading I used the ... strategy.
- Was the strategy successful? What could you do differently next time?

Modelling Reflective Thinking

Modelling is an effective way of supporting students' development as reflective thinkers. Teachers can model aspects of reflection such as these:

- accessing prior knowledge—"What do I already know about ..."
- linking new learning to what is already known—"This reminds me of ..."

- synthesizing information—“This bit of information links to ...”
- self-assessing—“I was able to use ... to work out ...”

Providing Set Formats

Sometimes the teacher may wish to support the use of Learning Logs by having students record their reflections in a set way or think about one particular aspect of their learning.

Joint Construction

Jointly constructing Class Learning Logs provides further support by demonstrating the strategies used to reflect and the way a written log entry is constructed.

Class Learning Logs can be revisited many times to

- enable students to reflect on what has been learned over a period of time
- provide a model for students’ own Learning Logs
- refresh students’ memories about strategies they can use
- assist in the construction of Learning Journeys

(Adapted from J. Wilson and L. Wing Jan, 1993)

Guiding Questions or Prompts for Learning Logs

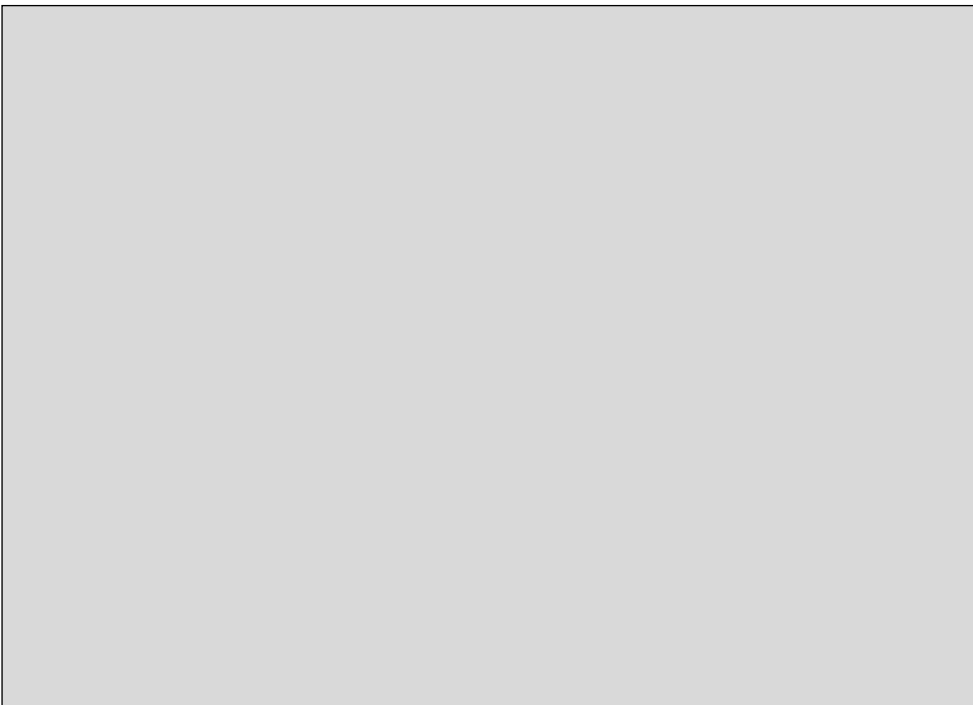


Figure 9.13 Adapted from B. Bennett, C. Rolheiser, and L. Stevahn, 1991

11 Look What I Can Do

The Student Self-Assessment pages for each phase of the *First Steps* Maps of Development provide another framework to support students as they reflect on and represent their learning. The “Look What I Can Do” statements are reflective of the Indicators in each phase of development. Indicators have been reworded into student-friendly terms. Students can rate themselves against the given statements. Once ratings have been completed, the statements can be used as a basis for setting future goals.

12 T-Charts

T-Charts require students to brainstorm and record information on two dimensions: “Looks like” and “Sounds like.” Students can reflect on the two statements individually and then share their information in small groups or with the whole class if desired.

Figure 9.14 is an example completed by a Grade 3 class after reflecting on a group discussion. Students were asked to think about what would be evident to an outsider observing effective groups in operation. The T-Chart forms the framework for goal-setting and is a way of improving future group work. It can be amended as needed.

Effective Group Work	
Looks like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One person talking, the rest listening • People looking at the speaker • Everyone on task • Looking interested • Everyone having a chance to speak 	Sounds like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “That’s a good idea.” • “Could you repeat that? I’m not sure I understand.” • “What’s your idea?” • “Can you tell us a bit more about that?” • “Can I add to that point?”

Figure 9.14 Effective group work—T-Chart

13 Y-Charts

Y-Charts are an extension of T-Charts. They include the two dimensions from T-Charts with the addition of a third: “Feels like.” Y-Charts are constructed in the same manner as T-Charts and can easily be adapted to use with many different processes or strategies.

Have-a-Go		
Looks like ...		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trying different ways of writing a word • checking the charts in the room 		
Sounds like ...		Feels like ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’m not sure which letter pattern to choose so I’ll try ee and ea and see which one looks right.” • “Which way looks right?” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Wow, I can work this out.” • “I can do this.”

Figure 9.15 Y-Chart on the “Have-a-Go” process

14 K-W-H-L Framework

A K-W-H-L Framework can be used to represent the connection between what is already known and what is new. It can also be used as a plan of action before learning begins and, later, to reflect and represent what was done.

K-W-H-L Framework

Name: <u>Roger</u>		Date: _____	
K	W	H	L
What do I <u>k</u> now?	What do I <u>w</u> ant to find out?	How can I find out what I want to learn?	What did I <u>l</u> earn?
-Dinosaurs ate meat and plants. -Dinosaurs were different sizes. -Dinosaurs lived long ago.	-What was the biggest dinosaur? -Why did dinosaurs die out? -Where did dinosaurs live?	-check the library catalogues. -search on the internet -email the museum	
What should I do first? Email the museum - it might take a while to get the answer. Next I will book a space on the library computer and do a net search. Then I will check the catalogues.			
What did I do well? What strategy was successful?			

Students complete this section at the conclusion of the topic or unit.

Students complete this section at the conclusion of the topic or unit.

Figure 9.16 K-W-H-L Framework

Ways of Reporting Learning

There are many different ways in which students can be encouraged to report on their learning. The type of reporting activity will depend on

- the time available
- the time span; e.g., a single lesson or a whole unit of work
- the students' familiarity with the activity and the reporting process
- the purpose
- the number of students involved; e.g., whole class, small group, partners

The activities listed under “Five-Minute Reporting” are probably more suited to reporting sessions during or after a single lesson. They are brief but can be highly effective. The following reporting activities may take longer and involve students reporting on many aspects of their learning. These may be used at the end of a unit of work.

1 “Five-Minute Reporting”

2 Conferences

3 Jigsaw

4 Envoy

5 Inside/Outside Circles

6 Learning Journeys

1 “Five-Minute Reporting”

- Have students turn to a partner and discuss some aspect of the lesson or strategies they have used. Ensure that both students have equal time as speaker and listener.
- Ask for volunteers to report their learning to the class. Ensure the students listening have the opportunity to question those reporting.
- Sticky notes: Students working individually or in pairs write one idea from their reflection on a note. Invite students to bring their notes and place them on a chart, board, or flip-chart. Randomly select one or two notes from the board and have those students elaborate on their notes.

2 Conferences

Conferencing is purposeful talking and listening and is an excellent forum for reporting reflections and sharing representations of learning. Conferencing can occur in a variety of ways from one-on-one interactions between teacher and student to small-group peer conferencing. The conference can be used to reflect on literacy areas, such as writing, or on the strategies and processes of learning.

3 Jigsaw

Jigsaw promotes sharing and reporting of understandings or ideas. The strength of Jigsaw is that it promotes engagement and focus of individuals as each person is responsible for contributing to the sharing process.

- Form “home groups” of three or four students. Allocate different tasks to each group. For example, groups read different chapters in a novel, find different letter patterns, or research different information about an animal. These home groups will become “experts” in one particular area.

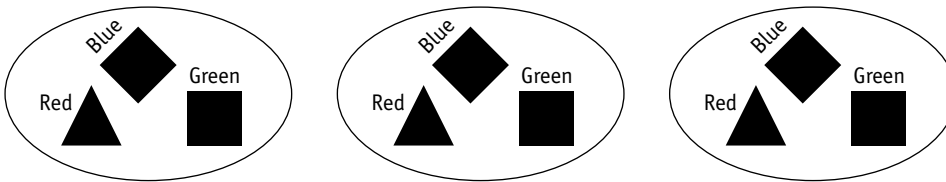


Figure 9.17 Home groups

- One member from each home group moves out to form a new group. This can be done by allocating a different number, colour, or letter to the members of each home group. Similar numbers, colours, or letters then get together to form new groups.

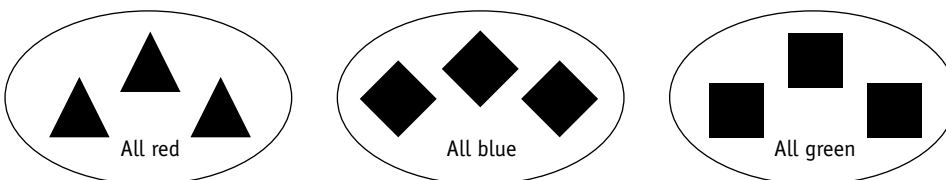


Figure 9.18 New groups

- Each member reports information from the home group task. Other members of the group listen and can question or record information.

4 Envoy

Envoy is a cooperative learning strategy that promotes sharing or reporting of understandings and ideas.

- Allocate topics to home groups. Groups then discuss the topic and become the “experts.”

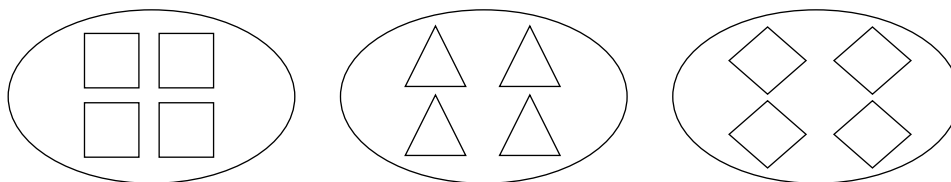


Figure 9.19 Home groups

- Allocate one person in the home group to be the spokesperson or envoy. The envoy moves to another group to report information about their topic.

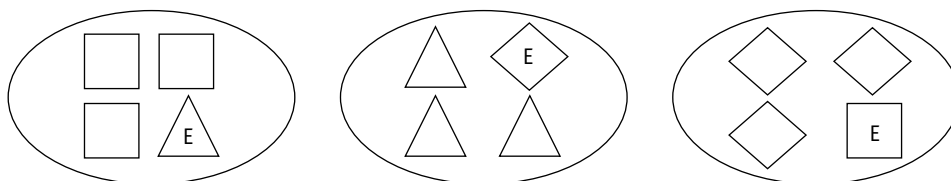


Figure 9.20 Envoys move to another group.

- After sharing information with the “host group,” the envoy becomes a listener. The host group shares their information.
- The envoy returns to the home group and shares what was learned from the host group.

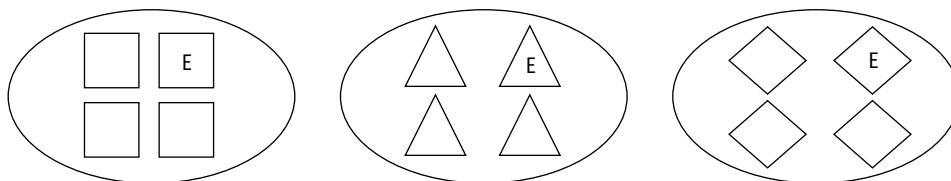
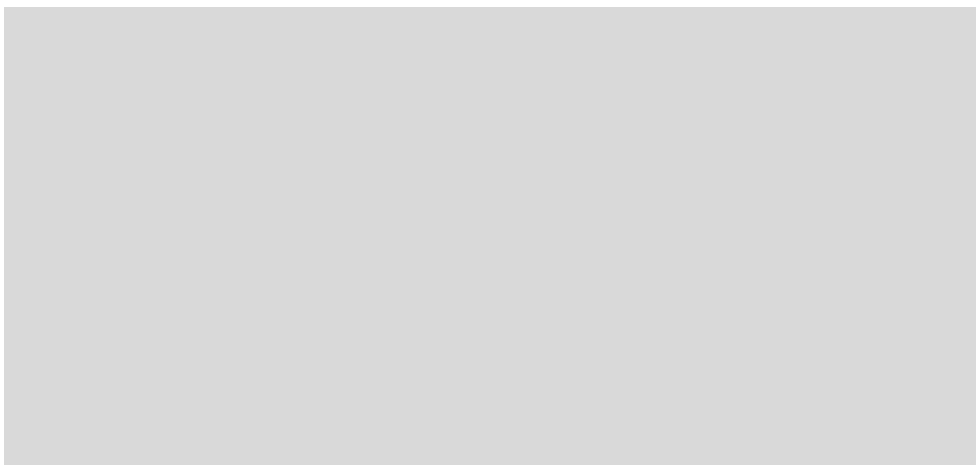


Figure 9.21 Envoys return to the home group.

5 Inside/Outside Circles



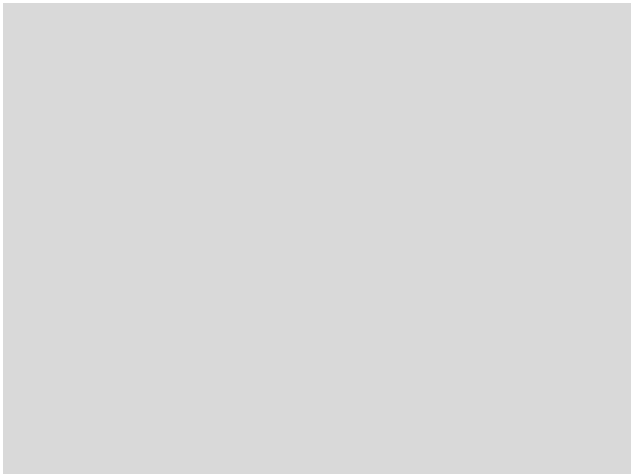


Figure 9.22 Inside/Outside Circles

6 Learning Journeys

Learning Journeys are a way for students to report learning to others. On a Learning Journey students physically take someone (parent, caregiver, sibling, relative) on a journey around the classroom to share their learning products and processes. Journeys provide an opportunity to report not only on what they have learned, but also on the way it was learned (Brockhoff 1995).

Properly executed, a Learning Journey is more than a “show and tell” of work sample books. It promotes metacognitive thinking as students prepare to share their learning with others. Learning Journeys provide opportunities for students to

- report or demonstrate activities in the classroom; e.g., **Shared Writing**
- demonstrate procedures of games; e.g., **barrier games**
- discuss items and activities found in learning centres or special areas; e.g., **science table**
- point out and demonstrate how to use environmental print; e.g., **Cumulative Charts**
- discuss and demonstrate how independent work areas are used; e.g., **the writing table, reading corner**

Planning a Learning Journey

- Students record major learnings from a given period of time; e.g. “During last term, I learned that the globe will only light up if a **circuit is closed.**” A maximum of five or six is appropriate.
- Students then consider activities or aspects of the classroom environment that will help them demonstrate their learning to others; e.g., **technology table to demonstrate closed circuit.** There should be at least one activity or demonstration for each major learning.

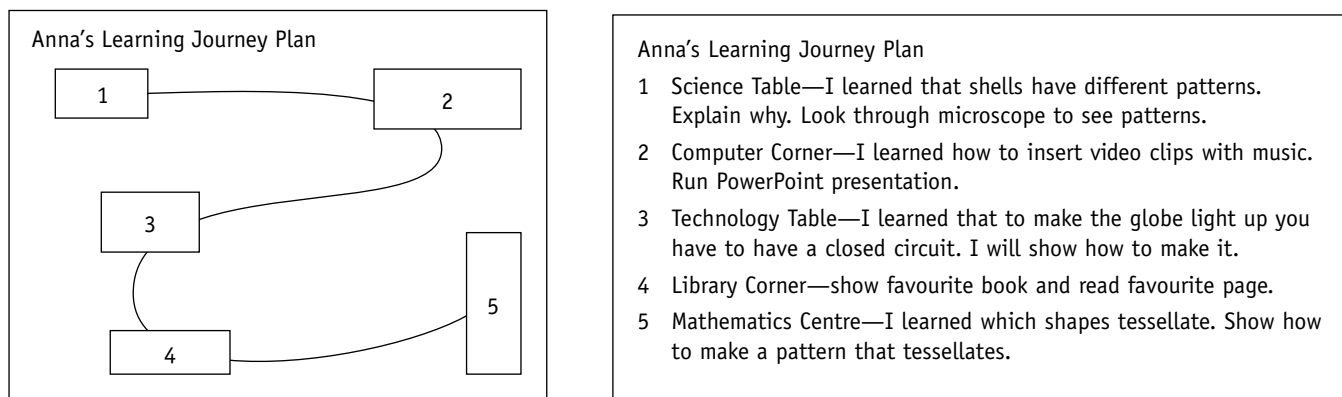


Figure 9.23 A student's Learning Journey plan

- Students plan, draw, and write their Learning Journeys, considering where and what they will share to illustrate their learning.
- Rehearse the plan by taking another student on the journey. Encourage students to ask questions such as “Why did you like this activity?” or “Was there anything that was challenging about this?” or “What would you do next time?” Students make modifications to their Learning Journey if needed.
- Various supports such as guiding questions or checklists may be appropriate for students, depending on their age and experience.

Checklist for _____'s Learning Journey

- Introduce your visitors to your teacher.
- Take your visitors on a tour of the room, stopping at your selected places.
- Share your work or demonstrate the activity.
- Discuss your goals for next term or semester.
- Thank your visitors for coming.


Figure 9.24

Points for Teachers to Consider

- Inform visiting participants of what to expect from the Learning Journey and their role. Perhaps give some directions for asking questions and providing specific feedback. Teachers may also want to explain why Learning Journeys have been introduced. This process will need to be started well before the Learning Journeys are planned to allow for questions or concerns to be addressed.
- Organize a time for the Learning Journeys. Consider the availability of parents and caregivers when organizing times.

Before-school or after-school appointments may need to be made if many parents and caregivers work. Plans for the accommodation of younger siblings may also need to be considered.

- Timetable the Learning Journeys for the class so everyone doesn't arrive at the same time.
- Ensure that every student has someone to take on the Learning Journey. If parents are not available consider other relatives, older siblings, or another teacher.
- After the Learning Journey, the teacher, students, and parents can reflect on the process and outcomes. Doing so will help set directions or guidelines for future journeys.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Learning Journey Reflection Sheet

What was the best part? _____

What didn't work well? _____

Suggestions: _____

Figure 9.25

CHAPTER 10

Communicating with Parents

Developing Home–School Partnerships

This chapter has been written using the word “parents” with the understanding that this term encompasses all adults who are responsible for the care and welfare of a child in the home.

Developing a strong home–school partnership is vital. Parental involvement is an integral part of all aspects of students’ learning. In particular, parents play a pivotal role in supporting their child’s literacy learning and are a rich source of information about their own child’s literacy development.

This chapter looks at the ways in which teachers and schools can support and communicate with parents to maximize home–school partnerships. It offers general suggestions that could apply to any learning arena, recognizing that, for some students, literacy support may come in the form of afterschool homework clubs or tutors. The *First Steps* Maps of Development in each strand offer further suggestions for helping parents and other involved adults to support literacy development in the home. A range of phase-specific activities are outlined in each phase and detailed further on the supporting CD-ROM.

Home–school communication generally falls into three broad categories, discussed here under the following headings:

- Raising Awareness
- Sharing Information
- Involving Parents

Raising Awareness

Awareness-raising communication is designed to help parents understand the practices, procedures, and function of the school. This is often achieved using informal conversations, announcements about the school’s activities, weekly school newsletters or bulletins, open houses, invitations to school functions and activities, school information booklets for new enrolments, and questionnaires. These types of communication are designed to establish rapport with parents and to give them a sense of confidence in the school. They encourage parents to feel more comfortable about contacting the school with regard to their children.

Sharing Information

Sharing information keeps parents informed about the policies, procedures, aims, and expectations that exist in the school but more specifically in the classrooms. Communication of this type is generally between the classroom teacher and the parents and may be individualized and more formal in nature. Communication methods may include parent–teacher meetings, home visits, letters and notes, class newsletters, teacher–parent noticeboards, reports, phone and e-mail correspondence, portfolios or work-sample packages, and communication books. Parents can also be encouraged to share information about their child with the school or teacher. This helps to make information sharing a two-way process.

Involving Parents

One goal of communication is to actively involve parents in the school and classroom. School-level involvement may include tasks such as helping out in the library, taking part in parent committees and advisory councils, or coaching a sports team. In-class involvement can take many forms including assisting during classroom activities at an instructional or support level, providing teacher assistance by helping with displays, making games and activities, providing support during class outings, and offering expertise for in-school events. For those parents who cannot be involved directly in the classroom, opportunities exist for them to provide support to the classroom programs through the work they do with their child at home; e.g., helping with home reading or research.

The Importance of Developing Partnerships with Parents

It is important that parents are

- invited to provide information about their child’s literacy development
- informed about their child’s literacy development
- provided with information and strategies to support their child’s literacy development in the home

It is important for teachers to communicate with parents so that

- parents have a better understanding of how teachers are helping students to achieve success at school
- parents learn how their children are progressing in their schooling
- parents learn ways they can support their children’s learning at home

- parents understand that they have a role in influencing the priorities and practices of the school
- teachers have a better understanding of their students' background and experiences
- students see that the adults in their life care about them and are interested in their learning, family practices, and home communities

Raising Awareness and Sharing Information

Schools, teachers, and parents have a mutual interest in promoting a student's learning. It is important to develop effective ways of raising awareness and sharing information, both written and oral.* Schools and teachers often experiment with a range of ways of communicating with parents until they discover those that are most efficient for their situation and the ones they are most comfortable in using.

A variety of ways of communicating with parents are outlined in this section. These can be used either at the school level to raise awareness, or at the classroom level to share information. It is not practical or recommended that they all be implemented at one time.

- 1** Meet-the-Teacher Night
- 2** Communication Books
- 3** Newsletters
- 4** E-mails
- 5** Web Page
- 6** Faxes
- 7** Telephone
- 8** Informal Talks
- 9** Quick Notes
- 10** Conferences
- 11** Three-Way Conferences
- 12** Bulletin Boards
- 13** Master or Monthly Calendar of Events
- 14** Report Cards, Portfolios, Work Samples
- 15** Surveys

* If English is another language for parents, it is advantageous to have written communications translated into the language used at home. This is not always easy, but is worth pursuing. There are often supports available within the community to enable this to happen.

1 Meet-the-Teacher Night

This may be the first formal contact between the teacher and parents. These nights provide an opportunity for the teacher and aspects of the curriculum to be introduced. Possible topics during this session are as follows:

- the teacher—parents will be interested to find out about the teacher as a person and to learn about the teacher’s relevant professional experiences and philosophies.
- the classroom—the teacher may discuss school and classroom policies and procedures, the curriculum, homework criteria, goals and expectations for students, and instructional materials that will be used.
- working together—the teacher may outline how home and school can work together; inform parents about how, where, and when he or she can be contacted; and discuss how parents can best support their child’s learning.

A parent information booklet, which can be referred to during the year, may be provided at this time. This booklet can provide parents with the language of the classroom and enable them to discuss school in terms that are familiar to their children.

2 Communication Books

Communication books have been used successfully as a form of two-way sharing between the home and the classroom. Each student has a personal communication book in which the teacher and parents can share comments pertaining to the student.

Comments may be in praise of a particular achievement, related to an area of focus, or general in nature. Parents should be encouraged to exchange comments with the teacher, providing information about literacy development in the home.

3 Newsletters

Newsletters sent home can inform parents about aspects of the classroom. These may include reminders about upcoming events, samples of students’ work, news about topics of study, or ideas for support at home.

If it is not practicable to produce a class newsletter, teachers can ensure something from their classroom is reported in the regular whole-school newsletter.

September 23
Room 103

Dear Parents,

I am very pleased with the way the children are settling in.

- They are learning basic routines.
- They are beginning to work in small groups where they are not directly supervised.
- Good work habits, such as focusing on the task, persevering before asking for help, and making an effort to be neat, are developing.

Thank you for your help in these ways:

- encouraging punctuality—most children are arriving by 9 a.m. so we are able to begin the day smoothly
- ensuring that your children unpack their bags and enter the classroom by themselves
- reading with them at home and filling in Reading Record sheets
- putting their names on everything!

I would like to ask for your help in another way, too. Please provide your child with a large shirt for Art. The shirt should be easy to fasten and the sleeves short enough not to be in the way.

Another way in which to help is to donate boxes and rolls from plastic and foil wraps. The class is beginning a theme of work about transport. As part of this program, we are going to design and construct moving vehicles. We need *hundreds* of the boxes and rolls! Boxes should be no bigger than cereal or shoe boxes.

Next month, the Grade 1 teachers will assign some work that you and your children can do at home. This work will take the form of special projects, not nightly assignments. In the meantime, please continue to read with your children every week night.

Finally, if you wish to discuss any aspect of the program or tell me something that would better allow me to help your children learn, please get in touch with me. I would be happy to meet with you at a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely,

Ms. Goldman

Figure 10.1 Sample class newsletter

4 E-mails

E-mail addresses of parents can be used to send information quickly. Students without an e-mail address can receive a printout of the e-mail sent home. E-mail also allows quick responses from the parents if the need arises.

5 Web Page

Some schools or individual teachers create a Web site that parents can visit to find out what is happening in the classroom. It is worthwhile giving parents access to information on current events, assignments, current and future projects, as well as any necessary reminders.



Figure 10.2 Sample school Web site

6 Faxes

Some parents may prefer communication via a fax rather than an e-mail or a Web site. Sending faxes is another option to keep parents informed and involved.

Note: Students can be involved in the creation of any of the above messages. These are ideal opportunities to model and discuss purpose, audience, context, and forms of writing.

7 Telephone

Teachers often make contact with parents when things go wrong, so why not call when they go right? Make positive phone calls. Let parents know that their child has done something worthy of recognition—achieving a set goal, doing well on an assessment task, or making a great presentation. As well, voice mail messages can be a convenient way to remind parents of school and classroom events.

8 Informal Talks

Teachers often make use of informal opportunities to share information with parents; e.g., before and after school.

9 Quick Notes

Let parents know that their child has done something well through written communication in the form of letters, informal notes, or certificates. These are often well received and keep parents informed about what is happening in the classroom. (See below.)

10 School-Wide Assemblies

Teachers can invite parents and other family members to join in celebrations when children are being recognized for their achievements.

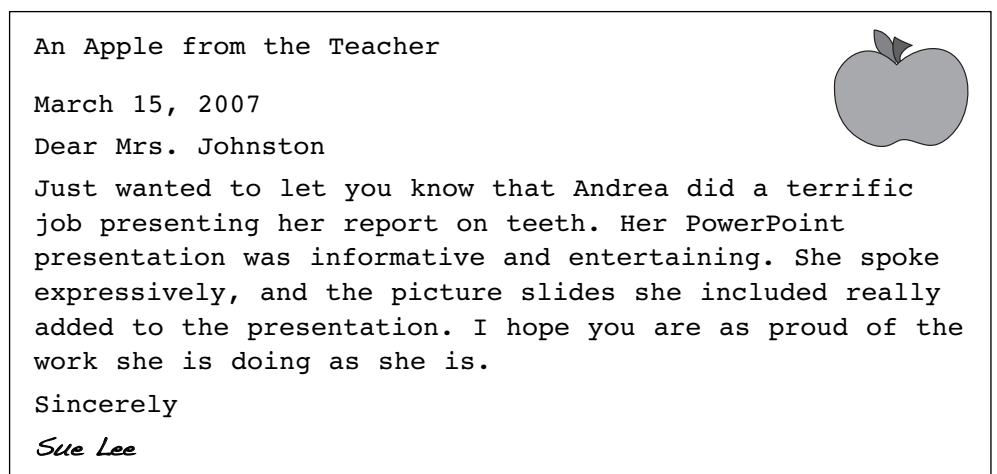


Figure 10.3 A teacher-to-parent note

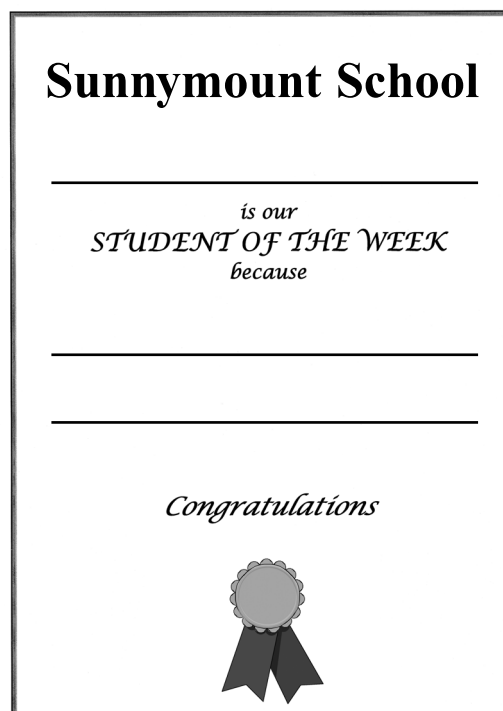


Figure 10.4 A certificate

11 Conferences

Conferences allow parents and teachers to meet face to face.

This is valuable because most people can express themselves more completely and openly in person. For parents with limited English it may be necessary to organize translators for these conferences. A translator may be a relative, a friend, another teacher, or someone from an outside agency. The opportunity to ask follow-up questions or elaborate on specific points in face-to-face meetings allows any misunderstandings or misconceptions to be clarified.

Conferences should be held at a time when parents can meet and plan with the teacher to ensure their child's success in school. Well-conducted parent-teacher conferences can accomplish several goals.

- Teachers learn first-hand about the child's home-learning environment.
- Parents find out how their child is progressing academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Parents and teachers can celebrate successes and discuss areas for further or future development. Teachers can share information based on *First Steps* Maps of Development if they wish.
- Parents can ask about any aspects of the curriculum and classroom policies; e.g., **homework, attendance**.
- Teachers and parents can develop a mutual action plan to help ensure the child's success in school.

Teachers may wish to make notes before the conference so that important information is not forgotten. A suggested plan may include any or all of the following:

- Begin on a positive note by remarking on unique qualities of the student.
- Discuss the student's strengths and weaknesses.
- Share and discuss academic and social goals for the rest of the year (if appropriate). Discuss any issues related to these goals.
- Ask for parent input on the student's current performance and social development.
- Have curriculum documents on hand should questions arise relating to outcomes/expectations.

12 Three-Way Conferences

Three-way conferences allow the teacher, parent, and student all to have input into a discussion about the student's development over time. They provide an ideal opportunity for reporting and sharing information with parents. These conferences can be led by the student

(also known as student-led conferences) and may incorporate a “journey” around the classroom, pre-conference observation of the student in the classroom, and/or the sharing of a portfolio collection.

Before the Conference

- Prepare students for the conference. You can do this by teaching them how to collect evidence of their learning, how to review their goals, how to create personal action plans, and how to share their reflections about learning; e.g., “To learn about ... I had to ...”
- Prepare parents for the conference by providing them with background information outlining the procedure to be followed and their role in it.

During the Conference

- The student shares a collection of work samples.
- The student leads the discussion on what has been learned, what areas need to be worked on, and the goals that have been chosen for the next teaching and learning period.
- Learning goals proposed by the student are discussed, modified if necessary, and agreed on.
- The student discusses a plan of action to achieve these goals, and the teacher and parents agree to provide the necessary support.
- The teacher ensures that the conference runs smoothly by helping the student address the issues and answering questions that arise.

After the Conference

- The teacher records the discussion from the conference and any specific information about goals, support, or follow-up that may be needed.

13 Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards outside the classroom door can be used to communicate with parents about numerous things; e.g., upcoming events, class and student achievements, rosters for classroom volunteers. A copy of any vital information posted on the bulletin board will need to be sent home to parents who may not view the board. Whenever possible, involve students in contributing to and maintaining the bulletin board.

14 Master or Monthly Calendar of Events

A calendar that outlines events for a given period can be sent home to parents. At the beginning of the year this could be a general outline of the events that are known at that time. Then a monthly update providing more detail could be sent.

**WESTRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FALL/WINTER**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
September 14	September 15	September 16	September 17 Close 2:30 p.m.	September 18
September 21	September 22	September 23 Education Week Breakfast	September 24 Assembly	September 25 PHOTOS
September 28	September 29 School Nurse Visiting	September 30 SCHOOL REVIEW VISIT	October 1	October 2
October 5	October 6 School Visit ROM	October 7	October 8	October 9
October 12 Thanksgiving	October 13 School Council Meeting	October 14	October 15	October 16
October 19	October 20 Fitness/skills assessment	October 21 Fitness/skills assessment	October 22 Assembly	October 23
October 26 Kindy Parents meeting at Kindy 9:00 a.m.	October 27	October 28	October 29	October 30 Professional Development Day <u>STUDENTS DO NOT ATTEND</u>
November 2	November 3 Choir Performance at Bayshore Shopping Centre	November 4	November 5	November 6
November 9	November 10 School Nurse Visiting	November 11 Remembrance Day	November 12 P&C Christmas Sale Thank you breakfast for parents (Staff/students)	November 13
November 16	November 17 School Council Meeting	November 18 Drama Night	November 19	November 20

Figure 10.5

15 Report Cards, Portfolios, Work Samples

Sending home samples of students' work on a regular basis is an excellent way of communicating with parents about student progress. Although portfolios and formal report cards are often sent home at predetermined dates, work samples can be sent as teachers judge it appropriate or in line with school policy.

16 Surveys

It is beneficial if communication occurs both ways between the home and school. Parents know a lot about their children and this information can provide teachers with valuable insights into classroom behaviour and academic achievement. Sending home surveys for parents to complete is an excellent way of finding out more about students in a classroom.

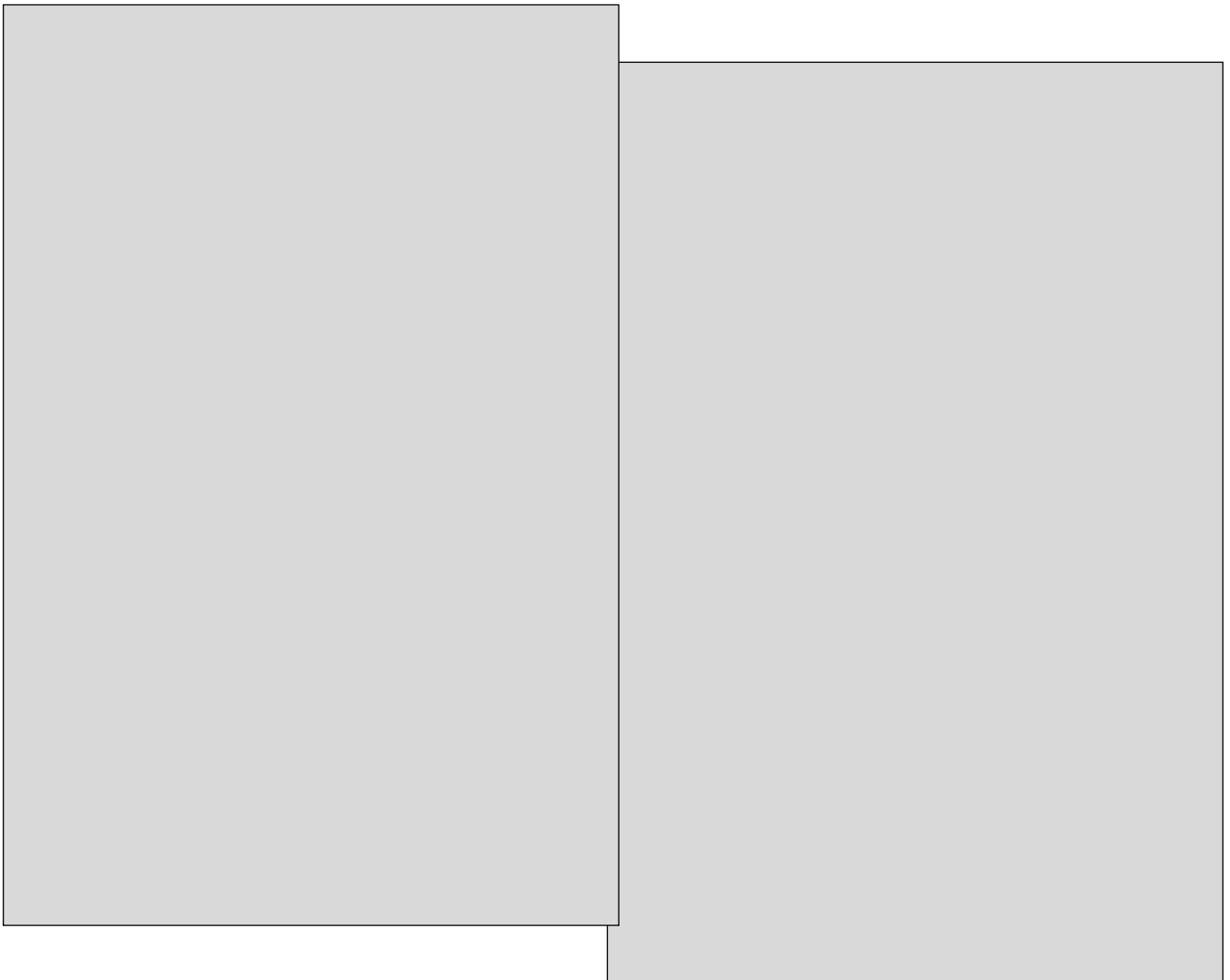


Figure 10.6 Adapted from L. Rhodes and N. Shanklin, 1993


Involving Parents

There are various ways in which parents can support their child's education both at the school and classroom level. Some parents may be able to assist within the classroom on a regular basis while others, due to other commitments, may help outside of school hours on an intermittent basis.

It's a good idea to send home surveys or questionnaires regularly. These may provide a list of ways in which parents can be involved in the school or classroom. By inviting parents to be involved, teachers are acknowledging the valuable contribution and expertise that parents can offer to the school or class.

Parents can contribute in these ways:

- helping in the classroom for a given period of time or during a particular lesson; e.g., **read to students, help during writing, science or art**
- assisting on field trips and excursions
- being a guest speaker and addressing the class on an area of expertise, about an interest or an experience; e.g., **a chef could demonstrate cooking**
- performing tasks outside the classroom; e.g., **covering books, making resource materials**
- providing resources for a particular topic; e.g., **photographs taken on a trip**
- joining the school parent or community group
- participating in any cultural or historical events that the school or class celebrates



Parent Survey

Name: _____

Child's name: _____

Are you able to volunteer? If so, please circle your choice.

morning	afternoon	evening
weekly	monthly	occasionally

What day suits you best? _____

How can you help?

_____ assist in the classroom

_____ be a guest speaker — Topic: _____

_____ do clerical work (publishing materials, etc.)

_____ tutor/mentor ☐ Literacy ☐ Numeracy

_____ serve as library assistant

_____ assist with field trips

_____ translate materials

_____ other (Please indicate.)

Thank you for your attention.

Figure 10.7 Sample parent survey adapted from B. Power, 1999

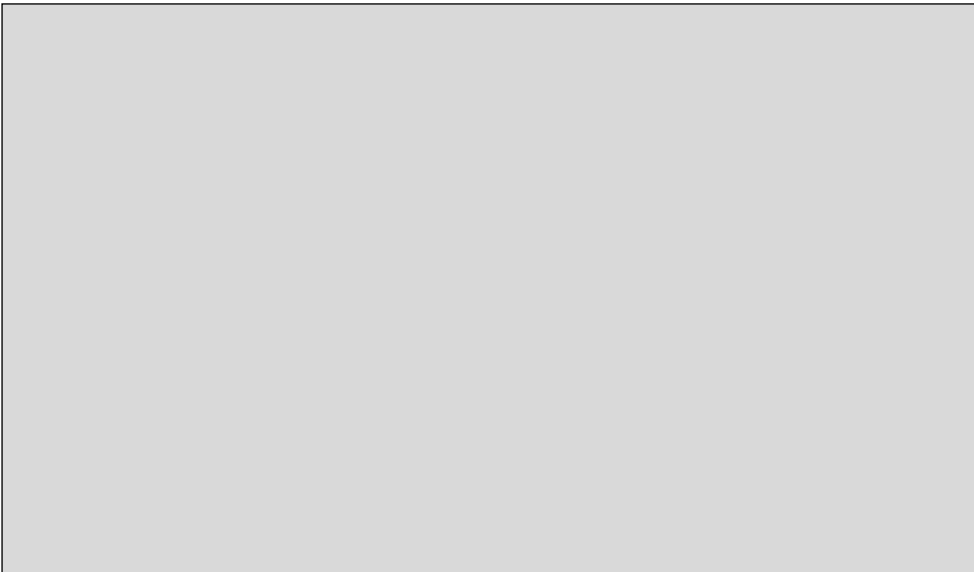
Helping Parents Support Literacy Development

Parents often request help in supporting their children's literacy development. In this section there are suggestions about how the teacher can assist parents to help their children. Teachers can make selections that are most appropriate to their context and to the particular parent group.

- 1** Open-Door Policy
- 2** Parent Workshops
- 3** Family Nights
- 4** Activities from the CD-ROM
- 5** Guest Speakers
- 6** Videos of Good Practice
- 7** Literacy Articles
- 8** Recommended Reading Lists, Web Sites
- 9** Information Brochures, Fridge Cards

1 Open-Door Policy

Let parents know that during certain times of the week the classroom door is open and they are welcome to come in and watch students work. Encourage parents to give advance notice of a visit to avoid timetable clashes with activities such as field trips and sports. Make it clear that during these visits the focus will be on parents observing the class so they will understand more about their child's learning. This time is not an opportunity to discuss a student's progress with the teacher. The teacher's responsibility at this time is to the students, not the parent. Teachers might distribute a handout that lists things the parents could observe; e.g., "Notice how the students use prediction during this lesson."



Adapted from T. Cairney and L. Munsie, 1992

2 Parent Workshops

Plan workshops so parents can learn about and try out activities that students are experiencing. Workshops enable parents to feel more confident and more able to assist their children at home. These workshops also provide an opportunity for the teacher to explain why particular methodologies, such as the use of investigation, modelled writing, guided reading, or project work, are used in the classroom.

3 Family Nights

Family nights focusing on a particular curriculum area allow parents to work with their children and be involved in activities that are used in the classroom, e.g., math or science night, music or art activities.

4 Activities from the CD-ROM

In the phases of the *First Steps* Maps of Development there is a suggested list of activities that parents can do at home to support their child. The Map of Development CD-ROM for each strand provides more detailed explanations of these activities. Teachers can select appropriate activities to be copied and sent home for parents to use.

5 Guest Speakers

Organizing guest speakers to address parents on selected topics can be very beneficial; e.g., children's author or anti-bullying expert.

6 Videos of Good Practice

Videos or DVDs that support parents' understanding of literacy development can be made available for borrowing. The flexibility in the use of these resources can be appealing to busy parents.

7 Literacy Articles

It may be beneficial for teachers to collect education or literacy articles on topics that provide useful information for parents. These may come from a variety of sources, such as professional books, journal articles, weekly magazines, or the local newspaper. Have these available for parents to access. Selected extracts or articles may be sent home to all parents.

8 Recommended Reading Lists, Web Sites

Keep parents informed about places to find recommended reading lists for their children and Web sites that provide useful educational information. Direct them to the Children's Book Council, local book stores, and newspapers that often have this type of information readily available. Web sites such as those for *National Geographic* and The Discovery Channel have sections for children. Many children's authors have now developed their own Web sites that are often worth a visit. Child-friendly search engines can also prove to be invaluable.

9 Information Brochures, Fridge Cards

Teacher-created or commercially produced brochures and cards can provide information about a particular literacy idea or offer suggestions about ways parents can support development at home.

How to Support Your Child as a Reader

- Read with and to your child every day and talk about the
 - information
 - pictures
 - story
 - message
- It helps if you find books your child likes.
- If the book is ...
 - hard — you read it
 - easy — your child reads it
 - just right — take turns

READ, READ, READ!

Reading skills develop through reading.

Figure 10.8 Adapted from ALEA Fridge Cards

Here is a part of a brochure to be sent home to tell families about *First Steps*.

First Steps Writing

Soon, your children will be part of a district-wide initiative to improve students' writing.

Like other schools across the district, Fuller Avenue Elementary School is adopting *First Steps*, a professional development program focusing on supporting students in writing. Trained teachers will be implementing program ideas in their classrooms, sensitive to the developmental phases of their students. Students will be learning to write clearly and concisely, keeping their audiences and purposes in mind. The resource also includes a strong spelling component.

As parents and guardians, you, too, have an important role to play in your children learning to write compellingly and well. Over time, you can expect to receive a variety of Parent Cards that offer specific suggestions on how you can help at home. We will also send you questionnaires and surveys in an effort to better understand your children's unique strengths and challenges. Of course, we know that you can do much to support your children's learning. Your contribution is vital to the long-term success of our initiative with *First Steps*.

Why *First Steps* Writing?

One goal of the district's Literacy Committee is to improve student achievement in writing. After much scrutiny, the committee, which includes teachers, principals, and district staff, determined that *First Steps* Writing provides the best means of realizing this. *First Steps* Writing is a comprehensive resource, part of a program that addresses four key literacy strands. It is well grounded in research and reflects the latest understandings of how to teach writing. Teachers in the district will find many tools for helping student writers progress.

Figure 10.9 Sample brochure for parents

First Steps is founded on a belief that effective teachers and schools share the responsibility of implementing a cohesive learning program and have high expectations for their students. As partners in education, parents have a significant role to play in any school.

Parents need to be welcomed into schools and classrooms and kept informed about what is happening in education. Routman (1991) suggests that when teachers and schools

- create opportunities for parents to see themselves as a vital, continuing part of their child's education, and
- develop open lines of communication that build trust,

parents are in a better position to support the learning process at home and demonstrate support of the school in the wider community.

Glossary

analyzing	a teaching and learning practice involving examination of the parts to understand the whole
applying	a teaching and learning practice involving the independent use of a skill, strategy, or understanding to achieve a purpose
assessment	gathering data about students
assessment as learning	a student self-assesses personal learning and takes responsibility for moving his or her thinking forward (see also metacognition)
assessment for learning	made up of two phases—diagnostic (initial) assessment and formative assessment
assessment of learning	occurs at the completion of a learning unit and is accompanied by a number or letter grade (summative), which is communicated to the student and parent.
Assisted Reading	a practice that involves a student reading in tandem with an accomplished reader
Author's Circle	an instructional approach involving students sharing a text they have written in a small group; members take turns to give the author positive feedback and suggestions for improvement.
automaticity	bringing information to mind with little or no effort because a skill or understanding is so well known; e.g., the fast, accurate recognition of single words when reading
code-switching	changing from one language to another during spoken or written communication so the finished text contains elements of both languages
context	the broad linguistic, social, and cultural experiences that are brought to a situation
Contextual Understanding	understanding how the context affects the creation and interrelation of a text and the choice of language and images; recognized by <i>First Steps</i> as a substrand or lens through which to monitor and support literacy development
Conventions	the structures and features of texts; e.g., spelling, grammar, pronunciation, text layout; recognized by <i>First Steps</i> as a substrand or lens through which to monitor and support literacy development
critical literacy	the analysis and questioning of texts to reveal the values and beliefs that attempt to position the users
diagnostic assessment	occurs at the beginning of a learning unit and helps the teacher to determine what a student does and does not know about a topic; used to inform instruction
discussing	a teaching and learning practice involving the exchange of opinions on topics, themes, or issues
EAD	English as an Additional Dialect—includes forms of non-standard English

ELL	English Language Learner
evaluation	when judgments are made about students from gathered data
familiarizing	a teaching and learning practice involving raising awareness and activating prior knowledge
fish bowl	a modelling technique that involves students seated around the perimeter of the room observing two or three groups of students rehearsing a process
flexible grouping	groups formed and dissolved depending on the goal of a lesson
formative assessment	occurs during the learning of a unit and helps a teacher to determine a student's knowledge and skills, as well as any learning gaps or misconceptions they may have; used to inform instruction
formative evaluation	judgments made about a learner or the learning program as it progresses towards its final goals, aims, or objectives
Global Statement	a written snapshot of a learner in a particular phase of development which encapsulates the typical characteristics of that phase
graphic organizers	visual representations of concepts that enable a learner to visualize, record, and retrieve information from a text
Guided Reading	an instructional approach where teachers guide small groups of students as they read a common text assigned by the teacher with the aim of teaching and practising reading strategies
Guided Speaking and Listening	an instructional approach where teachers guide small groups of students as they construct spoken texts with the aim of teaching and practising oral strategies
Guided Viewing	an instructional approach where teachers guide small groups of students as they view a common text with the aim of teaching and practising viewing strategies
Guided Writing	an instructional approach where teachers guide the construction of a text with the aim of teaching and practising writing strategies
guiding	a teaching and learning practice involving the provision of scaffolding through strategic assistance at predetermined checkpoints in the learning process
indicator	a description of a literacy behaviour
innovating	a teaching and learning practice involving the alteration or amendment of a text to create a new one
investigating	a teaching and learning practice that involves finding, analyzing, questioning, and using information for a purpose
Key Indicator	a description of literacy behaviours that most students display at a phase of development
Language Experience	an instructional approach based on the idea that an experience can be shared, talked about, written down, and then read about and reread

Learning Journey	a way of reporting learning to others that involves students discussing and demonstrating what has been learned and the way it was learned
literacy	the ability to read, write, speak, listen, and view to achieve a variety of purposes for oneself or a range of audiences
Literature Circle	an instructional approach to reading where a small group of students meets to discuss a text they have chosen to read
Major Teaching Emphases	teaching priorities appropriate to phases of development
metacognition	thinking about one's thinking
Modelled Reading	an instructional approach to reading typified by the teacher selecting and reading a text to students and thinking aloud about the strategies that are being used
Modelled Speaking and Listening	an instructional approach to speaking and listening typified by the teacher constructing a text for students and thinking aloud about the strategies that are being used
Modelled Viewing	an instructional approach to viewing typified by the teacher viewing a text with students and thinking aloud about the strategies that are being used
Modelled Writing	an instructional approach to writing where the teacher constructs a text for students and thinks aloud about the strategies being used
modelling	a teaching and learning practice involving explicitly thinking aloud to show how and why something is done
phase	a clustering of behaviours and skills along a Map of Development
playing	a teaching and learning practice involving the exploration of concepts and skills through imagining and creating
practising	a teaching and learning practice involving the rehearsal of a skill or strategy
print-rich environment	an environment filled with meaningful print
Processes and Strategies	application of knowledge and understandings to comprehend and compose texts; recognized by <i>First Steps</i> as a substrand of literacy
pro forma	a prescribed format with sections to be filled in
Read and Retell	an activity described by Brown and Cambourne (1987) involving students in predicting, sharing, reading, writing, listening, and justifying
Readers Theatre	an oral reading of a script where the focus is on interpreting the text and creating the script rather than on memorizing it
reflecting	a teaching and learning practice involving thinking about the what, how, and why of previous experiences
reporting	sharing learning with others
representing	demonstrating learning or understanding; e.g., by drawing a picture, constructing a graphic organizer, or writing key words; seen by some as a separate strand of literacy

rubric	a descriptive framework featuring short statements along a continuum of excellence focusing on varied criteria
Shared Reading	an interactive instructional approach to reading where students see the text, observe a good model (usually the teacher) reading it, and are invited to read along
Shared Speaking and Listening	an interactive instructional approach where the teacher and students jointly construct an oral text
Shared Viewing	an interactive instructional approach where the teacher and students jointly construct meaning from a visual text; create a visual text
Shared Writing	an interactive instructional approach where students see the construction of a text by a good model (usually the teacher) and are invited to contribute ideas and suggestions; the control of the pen remains with the model.
sharing	a teaching and learning practice that involves the joint construction of meaning; e.g., between teacher and students, or student and student
simulating	a teaching and learning practice involving the adoption of a role or imagining oneself in a hypothetical setting
socio-cultural	a combination of social and cultural factors, such as economic status, geographical location, beliefs, and values
strand	one of several interwoven language modes; e.g., Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Viewing
strategy	the mental processes used to do something you want to do
substrand	one of the four interwoven lenses through which student performance in literacy can be monitored and supported: Use of Texts, Contextual Understanding, Conventions, Processes and Strategies
summative evaluation	the final judgments made to determine the degree to which goals, outcomes, expectations, aims, or objectives have been reached (see assessment of learning)
targeted feedback	specific information given to direct, improve, or control present and future learning
text	any means of communication using words, graphics, sounds, and images, in print, oral, visual, or electronic form, to represent information and ideas to an audience. These ideas can be shared over distance and time.
text deconstruction	analyzing a text section by section, to reveal its organization, structure, and language features
text reconstruction	putting a text together; e.g., from jumbled paragraphs
transforming	a teaching and learning practice involving the re-creation of a text or object in another genre, form, mode, medium, or text product type; e.g., turning a story into a play, or a book into a film
Use of Texts	the composition and comprehension of texts; recognized by <i>First Steps</i> as a substrand or lens through which to monitor and support literacy development

Bibliography

- Anthony, R., T. Johnson, N. Mickelson, and A. Preece. 1991. *Evaluating Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.
- Ashman, A., and J. Elkins. 2002. *Educating Children with Diverse Abilities*. Australia: Pearson Education.
- Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) Fridge Cards.
- Bailes, J., ed. 1980. *The Reading Bug and How to Catch It*. Sydney, AU: Ashton Scholastic.
- Beecher, B., and L. Arthurs. 2001. *Play and Literacy in Children's Worlds*. Newtown, NSW, AU: Primary English Teaching Association (PETA).
- Bennett, B. 1997. *Pen Note 102*. Newtown, NSW, AU: Primary English Teaching Association (PETA).
- , C. Rolheiser, and L. Stevahn. 1991. *Cooperative Learning: Where Heart Meets Mind*. Toronto: Educational Connections / Bothel, WA: Professional Development Associates.
- , and P. Smilanich. 1994. *Classroom Management: A Thinking and Caring Approach*. Toronto: Bookation Inc.
- Berry, R., and J. Hudson. 1997. *Making the Jump: A Handbook for Teachers of Aboriginal Students*. Western Australia: CEO, Kimberley District, Catholic Education Office.
- Blakey, E., and S. Spence. 1990. *Developing Metacognition*. Syracuse, NY: ERIC Digest, ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources.
- Board of Studies. 1995. *Curriculum and Practices Framework: English*. Victoria, AU: Carlton.
- Breen, M., et al. 1997. *Profiling ESL Children*, Vol. I: Key Issues and Findings. Canberra, AU: Department of Employment, Education, Training, and Youth Affairs.
- Brockhoff, V. 1995. *Learning Journeys*, Practically Primary, Vol. I, Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA). Victoria, AU: Carlton.
- Brown, H., and B. Cambourne. 1987. *Read and Retell*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- . 1990. *Read and Retell: A Strategy for the Whole Language / Natural Learning Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Burke, J. 2000. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton Cook / Heinemann.
- Cairney, T., and L. Munsie. 1992. *Beyond Tokenism—Parents as Partners in Literacy*. Victoria, AU: Australian Reading Association.
- Canter, L., and M. Canter. 1991. *Parents on Your Side*. Santa Monica, CA: Canter and Associates.
- Clarke, J., R. Wideman, and S. Eadie. 1990. *Together We Learn*. Toronto: Prentice-Hall.
- Coughlin, D. 2000. *The Mainstreaming Handbook: How to Be an Advocate for Your Special Needs Students*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Curriculum Corporation. 1994. *A Statement on English for Australian Schools*. Victoria, AU: Carlton.
- Daniels, H. 2002. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Davies, A., C. Cameron, C. Politano, and K. Gregory. 1994. *Together Is Better*. Victoria, AU: Eleanor Curtain Publishing.

Dekkers, S. 1996. *Voices in the Classroom*. Australian Literacy Educators' Association National Conference 1996, Adelaide, South Australia.

DuFour, R., R. DuFour, R. Baker, and G. Karhanek. 2004. *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn*. Bloomington, IN: Solutions Tree.

Education Department of Western Australia. 1994. *Supporting Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Through First Steps: The Highgate Project*. Perth, AU: Education Department of Western Australia.

———. 1998. *English Student Outcome Statements*. Perth, AU: Education Department of Western Australia.

Evans, J. 1991. *Teachers Guide for Remote Schools*. Western Australia: Ministry of Education.

Freeman, Y., and D. Freeman. 1998. *ESL/EFL Teaching: Principles for Success*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fullan, M. 1991. *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

———. 1993. *Change Forces*. Pennsylvania: The Falmer Press.

———. 1999. *Change Forces: The Sequel*. Pennsylvania: The Falmer Press.

———. 2001. *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, 3rd Edition. Toronto: Irwin Publishing.

———, P. Hill, and C. Crévola. 2006. *Breakthrough*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Garner, R. 1997. "Metacognition and Self-Monitoring Strategies," in *What Research Has to Say About Reading*, Chapter 10. International Reading Association.

Guskey, T. R. 2000. *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hammond, J., ed. 2001. *Scaffolding Teaching and Learning in Language and Literacy Education*. Newtown, NSW, AU: Primary English Teaching Association (PETA).

Harvey, S., and A. Goudvis. 2000. *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Harwayne, S. 2002. *Professional Development Corner*. Stenhouse Newslink, September.

Hill, S., and T. Hill. 1990. *The Collaborative Classroom*. Victoria, AU: Eleanor Curtain Publishing.

Hoyt, L. 1998. *Revisit, Reflect, Retell: Strategies for Improving Reading Comprehension*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Joyce, B., and B. Showers. 1995. *Student Achievement Through Staff Development*. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers.

Kagan, S. 1990. *Cooperative Learning: Resources for Teachers*. San Juan Capistrano, CA: Resources for Teachers.

Kaufman, D. 2000. *Conferences and Conversations*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kirkpatrick, D. L. 1996. "Great Ideas Revisited. Techniques for Evaluating Training Programs," *Training and Development Journal* 50(1).

- Kordalewski, J. 1999. *Incorporating Student Voice in Teaching Practice*. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education.
- Kuhs, T., R. Johnson, S. Agruso, and D. Monrad. 2001. *Put to the Test*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Lee, D. 1979. *Alligator Pie*. Toronto: MacMillan.
- Loucks-Horsley, S., P. Hewson, N. Love, and K. Stiles. 1998. *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of Science and Mathematics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- National Staff Development Council. 2001. *Standards for Staff Development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.
- Nicoll, V., ed. 1996. *May I See Your Program Please?* NSW, AU: Primary English Teaching Association (PETA).
- North Central Regional Education Laboratory. *High Expectations*. www.ncrel.org.
- Opitz, M. F. 1998. *Flexible Grouping in Reading*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.
- Owocki, G. 1999. *Literacy Through Play*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Pearson, P. D., and M. Gallagher. 1983. "The Instruction of Reading Comprehension." *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8.
- Power, B. 1999. *Parent Power Energising Home—School Communication*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Rhodes, L., and N. Shanklin. 1993. *Windows into Literacy: Assessing Learners K–8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Rickards, D., and E. Cheek. 1999. *Designing Rubrics for K–6 Assessment*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Routman, R. 1991. *Invitations: Changing as Teachers and Learners K–12*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- . 2000. *Conversations: Strategies for Teaching, Learning and Evaluation*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Sandstrom, R., ed. 1994. *Programming for Literacy Learning*. AU: Shortrun Books.
- South Australia Department of Education, Training and Development. 2000. *ESL in the Mainstream: Teacher Development Course*.
- Strickland, K., and J. Strickland. 2000. *Making Assessment Elementary*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Swartz, L. 2006. *The Novel Experience: Steps for Choosing and Using Novels in the Classroom*. Markham, ON: Pembroke Publishers.
- Vogt, L., C. Jordan, and R. Tharp. 1987. "Explaining School Failure, Producing School Success: Two Cases," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 18.
- Vygotsky, L. S. 1980. *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wilson, J., and L. Wing Jan. 1993. *Thinking for Themselves: Developing Strategies for Reflective Learning*. Victoria, AU: Eleanor Curtain Publishing.
- Zimmerman, S., and E. Keene. 1997. *Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Index

A

Aboriginal students, 51–52
 activities, adaptable, 49
 adaptable activities and learning
 experiences, 49
 adaptations, 89
 ALEA Fridge Cards, 205f
 “Alligator Pie”, 137
 analysis of information, 89–90
 analyzing, 130, 206
 anecdotal notes, 112
 annotations, 117, 117f
 applying, as a teaching and learning
 practice, 132–133, 206
 Arcola Community School, 51–52
 areas, 71–73
 articulate, 166f
 articulation of vision, 29
 assemblies, school-wide, 196
 assessment, 86, 206
 see also assessment and evaluation
 assessment and evaluation
 adaptations, 89
 analysis of information, 89–90
 clear purpose, 87
 collaborative approach, 88–89
 comprehensive, 85
 data-collection methods. *See* data-collection methods
 data-management systems, 89
 definitions, 85–87
 educative, 85
 evaluation of outcomes, 30
 explicit, 85
 fair, 85
 ongoing assessment in authentic
 contexts, 88
 process, 90, 91f
 range of tools and methods, 88
 record-keeping systems, 89
 recording information, 112–118
 sharing information, 118–119, 120f
 successful assessment and evaluation,
 87–90
 valid, 85
 assessment as learning, 86, 206
 assessment for learning, 53–54, 86, 206
 assessment methods, 88
 assessment of learning, 86–87
 Assessment, Teaching, and Learning Cycle,
 21, 22f
 assessment terms
 assessment, 86
 assessment as learning, 86, 206
 assessment for learning, 54–55, 86, 206
 assessment of learning, 86–87
 evaluation, 86
 summative assessment, 86–87
 assessment tools, 88
 Assisted Reading, 206
 auditory learners, 168f
 aural activities, 45
 authentic contexts, 88
 Author’s Circle, 136, 206
 automaticity, 206
 awareness-raising communication
 bulletin boards, 198
 calendar of events, 198, 199f
 communication books, 193
 conferences, 197–198
 described, 190

e-mails, 194
 informal talks, 195
 Meet-the-Teacher night, 193
 methods, 192
 newsletters, 193, 194f
 portfolios, 200
 quick notes, 195
 report cards, 200
 school-wide assemblies, 195
 teacher-to-parent note, 196f
 telephone, 195
 three-way conferences, 197–198
 Web site, 194, 195f
 work samples, 200

B

Balloon Tree, 179
 barrier games, 56
 Bennett, B., 23, 25, 181f
 bird’s-eye view, 71, 75
 Breen, M., 5
 Brockhoff, V., 187
 bulletin boards, 198

C

Cairney, T., 203
 calendar of events, 198, 199f
 caregivers. *See* parents
 case stories. *See* *First Steps* case stories
 CD-ROM activities, 204
 CD-ROMs, 3, 8
 celebration
 implementation of *First Steps*, 28
 of individual differences, 76–77
Change Forces, 27
 checklists, 114, 115f
 clarification of expectations, 77–79
 class groupings, 153, 154f
 Class Learning Logs, 181
 classroom culture
 core of routines, 79–80
 described, 76
 expectations, clarification and support
 of, 77–79
 individual differences, 76–77
 negotiating aspects of curriculum,
 80–84
 classroom layout. *See* physical environment
 classroom planning. *See* planning
 clear purpose, 87
 climate, 71
 code-switching, 206
 Cole, B., 179
 collaborative approach, 88–89
 communication books, 119, 120f, 193
 comprehensive assessment, 85
 Concept Maps, 177–178, 177f, 178f
 conference record sheets, 108f
 conferences, 106–107, 108f, 184, 197–198
 context, 206
 Contextual Understanding substrand, 18, 206
 contextualized activities, 43
 continuity through planning, 27
 Conventions substrand, 18–20, 206
 conversations
 conferences, 106–107, 108f
 described, 106
 interviews, 108–111
 core of routines, 79–80
 Crévol, C., 25
 criterion-referenced tests, 105

critical literacy, 206
 cross-curriculum grids, 113, 114f
 cultural factors, 12
 culture
 classroom. *See* classroom culture
 diversity. *See* diversity
 Cumulative Chart, 175, 176f
 curriculum frameworks, 12–14, 14f

D

daily work pad, 147
 daily work plan, 149f
 data-assessment tools, 88, 89
 data-collection methods
 conferences, 106–107, 108f
 conversations, 106–111
 described, 92
 focused observation, 92–93
 interviews, 108–111
 product assessment, 93–106
 retellings, 102–103, 103f
 self-assessment products, 93–100
 surveys and questionnaires, 103–104,
 104f, 105f
 tests, 105–106
 Think-Alouds, 101, 102f
 work samples, 102
 data-collection systems, 89
 decision-making guidelines, 48
 decision-making sessions, 27
 development of vision, 29
 diagnostic assessment, 206
 dialogue journals, 99
 differences, individual, 76–77
 differentiated instruction, 37, 48, 56–58
 differentiated learning, 37
 differentiated teaching and learning
 environment, 64
 disabilities, 12
 discussing, 135–136, 206
 diversity
 adaptable activities and learning
 experiences, 49
 annotation of Maps of Development, 48
 aural activities, 45
 case stories. *See* *First Steps* case stories
 challenge of diversity, 40
 defining diversity, 39–40
 differentiated instruction, 48
 Effective Teaching and Learning
 Practices, 49
 experiences that value the first
 language, 46
 as a factor, 12
 heavily contextualized activities, 43
 identification of varied patterns of
 development, 47
 negotiated activities, 44
 open-ended questions and tasks, 42
 overview of teaching for diversity, 40–46
 using *First Steps*, 47–49
 visual activities, 45
 DuFour, Rebecca, 25
 DuFour, Richard, 25

E
 e-folios, 118–119
 e-mails, 194
 EAD (English as an Additional Dialect), 207
 Eaker, R., 25
 educational change, 23



educative assessment, 85
 effective, 166f
 effective discussion, 135–136
 effective group work (T-Chart), 182f
 effective teaching
 described, 31–32
 First Steps beliefs. *See First Steps* beliefs
 successful assessment and
 evaluation, 87–90
 effective teaching and learning environment
 classroom culture, 76–84
 core of routines, 79–80
 draft plan, 73f
 embedded learning experiences, 67
 expectations, clarification and support
 of, 77–79
 floor areas, organization of, 71–73
 focused on strategies, 60
 importance of, 59
 individual differences, 76–77
 investigative situations, 61
 negotiating aspects of curriculum, 80–84
 physical environment, 70–75
 purposeful practice, 68
 reflection of *First Steps* beliefs, 59–69
 reflective situations, 62
 scaffolds, 63
 shared responsibility, 39
 supportive, 65
 tailored/differentiated, 64
 tested practices, 66
 wall spaces, organization of, 74–75
 effective teaching and learning practices
 analyzing, 130
 applying, 132–133
 as decision-making guide, 122
 described, 49, 121–122
 discussing, 135–136
 familiarizing, 125
 First Steps definitions, 124
 Gradual Release of Responsibility
 Model, 123f
 guiding, 128–129
 innovating, 136–137
 investigating, 133, 134f
 labelling of, 121–122
 modelling, 126–127
 playing, 134–135
 practice, meaning of, 122
 practising, 131–132
 reflecting, 140
 sharing, 127–128
 simulating, 139
 transforming, 137–138, 138f
 understanding effective practices,
 122–123
 ELL. *See* English Language Learners (ELL)
 ELL practices, 40
 embedded learning experiences, 38, 67
 encourager, 161
 English Language Learners (ELL), 12,
 40–46, 207
 as a case study, 55–56
 see also diversity
 Envoy, 185–186, 186f
 evaluation, 86, 207
 see also assessment and evaluation
 evaluation of outcomes, 30
 expectations
 clarification and support of, 77–79
 for implementation, 29
 explicit assessment, 85
 explicit feedback, 165, 165f

F
 fair assessment, 85
 familiarizing, as a teaching and learning
 practice, 125, 207
 family nights, 203
 feedback, 25, 165, 165f, 166f, 209
 first language, valuing, 46
First Steps
 annotation of Maps of Development, 48
 effective teaching and learning
 practices. *See* effective teaching
 and learning practices
 identification of varied patterns of
 development, 47
 instructional approaches, 123
 long-term planning, 143
 Maps of Development. *See* Maps of
 Development
 overview, 3–8, 10
 as resource, 34
 successful implementation, 23–30
 understanding *First Steps* beliefs, 31–38
 using with diverse learners, 47–49
First Steps beliefs
 art of teaching literacy, 31–32
 described, 35
 embedded learning experiences, 38, 67
 focused on strategies, 35–36, 60
 investigative situations, 36, 61
 in positive teaching and learning
 environment, 59–69
 purposeful practice, 38, 68
 reflective situations, 36, 62
 reflective teacher, 34
 scaffolds, 36–37, 63
 shared responsibility, 38, 39
 supportive environment, 37, 65
 tailored/differentiated, 37, 64
 tested practices, 37, 66
 whose literacy, 32–34
First Steps case stories
 Aboriginal students, 51–52
 differentiated instruction, 56–58
 English Language Learners (ELL), 55–56
 professional learning communities, 50
 supporting assessment for learning, 53–54
 fish bowl, 207
 Five-Minute Reflections, 170–171
 Five-Minute Reporting, 184
 fixed features, 71
 flexible grouping, 154, 207
 floor areas, 71–73
 focused observation, 92–93
 focused on strategies, 35–36
 focused on strategies, teaching and learning
 environment, 60
 formal observations, 92
 formative assessment, 207
 formative evaluation, 207
 four resources model, 17
 Four Roles of a Literate Learner, 17
 frameworks
 analyzing a text to determine
 framework, 130f
 for goal-setting, 98, 98f
 Guided Writing framework, 129f
 for investigating, 134f
 K-W-H-L framework, 183, 183f
 metacognitive thinking, 100f
 observational frameworks, 104
 reflection, 100f
 Freebody, P., 17
 fridge cards, 204–205, 205f
 Fullan, M., 23, 25, 27
 furniture, 71

G
 Gallagher, M., 37, 123
 gifted and talented students, 40–46
 Gilman, P., 179
 Global Statement, 207
 glossary of terms, 206–209
 goal, 166f
 goal-setting, 172–174
 goal-setting frameworks, 98, 98f
 goals for implementation, 29
 Gradual Release of Responsibility Model,
 37, 123f
 graphic organizers, 207
 group management
 described, 160–161
 key communicator, 162
 as long-term process, 162
 numbering off, 162
 role assignments, 161–162
 structuring responses, 162
 grouping
 class groupings, 153, 154f
 considerations, 152–153
 different ways of grouping, 155f
 flexible grouping, 154
 group management, 160–162
 individual, 153
 lesson structures, 156–160
 small groups, 153
 whole class, 153
 working with groups, 160–162
 guest speakers, 204
 guided questions or prompts, 180, 181f
 Guided Reading, 207
 Guided Speaking and Listening, 207
 Guided Viewing, 207
 Guided Writing, 207
 Guided Writing framework, 129f
 guiding, 128–129, 207
H
 Harwayne, S., 24
 heavily contextualized activities, 43
 high-quality professional development,
 23–24
 high spaces, 74
 Hill, P., 25
 Hill, S.T., 171
 home-school partnerships
 awareness-raising communication,
 190, 192–200
 development of, 190–191
 helping to support literacy
 development, 202–205
 importance of, 191–192
 parent involvement, 191, 201
 sharing information, 191, 192–200
 “how,” negotiating, 83
I
 identification of varied patterns of
 development, 47
 implementation of action plans, 173–174,
 173f
 implementation of *First Steps*
 celebrating, 28
 continuity through planning, 27
 goals and expectations, 29
 high-quality professional development,
 23–24
 implementation factors, 23
 implementation plan, sample, 28f
 ongoing teacher support, 25
 outcomes, monitoring and evaluation
 of, 30

parent involvement, 30
 principal as learner and leader, 24–25
 reflecting, 28
 successful implementation of change, 23
 time, 26–27
 vision, development and articulation of, 29
 whole-school implementation, 26
 implementation plan, 28f
 indicator, 207
 individual differences, 76–77
 individual education plans, 40
 individual teaching and learning, 153
 ineffective, 166f
 informal observations, 92
 information
 analysis, 89–90
 collection. *See* data-collection methods
 recording. *See* recording information
 sharing information, 118–119, 120f
 information brochures, 204–205, 205f
 innovating, 136–137, 207
 Inside/Outside Circles, 186, 187f
 instructional approaches, 123
 integrated unit of work, 144f
 interactive learners, 168f
 interviews
 described, 108
 with parents, 111
 with students, 108
 investigating, 133, 134f, 207
 investigative situations, 36
 investigative teaching and learning environment, 61

J
 Jigsaw, 185, 185f
 journal scaffolds, 100f
 journals, 99, 100f, 180–181, 181f
 Joyce, B., 23, 25, 26

K
 K-W-H-L chart, 134f
 K-W-H-L framework, 183, 183f
 Kagan, S., 186
 Karhanek, G., 25
 key communicator, 162
 Key Indicators, 6f, 7, 11–12
 defined, 207
 observational frameworks for parents, 104
 kinesthetic learners, 168f
 Kirkpatrick, D.L., 30
 Kirkpatrick's Model of Evaluation, 30

L
 Language Experience, 208
 layout of classroom. *See* physical environment
 leadership, 24–25
 learners, types of, 168
 Learning Charts, 176, 176f
 learning environment. *See* effective teaching and learning environment
 learning experiences, 49
 Learning Journeys, 119, 187–189, 188f, 189f, 208
 Learning Logs, 180–181, 181f
 learning practices. *See* effective teaching and learning practices
 learning styles, 12, 167
 Lee, D., 137
 linguistic factors, 12
 linking words or phrases, 178
 Listening strand, 1–2

literacy, 208
 literacy, teaching, 31–32
 literacy articles, 204
 literacy development support
 CD-ROM activities, 204
 described, 202
 family nights, 136
 fridge cards, 204–205, 205f
 guest speakers, 204
 information brochures, 204–205, 205f
 literacy articles, 204
 open-door policy, 203
 parent workshops, 203
 recommended reading lists, 204
 videos of good practice, 204
 Web sites, 204
 literacy for each learner, 32–34
 literacy interview questions, 111f
 Literature Circles, 136, 206
 log formats, 94, 94f, 96f
 long-term plan, 144f
 “Look What I Can Do,” 182
 Loucks-Horsley, S., 23
 low spaces, 75
 Luke, A., 17
 Luke and Freebody's four resources model, 17

M
 M-space, 36n
 Major Teaching Emphases
 defined, 208
 described, 6f, 7
 differentiated instruction, 48
 linkage to development phases, 90
 selection of appropriate future learning experiences, 90

manager, 161
 Maps of Development
 annotation of, 48
 and curriculum frameworks, 12–14, 14f
 described, 2–3, 6
 diversity, consideration of, 12
 focused observation, 93
 as framework, 47, 89
 identification of varied patterns of development, 47
 Key Indicators, 7, 11–12
 Major Teaching Emphases, 7
 phases, 6–7
 process for assessment and evaluation, 90, 91f
 professional judgment, 11
 purpose of, 47
 recording information, 117
 Teaching and Learning Experiences, 8
 understanding, 11–12

master calendar of events, 198, 199f
 McClelland, S., 53
 Meet-the-Teacher night, 193
 mental space for new learning, 38
 metacognition, 208
 metacognitive process
 catering for different learning styles, 167
 reflecting on the learning, 166–167
 reporting the learning, 168
 representing the learning, 167, 168f

metacognitive thinking
 described, 163
 explicit feedback, 165, 165f
 framework, 100f
 in journals, 99
 modelling, 164
 reflecting on learning, 165
 sample, 101f

students and, 95
 supporting, 163–164
 teaching, 164–165
 terms, 166, 166f
 middle spaces, 74–75
 Modelled Reading, 148, 208
 Modelled Speaking and Listening, 208
 Modelled Viewing, 208
 modelling, 123, 126–127, 164, 208
 modelling goal-setting, 172
 modelling reflective thinking, 180–181
 monitoring outcomes, 30
 monthly calendar of events, 198, 199f
 Mulhern, M., 56–58
 Munsch, R., 179
 Munsie, L., 203

N
 nature of the resource, 3–4
 negotiate, 166f
 negotiated activities, 44
 negotiated assessment rubric, 83f
 negotiated criteria for goal, 173f
 negotiated rules, 81–83
 negotiated science plan, sample, 82f
 negotiating aspects of curriculum
 described, 80
 “how,” 83
 “what,” 81–83
 “when,” 81
 “with whom,” 84
 New Brunswick, 50
 newsletters, 193, 194f
 noise, 71
 norm-referenced tests, 105–106
 notes, 195
 numbering off, 162

O
 observation, focused, 92–93
 observation grids, 112, 113f
 observational frameworks, 104
 one-on-one conferences, 106–107
 ongoing assessment in authentic contexts, 88
 ongoing teacher support, 25
 open discussions, 136
 open-door policy, 203
 open-ended questions and tasks, 42, 61f
 Opitz, M., 155f
 oral language, 56
 organization
 floor areas, 71–73
 within strands, 2
 wall spaces, 74–75
 organizational structures for individual lessons
 described, 152
 flexible grouping, 154
 grouping considerations, 152–153
 lesson structures, 156–160
 outcomes, 30
 overview
 First Steps, 3–8
 First Steps materials, 10
 integrated unit of work, 144f
 of texts, 16f

P
Paper Bag Princess, 179
 parent interview questions, 111f
 parent survey, 104f, 202f
 parent workshops, 203
 parents
 see also home-school partnerships

and assessment and evaluation, 88
 awareness-raising communication, 190, 192–200
see also awareness-raising communication
 communication books, 119
 English as another language, 192*n*, 197*n*
 goals and expectations for
 implementation of *First Steps*, 29
 helping to support literacy development, 202–205
 home–school partnerships, 190–191
 importance of developing partners, 191–192
 interviews with, 111
 involvement of, 191, 201
 involvement in implementation, 30
 observational frameworks, 104
 shared responsibility, 38, 39
 sharing information, 118–119, 120*f*, 191, 192–200
 survey, 104*f*
 three-way conferences, 106, 119, 197–198
 Pearson, P.D., 37, 123
 Peel District School Board, 56–58
 peer conferences, 106
 personal goal-setting, 98, 98*f*
 personal response journals, 99
 phases, 6–7, 208
 physical environment
 draft plan, 73*f*
 factors to consider, 70–71
 floor areas, organization of, 71–73
 wall spaces, organization of, 74–75
 planning
 across the strands, 150, 151*f*, 152*f*
 considerations, 142
 daily planning, 147–148
 goal-setting action plans, 173, 173*f*
 for implementation. *See* implementation of *First Steps*
 for individuals, 148–149, 150*f*
 levels of planning, 142
 long-term plan, 144*f*
 long-term planning, 143
 meaning of, 141
 purposeful planning, 141
 reasons for, 141
 short-term plan, 145*f*, 146*f*
 short-term planning, 145–146
 weekly planning, 147–148, 147*f*
 playing, 134–135, 208
 portfolios, 118–119, 200
 positive teaching and learning environment.
 See effective teaching and learning environment
 Power, B., 202*f*
 practice, 122
 practising, 131–132, 208
 Primary English Teachers Association (PETA), 25
Princess Smartypants, 179
 principal as learner and leader, 24–25
 print-oriented learners, 168*f*
 print-rich environment, 208
 pro forma, 208
 problem-solving situations, 36
 procedural writing, in a case study, 51–52
 process for assessment and evaluation, 90, 91*f*
 Processes and Strategies substrand, 20–21, 208
 product assessment
 retellings, 102–103, 103*f*

self-assessment products, 93–100
 surveys and questionnaires, 103–104, 104*f*, 105*f*
 tests, 105–106
 Think-Alouds, 101, 102*f*
 work samples, 102
 professional development, 23–24
 professional development leadership, 50
 professional judgment, 11, 48
 professional learning communities, 50
 proven approaches. *See* tested practices
 providing time, 26–27
 proximity, 71
 purpose, clear, 87
 purposeful planning, 141
 purposeful practice, 38, 68

Q

questionnaires, 103–104, 104*f*, 105*f*, 175
 quick notes, 196

R

Read and Retell, 208
 Readers Theatre, 208
 reading attitude questionnaire, 105*f*
 reading interview record, 109*f*, 110*f*
 reading lists, recommended, 204
 reading response journal sentence starters, 100*f*
 Reading strand, 1–2
 recognition of individual differences, 76–77
 recognizing different learning styles, 167
 recommended reading lists, 204
 record-keeping systems, 89
 recorder, 161
 recording information
 anecdotal notes, 112–113
 annotations, 117, 117*f*
 checklists, 114, 115*f*
 cross-curriculum grids, 113, 114*f*
 First Steps Maps of Development, 117
 observation grids, 112, 113*f*
 record-keeping systems, 89
 rubrics, 116, 116*f*
 sticky notes, 113, 113*f*
 reflect, 166*f*
 reflecting, 140, 208
 reflecting learning
 Concept Maps, 178*f*
 Cumulative Chart, 175, 176*f*
 described, 166–167
 Five-Minute Reflections, 170–171
 goal-setting, 172–174
 K-W-H-L framework, 183, 183*f*
 Learning Charts, 176, 176*f*
 Learning Logs, 180–181, 181*f*
 “Look What I Can Do,” 182
 Reflective Questionnaire, 175
 self-questioning, 174
 strategies for, 170
 T-Charts, 182, 182*f*
 Think-Pair-Share, 174–175
 types of activity, 169
 Venn Diagrams, 179, 179*f*
 Y-Charts, 183, 183*f*
 reflection on events, 99, 100*f*
 reflection sheet, 62*f*, 140*f*
 reflective discussions, 28
 Reflective Questionnaire, 175
 reflective situations, 36
 reflective teacher, 34
 reflective teaching and learning environment, 62
 report, 166*f*

report cards, 118, 200
 report writing checklist, 115*f*
 reporter, 161
 reporting learning
 conferences, 184
 described, 168
 Envoy, 185–186, 186*f*
 Five-Minute Reporting, 184
 Inside/Outside Circles, 186, 187*f*
 Jigsaw, 185, 185*f*
 Learning Journeys, 187–189, 188*f*, 189*f*
 reporting, defined, 208
 ways to, 184
 represent, 166*f*
 representing, 6, 208
 representing learning
 Concept Maps, 177–178, 177*f*, 178*f*
 Cumulative Chart, 175, 176*f*
 described, 167, 168*f*
 Five-Minute Reflections, 170–171
 goal-setting, 172–174
 K-W-H-L framework, 183, 183*f*
 Learning Charts, 176, 176*f*
 Learning Logs, 180–181, 181*f*
 “Look What I Can Do,” 182
 Reflective Questionnaire, 175
 self-questioning, 174
 strategies for, 170
 T-Charts, 182, 182*f*
 Think-Pair-Share, 174–175
 types of activity, 169
 Venn Diagrams, 179, 179*f*
 Y-Charts, 183, 183*f*
 research-based practices, 37, 66
 Resource Books, 3, 8, 49
 retellings, 102–103, 103*f*
 Rhodes, L., 200*f*
 role assignments, 161–162
 Rolheiser, C., 23, 181*f*
 routines, core of, 79–80
 Routman, R., 205
 rubrics, 116, 116*f*, 209

S

safety, 71
 samples
 annotated work sample, 117*f*
 checklists, 115*f*
 class newsletter, 194*f*
 communication books, 120*f*
 cross-curriculum grids, 114*f*
 daily work plan, 149*f*
 fridge cards, 205*f*
 implementation plan, 28*f*
 information brochures, 205*f*
 journal entries, 100*f*
 metacognitive thinking, 101*f*
 negotiated assessment rubric, 83*f*
 negotiated science plan, 82*f*
 observation grid, 113, 113*f*
 parent survey, 202*f*
 practice activities, 131*f*
 retelling record sheet, 103*f*
 rubrics, 116*f*
 sticky notes, 113, 113*f*
 student log, 94*f*, 96*f*
 student self-assessment—transitional
 reading phase, 96*f*
 “Two Stars and a Wish,” 97, 97*f*
 Web site, 195*f*
 weekly timetable, 147*f*
 work samples, 102, 200
 writing log, 95*f*

- scaffolded teaching and learning environment, 63
- scaffolding, 36–37
- school-wide assemblies, 195
- schools
- goals and expectations for implementation, 29
 - school leaders, 24–25
 - school-wide implementation, 26
 - shared responsibility, 38, 39
- self-assessment, 166f
- self-assessment products
- described, 93–94
 - goal-setting frameworks, 98, 98f
 - journals, 99, 100f
 - log formats, 94, 94f, 96f
 - “Two Stars and a Wish,” 97, 97f
- self-questioning, 174
- self-talk, 166f
- Shanklin, N., 200f
- Shared Reading, 209
- shared responsibility, 38, 39
- Shared Speaking and Listening, 209
- Shared Viewing, 209
- Shared Writing, 209
- sharing, 127–128, 209
- sharing, as practice, 122
- sharing information, 118–119, 120f, 191, 192–200
- see also* awareness-raising communication
- short-term plan, 145f, 146f
- short-term planning, 145–146
- Showers, B., 23, 25, 26
- Simcoe County District School Board, 53–54
- simulating, 139, 209
- simulation activity, 139f
- small-group conferences, 106
- social factors, 12
- socio-cultural, 209
- Sparks, D., 23
- Speaking strand, 1–2
- Spelling strand, 2
- staff development, 23–24
- standardized tests, 105–106
- stereotypes, 40
- Stevahn, L., 181f
- sticky notes, 113, 113f
- stop, look, and listen, 92
- strands
- defined, 209
 - described, 1–2, 4f
 - integration of four strands, 152f
 - integration of two strands, 151f
 - planning across the strands, 150, 151f, 152f
 - structure of, 6
 - substrands, 2, 5f, 15–17
- strategy, 166f, 209
- see also* Processes and Strategies substrand
- structure
- of the resource, 4–8
 - of the strands, 6
- structured format, 97f
- structuring responses, 162
- Student Achievement Through Staff Development*, 25, 26
- student attention, 71
- student log, 94, 94f, 96f
- student numbers, 71
- student self-assessment—transitional reading phase, 96f
- student survey, 105f
- students
- goals and expectations for implementation of *First Steps*, 29
 - group roles, assignment of, 161–162
 - interviews with, 108
 - metacognitive thinking, 95
 - planning for individuals, 148–149, 150f
 - teacher-student conferences, 106–107
 - substrands, 2, 5f, 15–21, 209
 - see also* specific substrands
- successful, as term, 166f
- successful assessment and evaluation, 87–90
- summative assessment, 86–87
- summative evaluation, 209
- supervision, 71
- support
- assessment for learning, 53–54
 - of expectations, 77–79
 - literacy development, 202–205
 - for metacognitive thinking, 163–164
 - for teachers, 25
- supportive environment, 37
- supportive teaching and learning environment, 65
- surveys, 103–104, 104f, 105f
- T**
- T-Charts, 65, 182, 182f
- tailored learning, 37
- tailored teaching and learning environment, 64
- targeted feedback, 209
- teacher-made tests, 105
- teacher-student conferences, 106–107
- teacher-to-parent note, 196f
- teachers
- effective teaching. *See* effective teaching
 - goals and expectations for implementation of *First Steps*, 29
 - ongoing support for, 25
 - reflective teacher, 34
 - stop, look, and listen, 92
 - teacher-student conferences, 106–107
- teaching environment. *See* effective teaching and learning environment
- Teaching and Learning Experiences, 6f, 8
- teaching and learning practices. *See* effective teaching and learning practices
- teaching literacy, 31–32
- teaching metacognitive thinking, 164–165
- teaching practices. *See* effective teaching and learning practices
- telling, 121
- tested practices, 37, 66
- testing, 121
- tests, 105–106
- text, 209
- text deconstruction, 209
- text innovations, 136–137
- text product type or format, 137
- text reconstruction, 209
- text-to-self connection, 171f
- texts. *See* Use of Texts substrand
- Think-Alouds, 101, 102f
- Think-Pair-Share, 174–175
- “The Three Little Pigs,” 138
- three-way conferences, 106, 119, 197–198
- “Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down,” 171
- time for ongoing learning, 26–27
- timetable, 147, 147f
- traffic, 71
- transforming, 137–138, 138f, 209
- translators, 196n
- “Two Stars and a Wish,” 97, 97f
- U**
- understanding *First Steps* beliefs, 31–38
- Universal Design for Learning, 41
- Use of Texts substrand, 15–17, 16f, 209
- V**
- valid assessment, 85
- varied patterns of development, 47
- Venn Diagrams, 179, 179f
- videos of good practice, 204
- Viewing strand, 1–2
- vision, 29
- visual activities, 45
- visual learners, 168f
- Vygotsky, L.S., 36–37
- W**
- wall spaces, 74–75
- wall view, 74
- Watson, Z., 50
- Web site, 194, 195f, 204
- weekly planning, 147–148, 147f
- “what,” negotiating, 81–83
- Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don’t Learn*, 25
- “when,” negotiating, 81
- “Whip Around” the Circle, 171
- whole class, 153
- whole-school implementation of *First Steps*, 26
- Wilson, J., 178
- Wing Jan, L., 178
- “with whom,” negotiating, 84
- work samples, 102, 200
- working memory, 36, 36n
- working with groups, 160–162
- writing interview record, 109f, 110f
- writing log, 95f
- Writing strand, 1–2
- Y**
- Y-Charts, 65, 65f, 183, 183f

Credits

P. 31, © Bumper DeJesus/Star Ledger/Corbis; p. 33 (left), Creatas/Jupiter Images; p. 33 (centre), Creatas/Jupiter Images; p. 33 (right), Comstock/Jupiter Images; p. 34 (left), © Michael Newman/PhotoEdit; p. 34 (right), Comstock “Early Education” disc/Jupiter Images; p. 51, © 2008 Jeff Shultz/AlaskaStock.com; p. 53, Will Hart/PhotoEdit; p. 63, © Nancy Sheehan/PhotoEdit; p. 64, © Bob Daemmrich/PhotoEdit; p. 66 (left), © Elizabeth Crews/The Image Works; p. 66 (right), © Bloomimage/Corbis; p. 68, Comstock/Jupiter Images; p. 69, © Eyewire/Gettyimages; p. 73, © Michael Newman/PhotoEdit; p. 75, © Lon C. Diehl/PhotoEdit; p. 84 (left), Comstock “Lifestyles” disc/Jupiter Images; p. 84 (right), © ColourBlind/Photodisc/Getty Images; p. 126, Comstock “Early Education” disc/Jupiter Images; p. 128, © David Young-Wolff/Alamy; p. 134, © Michael Newman/PhotoEdit; p. 136, © Robin Sachs/PhotoEdit; p. 155, Adapted from Flexible Grouping in Reading by Michael F. Opitz. Scholastic Inc./Teaching Resources. Copyright © 1998 by Michael F. Opitz. Reprinted with permission; p. 162, Silver Burdett Ginn; p. 169 (left), © Robin Sachs/PhotoEdit; p. 169 (right), © image 100/Corbis; p. 181, Adapted from Bennett, B., C.I. Rolheiser, and L. Stevahn. 1991. *Cooperative Learning: Where Heart Meets Mind*. Toronto, ON: Educational Connections; pp. 186–187 (Inside/Outside Circles activity and drawing): Adapted from Kagan, Spencer. 2004. *Cooperative Learning*. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Publishing. Used with permission of Spencer Kagan; p. 195, John G. Diefenbaker Elementary School, Richmond, BC, <http://www2.sd38.bc.ca/Diefenbaker-Web>. Used with permission. Clipart Copyright © Mark A. Hicks. www.MARKIX.net. Used with permission; p. 200, Adapted from L. Rhodes and N. Shanklin. 1993. *Windows into Literacy: Assessing Learners K–8*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; p. 202, Adapted from Power, B. 1999. *Parent Power Energizing Home–School Communication*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; p. 203, Adapted from Cairney, T.H. and L. Munsie. 1995. *Beyond Tokenism: Parents as Partners in Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Used with permission of Trevor Cairney.