Video transcript

Foundational skills – Literacy

Hello and welcome.

Literacy is fundamental to a student's ability to learn at school and to engage productively in society. The aim of this video is to familiarise you with the Literacy foundational skill, which offers a comprehensive view of literacy within the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0.

Let's begin by discussing what literacy is. Literacy is defined as the ability to comprehend both spoken language and a range of texts, and to express both verbally and through the written creation of text. In both comprehension and expression, students demonstrate accuracy, confidence and fluency, which provides the platform for successful learning in and out of school, and participation in the workplace and the community.

Let's turn our attention to the features of the Literacy foundational skill. Literacy is one of 3 foundational skills within the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0. It’s not a curriculum in and of itself – it’s a curriculum component. The development of literacy is enabled by the achievement of the knowledge and skills located in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 English, and further developed and applied in the other learning areas and capabilities. It is presented as a progression of student learning that describes the learning pathways along which students typically progress, regardless of age or grade.

The Literacy progression describes the observable indicators of increasing complexity in the use of Standard Australian English. By providing a comprehensive description of literacy development, the Literacy progressions give teachers a conceptual tool that can assist them to develop targeted teaching and learning programs for students who are working at, above or towards year-level expectations.

The progressions also complement the Victorian Curriculum F–10 English by providing more fine-grained descriptions of literacy development to support teachers to accurately monitor students' literacy development across all learning areas. The knowledge and skills in the Literacy foundational skill are acquired through the teaching of the English curriculum, with the majority of students developing their literacy skills as they progress through the levels of English.

Literacy is foundational not only to students’ learning in English, but to all learning for students across the curriculum. It is important to note that the skills of literacy can and should be applied through all curriculum areas of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0.

Students who do need additional support in acquiring literacy skills should be supported in the English classroom, but can also be supported in other curriculum areas. Teachers of other curriculum areas can work with English teachers to identify where those students are along the Literacy progression, in order to make appropriate modifications to their teaching, learning and assessment. In this way, it is possible that teachers across all curriculum areas can use the Literacy foundational skills to support students to successfully acquire literacy skills. The Literacy foundational skill is organised into 3 elements, which align with the language modes of the English curriculum. The 3 elements are Speaking and Listening; Reading and Viewing; and Writing. Each element includes sub-elements organised into levels that represent evidence-based aspects of literacy development. The elements and sub-elements are meaningfully mapped to the Victorian Curriculum F–10 English. This mapping is by both the progressions to the level and the sub-elements to the sub-strand. English teachers can use this mapping to identify appropriate sets of progressions from the Literacy foundational skill to support the learning of individual students and/or groups of students.

The sub-elements are organised into progression levels. All progression levels are flexible and personalised, with no specific timeframe for achievement, as they reflect the unique pace that each student may apply across the curriculum. The progression levels may span across multiple levels of the curriculum. It is important to note that students may demonstrate skills across more than one progression level, and that the levels in each sub-element are discrete and are not designed to align across sub-elements.

The Speaking and Listening element includes three sub-elements: Listening, Interacting and Speaking. Speaking and listening skills can and should be applied through all curriculum areas of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0. At Level 6, for example, skills in listening seen in the Interacting with others sub-strand have 2 indicator progressions under the sub-element of Listening. These can assist teachers in establishing evidence of skills in listening.

The Reading and Viewing element includes 4 sub-elements: Phonological awareness, Phonic knowledge and word recognition, Fluency, and Understanding texts. Students engage in reading and viewing across all learning areas of the Victorian Curriculum F–10. Students will use the knowledge and skills learned in English to engage with written and viewed text across the curriculum. For example, at Level 1, skills in phonic knowledge articulated in the Phonic and word knowledge sub-strand have 3 associated progressions under the sub-element of Phonic knowledge and word recognition. These provide English teachers with detailed indicators of progress through this skill set.

The Writing element includes 5 sub-elements: Creating texts, Handwriting and keyboarding, Punctuation, Grammar, and Spelling. The skills within the sub-elements of Writing are applied across all learning areas of the Victorian Curriculum F–10. For example, at Level 7, skills and spelling articulated in the Word knowledge sub-strand have 2 associated progressions under the sub-element of Spelling. These can support the development of students' progress.

Teachers across all levels and curriculum areas can support the literacy development of their students by understanding where their students are along the progression within the Literacy foundational skill, and providing opportunities for students to apply and extend these skills in authentic contexts.

Literacy enables students to access, understand, analyse and evaluate information and ideas, express thoughts and emotions, present ideas and opinions, and interact with others.

While the Literacy progression, with the Literacy foundational skill, describes the expected trajectory of skill development, not all students will progress through every level in a uniform manner.

Teachers and schools can use the Literacy foundational skill to support the development of targeted teaching and learning programs, and set clearer learning goals for individual students. They can also use the Literacy progressions to establish which literacy skills a student can apply, identify any gaps in students' literacy skills and knowledge, and plan for the next steps to progress learning in specific areas of literacy across the curriculum.

For more information, I encourage you to explore the Victorian Curriculum F–10 website, which provides easy access to the curriculum, including the Literacy foundational skill, and all the supporting resources.

Thank you for watching.