



Literacy immersion toolkit

Literacy immersion toolkit (Lit) is a reminder to you of best practice when teaching in an Australian indigenous context. Ensuring that *Standard Australian English* (SAE) and numeracy are taught in a holistic way. Literacy immersion must be the central focus of your planning. From a one-off lesson to a term long study, if a unit is not based around a text then develop a *group negotiated text* and scour it for literacy and numeracy teaching opportunities. But most importantly because SAE is such an intense focus you must ensure that the content of your text is educational and part of a comprehensive syllabus which integrates the *Australian Curriculum* (AC) with *Indigenous Language and Culture* (ILC).

Remember:

You are the key language model of students' English. Speak and write Standard Australian English.

- Do not experiment with your indigenous language skills or simplify your words.
- Speak clearly, at a measured pace.
- Allow students time to translate your voice and then time to comprehend your meaning.
- Consider your sentence structure and be prepared to stop and explain the meaning of the phrase you used.

Know your students.

- What are the reading/writing levels in your class?
- Check students literacy level or run your own tests such as [Schonell](#)*, or Running records.

Choose your text carefully.

- Analyze the text for language and complexity (Immersive Reader in Word 365 is great.)
- Evaluate the text's suitability for the class, if the concepts are too complex or [culturally embodied](#).
- Discuss your plan with your Assistant Teacher for cultural suitability and your senior teacher for advice. Your school may well have a library of suitable texts that have already been analyzed.

Plan ahead.

- Decide on two or three language items to concentrate on for each lesson. These may be sight words, spelling lists, linguistic structures, technical terms, inferential meanings etc.
- Brainstorm extension activities that are linked to the concepts and content in the text, as well as the curriculum area.
- Clearly express the learning outcomes for each of the activities and display them.
- Decide on assessment activities and rubrics.

Be explicit.

- In an EAL/D context, there is no room for hinting, intuition or osmosis. Lack of clarity causes students cognitive overload, stress, and a down-shift in their quality of thought. Students should know what they are learning, why it's important and how to improve.

Literacy immersion toolkit

0. Listen, speak, read then write.

It can't be said often enough. Listening is the first step in the literacy process. Students need to hear Standard Australian English (SAE) often and clearly. Always use your sound field system and model reading to the students. Listen to your students, at every level, there are always new words and sounds for students to practice. Use but do not get distracted by phonics programs such as [this excellent document from CDU](#), [Cued Articulation](#), or [RWI](#) etc. Immersion is the key to learning.

1. [Discover the Text](#) (Build the field of knowledge; set students up for prediction).

Talk about the contents of the text. Discuss and record what the learners already know about the topic and theme of the text. Represent this in the form of a semantic web or notes on a retrieval chart. Use information from the title, chapter headings, introduction and the summary of the text to discuss what the text might cover/be about (prediction).

2. Prediction

Using the headings, prior knowledge, illustrations etc. brainstorm and discuss with the students what this text could be about.

3. [Read the text aloud](#) with the students.

- [Modelled](#). Just the teacher. (I do)
- [Shared](#). The whole group with the teacher. (We do)
- [Guided](#). Individually. (You do)
- [Independent](#). Individual extended reading. (You do)

4. Complete [oral cloze exercises](#) (Checking the students' linguistic accessibility to the text)

- Teacher and student together
- individual student (one to one) with the teacher.

5. Confirming predictions, check for understanding, resetting predictions

- [discuss](#) whether the section of the text so far was as predicted
- what may happen subsequently in the text – further prediction based on content so far
- exchange ideas, opinions and feelings about the content of the text.

6. [Read the text to the students](#) with fluency and expression.

- Encourage students to read along.
- Explore the text by planning together to [role-play](#) aspects of the characters, the contexts, the issues, the solutions, etc.
- [Make links](#) between the written text and the real-world experiences of the students. Talk about similarities and differences.
- [Discusses the genre](#) of the text with the students.
- Deconstruct the text so students learn how different authors use different styles for effect.
- Demonstrate how the author has structured the text and how the different parts make up the whole.

7. Assessment

Have the [students retell the text](#) in groups of two or three, stating their opinions and their reasons for them. Give students different sections to retell and comment on. Record audio or video for assessment.

Literacy immersion toolkit

8. Word Walls

Display the English alphabet along a wall. [Teach the sound, letter names](#) and patterns. Practice single sounds, blends, word endings, irregular letter/sound patterns etc.

- Use a 'Stick and ball' font like [Poppins](#) for everything. Never capitalize whole words.
- Discretely label everything, especially around the door. (through, above, over, under etc)
- List words from the text under the appropriate letter name.

With the students, make a [list of words](#) that [fit certain categories](#) linked to the study of the text e.g. words that describe the characters, words that describe feelings/emotion linked to the plot, words which carry specific meanings etc.

Display this list and continue to add to the lists as the unit of work develops.

Use these words to develop a word wall [dictionary](#). (Use dictionaries! Understanding how dictionaries work is a literacy tool to support further learning.)

Continue to add to this visual display as unfamiliar words are encountered in the text.

Teach the students how to use *word walls* as a resource for their personal writing. Use the growing list of words on these wall resources for the study of words including spelling, rules and irregularities in rules.

For example, students, in pairs discuss and sort the words on cards into categories:

- word families
- same endings/beginnings
- sound patterns
- letter patterns
- rhyming words
- plurals etc.

9. Reconstruct the text

- [Modelled](#). Just the teacher. (I do) Display this prominently in the classroom.
- [Shared](#). The whole group with the teacher. (We do)
- [Interactive](#). Small groups. (we do)
- [Guided](#). Individually. (You do)

10. Independent writing assessment

(Expect independent writing only after students have been part of group-negotiated writing and they have seen a model of what the final product can look like.)

[Organise for the students to begin writing.](#)

- Brainstorm, discuss and list possible ways to write about the text.
 - Eg: plot, setting, content, genre.
- Students begin their first draft and continue developing this daily.
- Provide feedback to individual students about their writing so far.
- Lead a class meeting to discuss the writing so far and to make suggestions which individuals may take up as they continue their writing.
- Students review their writing so far, based on teacher input and revise as necessary.
- Repeat until the writing is complete.

11. Check for comprehension.

[Sort scrambled text](#), use longer chunks of text such as paragraphs/ the contents of a page.

- The whole group with the teacher. (I do)

Literacy immersion toolkit

- In groups of two or three. (We do)
- Individually (You do)

12. Deconstruction of the text with the students to produce a visual representation that summarises the structure of the genre of the text or the main events/time sequence/actions in the text – [a story map or graph](#).

13. Check comprehension.

Use the new words and phrases learned to construct sentences that mean the same as the original. (Show how the same meaning can be constructed differently in English)

[Create alternative endings and beginnings](#) for sentences and larger chunks of text.

- The whole group with the teacher. (I do)
- In groups of two or three. (We do)
- Individually (You do)

14. [Practice listening skills](#).

Students need to learn to hear the sounds in English that are different to the sounds in their language

Once these listening exercises have been introduced, do some of them for 10 minutes every day.

Listening exercises should cover the areas of stress, intonation and rhythm and pronunciation of English.

- Listen for specific sounds in spoken texts. Choose a group of words, a word, or a sound that the students need to listen to and learn to pronounce. When the students hear the target sound/word they indicate in some way.
- Read a part of any text which the students are familiar with substituting incorrect words. Allow the students to correct the words and supply the appropriate ones.
- Choose target sounds from the text. Play games that require the students to discriminate between the sounds
- Play alliteration games by adding onto a list of words that begin with the same sound pattern; play rhyming games by finding new words that sound the same; work out words where the beginning and end sounds have been reversed.
- Choose a repetitive part of the text to use as a chant, while the students follow the rhythm and stress of the language using body movements, musical instruments etc.

15. [Practice English pronunciation](#).

(As well as learning to hear the sounds of English, Second language learners need to be taught explicitly how to pronounce some English sounds that are not part of their repertoire.

Use any of your texts to concentrate on particular aspects of English pronunciation. Include sounds, words, phrases, whole sentences incorporating intonation and rhythm.

- The whole group with the teacher. (I do)
- In groups of two or three. (We do)
- Individually (You do)

16. [Examine the differences between spoken and written English](#).

Language is constructed differently for writing than it is for speech. The formal construction of written English needs to be explicitly taught to second language learners.

Examine the differences between spoken (free-flowing spontaneous) and written language.

Analyze some recorded English from any aspect of a previous activity and compare it with

Literacy immersion toolkit

the writing of the group-negotiated text.

17. Check comprehension

[Decide about true/false statements](#) based on the information from this unit.

- The whole group with the teacher. (I do)
- In groups of two or three. (We do)
- Individually (You do)

Use multiple-choice questions based on the text.

- The whole group with the teacher. (I do)
- In groups of two or three. (We do)
- Individually (You do)

Recognise and correct substitutions or errors in the text.

- The whole group with the teacher. (I do)
- In groups of two or three. (We do)
- Individually (You do)

18. Oral presentation

(Formal speaking is a specifically taught skill. Allow students to practice with material that is familiar to them, that they have been taught about and scaffolded into.)

[Explore the text through an oral presentation](#). Discuss and plan the presentation. Make group notes, use headings e.g. what, who, where, when, how.

19. Oral Assessments

For each unit of work, assess oral language. Make notes about the student's knowledge, understandings and use of language. A group of students should be targeted for assessment in each unit of work. Engage the students in discussion during the activities, record the students using Standard Australian English and write anecdotal notes about the student's use of English as observed.

Record the student as they:

- Give their ideas, opinions, and feelings about the stimulus text or retell the text.
- And make notes and/or record the student's responses to the listening, oral cloze and intonation exercises or pronunciation of the target sounds/words/phrases for the unit.
- Also, observe and note students' level of participation in whole group songs or recitations. Note their confidence and clarity of words.

20. Library

Take the class to the library at least once a week. Expect each student to take out a book to read for enjoyment.

Literacy immersion toolkit

21. Mathematical Literacy

Every activity needs to be examined for opportunities to integrate mathematical concepts and thinking. Our students need to practice problem-solving and reasoning in practical everyday situations.

- Number and algebra
- Measurement and geometry
- Statistics and probability

Consider how to incorporate;

- Money
- Time
- Volume
- Graphs
- Estimation
- Distance
- Angles
- Problem solving
- Data collection
- Mapping

Students need to understand the reasons and usefulness behind Maths rather than the process to solve equations. Activities must start from concrete physical manipulatives before moving to abstract numerals and functions. Teach methods of simplification and estimation, rather than long division or long multiplication.

Look at [years 2&3 of the Australian Curriculum](#) where students move from the concrete to the abstract.

Use the NTs [Mathematics Essentials student tracker](#) to gauge where your students sit.

Lit draws on resources from Fran Murray's Walking Talking Texts which is a comprehensive framework for teaching and assessing in our indigenous context. When you have time, explore Fran's [Walk Talk Teach](#).

*Schonell Reading Test

The child should read the words left to right. When a word that gets a little difficult, ask the child to sound it out. If the child can't say what the word is, then go on to the next one.

The person supervising the test will give one mark for each word correctly pronounced – even if the reader self corrects. **The supervisor will not suggest corrections.** No prompting. No hurrying. If the reader mispronounces **slightly** as in **postage** with a short 'o', the first time, then ask for the word again, marking it correct if the reader has self-corrected. Otherwise, do not ask for a word to be re-read.

If you do not give away the pronunciation of words that the reader does not know, then this same test may be used again at a later date to assess progress as a result of a teaching programme.

Reading age = (Number of words correct / 10) + 5

Schonell Spelling Tests

Choose what you believe will be an appropriate point to start the test.

Dictate each word in turn, saying the word individually, then putting it into a sentence and finally repeating the word.

e.g. time

Can you tell me the time?

time

Dictate slowly and clearly. Never hurry the learner and repeat the word as often as is needed.

Continue until the learner has made at least 5 consecutive errors.

Retesting

Strictly speaking, you should not re-test within a year of the previous test if you are using a standardized, normed test. Six months is an acceptable time delay, but it is usually unwise to retest within six months. Re-test using the B version of the test and alternate each subsequent time.

Spelling age = (Number of words correct / 10) + 5

Literacy immersion toolkit

Reading Test

tree	little	milk	egg
book	school	sit	frog
playing	bun	flower	road
clock	train	light	picture
think	summer	people	something
dream	downstairs	biscuit	shepherd
thirsty	crowd	sandwich	beginning
postage	island	saucer	angel
ceiling	appeared	gnome	canary
attractive	imagine	nephew	gradually
smolder	applaud	disposal	nourished
diseased	university	orchestra	knowledge
audience	situated	physics	campaign
choir	intercede	fascinate	forfeit
siege	recent	plausible	prophecy
colonel	soloist	systematic	slovenly
classification	genuine	institution	pivot
conscience	heroic	pneumonia	preliminary
antique	susceptible	enigma	oblivion
scintillate	satirical	sabre	beguile
terrestrial	belligerent	adamant	sepulchre
statistics	miscellaneous	procrastinate	tyrannical
evangelical	grotesque	ineradicable	judicature
preferential	homonym	fictitious	rescind
metamorphosis	somnambulist	bibliography	idiosyncrasy

Spelling Test A

net	can	fun	top	rag
sat	hit	lid	cap	had
let	doll	bell	yes	then
may	tree	by	ill	egg
land	how	your	cold	talk
flower	son	seem	four	loud
ground	lowest	brain	write	amount
noise	remain	hoped	worry	dancing
damage	else	through	entered	cough
fitted	spare	daughter	edge	search
concert	domestic	topic	method	freeze
avoid	duties	recent	type	instance
liquid	assist	readily	guess	attendance
description	welfare	various	genuine	interfere
accordance	mechanical	anxious	signature	allotment
approval	accomplished	remittance	financial	capacity
surplus	exceptionally	successful	preliminary	resource
prologue	colonel	coarse	referring	courteous
exhibition	affectionately	attorney	pinnacle	toboggan
definite	guarantee	anniversary	irresistible	hydraulic

Spelling Test B

see	cut	mat	in	ran
bag	ten	hat	dad	bed
leg	dot	pen	yet	hay
good	till	be	with	from
time	call	help	week	pie
boat	mind	sooner	year	dream
sight	mouth	large	might	brought
mistake	pair	while	skate	stayed
yolk	island	nerve	join	fare
iron	health	direct	calm	headache
final	circus	increase	slippery	lodge
style	bargain	copies	guest	policy
view	library	cushion	safety	patient
account	earliest	institution	similar	generous
orchestra	equally	individual	merely	enthusiastic
appreciate	familiar	source	immediate	breathe
permanent	sufficient	broach	customary	especially
materially	cemetery	leisure	accredited	fraternally
subterranean	apparatus	portmanteau	politician	miscellaneous
mortgage	equipped	exaggerate	amateur	committee