

Australian Curriculum General Capabilities

English

Literacy

The Literacy general capability presents those aspects of the Language and Literacy strands of the English curriculum that should also be applied in all other learning areas.

Students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students in listening to, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts, and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts.

Literacy is developed through the specific study of the English language in all its forms, enabling students to understand how the English language works in different social contexts and critically assess writers' opinions, bias and intent, and assisting them to make increasingly sophisticated language choices in their own texts. The English learning area has a central role in the development of literacy in a manner that is more explicit and foregrounded than is the case in other learning areas. Students learn literacy knowledge and skills as they engage with the Literacy and Language strands of English. They apply their literacy capability in English when they interpret and create spoken, print, visual and multimodal texts for a range of purposes.

Critical and creative thinking

Students develop capability in critical and creative thinking as they learn to generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems. Critical and creative thinking are integral to activities that require students to think broadly and deeply using skills, behaviours and dispositions such as reason, logic, resourcefulness, imagination and innovation in all learning areas at school and in their lives beyond school.

Critical and creative thinking are essential to developing understanding in English. Students employ critical and creative thinking through discussions, the close analysis of texts and through the creation of their own written, visual and multimodal texts that require logic, imagination and innovation. Students use creative thinking when they imagine possibilities, plan, explore and create ideas and texts.

Through listening to, reading, viewing, creating and presenting texts and interacting with others, students develop their ability to see existing situations in new ways, and explore the creative possibilities of the English language. In discussion students develop critical thinking as they state and justify a point of view and respond to the views of others. Through reading, viewing and listening students critically analyse the opinions, points of view and unstated assumptions embedded in texts.

Ethical understanding

Students develop ethical understanding as they identify and investigate the nature of ethical concepts, values, character traits and principles, and understand how reasoning can assist ethical judgment. Ethical understanding involves students in building a strong personal and socially oriented ethical outlook that helps them to manage context, conflict and uncertainty, and to develop an awareness of the influence that their values and behaviour have on others.

Students develop ethical understanding as they study the issues and dilemmas present in a range of texts and explore how ethical principles affect the behaviour and judgment of characters and those involved in issues and events. Students apply the skills of reasoning, empathy and imagination, consider and make judgments about actions and motives, and speculate on how life experiences affect and influence people's decision making and whether various positions held are reasonable.

The study of English helps students to understand how language can be used to influence judgments about behaviour, speculate about consequences and influence opinions and that language can carry embedded negative and positive connotations that can be used in ways that help or hurt others.

Intercultural understanding

Students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others. They come to understand how personal, group and national identities are shaped, and the variable and changing nature of culture. The capability involves students in learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect.

Students develop intercultural understanding through the study of the English language and the ways it has been influenced by different cultural groups, languages, speakers and writers. In interpreting and analysing authors' ideas and positions in a range of texts in English and in translation to English, they learn to question stated and unstated cultural beliefs and assumptions, and issues of intercultural meaning.

Students use Intercultural understanding to comprehend and create a range of texts, that present diverse cultural perspectives and to empathise with a variety of people and characters in various cultural settings.