

Levels 3–4: Overview of Learning and Teaching Activities for Reading

At this level students read, interpret and respond to a range of literary and multimedia texts. The texts have relatively concrete themes in a range of topic areas with some unfamiliar ideas, information, vocabulary and textual features.

The types of texts include:

- Shorter, more concentrated extracts of non-fiction such as an explanation of a topic in science, art or technology as well as everyday topics
- Longer fiction texts with extended chapters such as adventure, fantasy, suspense, historical and science fiction novels.
- Articles and reports that describe a perspective or opinion on a relatively concrete topic such as newspaper items and advertisements.
- Short poems (verse and songs) and short stories.

Over Levels 3–4, the complexity of texts increases in the following ways:

- sentences refer to more concepts
- sentences have less redundancy and less repetition
- the grammar of the sentences becomes more complex
- the meaning of each sentence and paragraph becomes more complex.

At this level there are two learning and teaching sequences, one for a fiction text [Blabbermouth](#) and one for a non fiction text [Early days in Sydney Town](#). This overview provides Teaching Strategies, Student Reading Behaviours and Word Level Knowledge.

Teaching Strategies

Over Levels 3–4 students are taught to use the following types of reading strategies to integrate multiple contextual cues and text organization:

Describe their reading plan for these types of texts. For example, when reading a text, students decide its likely topic; and suggest words, phrases and ideas that the text might say and questions it might answer. Students say what actions they will use while reading; how they will keep track of key ideas as they read; what they will do if what they read doesn't make sense; how they will use paraphrasing, visualising, summarising and reviewing; and how they will go about synthesising paragraph summaries across paragraphs.

Identify particular types of non-fiction texts; decide the purposes of each type; and link the purpose with actions they might take or questions they might ask after reading. For example, students distinguish between:

- Simple reports and explanatory texts that describe how something happened; to explain why something happened; and to answer questions about why something happened.
- Factual texts targeting different topics, for example, scientific, sporting and historical texts. Students identify what each type of text might tell the reader. For example, scientific texts tell us about the world or how things work; sports texts tell us how sports like cricket are played; and historical texts tell us what things happened in the past and how people lived.
- Technology and media texts

Read text independently, either silently or aloud as appropriate. Students may switch from one mode to the other if necessary for comprehension or other communication purposes.

Work out the meanings of unfamiliar words in less redundant contexts. Students synthesise text information across sentences in fiction and non-fiction text and gradually refine their understanding of the term as they continue to read.

Decide possible questions that may be answered by each type of text they have learnt. What would a sporting explanation tell them as opposed to a sporting description? What questions are answered by particular sentences in the text? For example, students read that butterflies begin life as tiny eggs and link this with 'How do butterflies begin life?'

Students use various paragraph comprehending strategies in an integrated way and identify paragraph information that facilitates reading.

- Students learn to use topic sentences as a way of getting an idea of what a paragraph is about. They read a topic sentence, paraphrase it and infer what the paragraph might say.
- Students select key ideas and paraphrase and visualise more complex sentences. Students paraphrase a paragraph consisting of more complex sentences such as sentences that have embedded phrases and clauses and describe the ideas. They predict events and infer possible consequences reading on as well as using relatively explicit concrete contextual cues to synthesise sentence meanings across two or three sentences in a paragraph of actions.
- Students summarise a paragraph in an integrated way. Students synthesise meanings across two or three sentences in a paragraph and then summarise it. They use topic sentences to summarise a paragraph and to identify the main questions to be examined by the paragraph. Students use the summary of a paragraph to predict events and infer possible consequences.
- Students summarise two or more paragraphs in an integrated way. Students read each paragraph, ask 'What has this been about?' and summarise it. They synthesise summaries first across two or three paragraphs and then longer text. Students use topic sentences for non-fiction texts to identify the main questions examined by each paragraph and use these questions to integrate the meaning of the text.
- Students visualise a sequence of paragraphs to assist text recall and comprehension, and then describe the sequence of images. They paraphrase and visualise first one and then two and three paragraphs, using the images to think about possibilities.

Consolidate what they read in a range of ways. Students suggest or select the summary sentence for a set of fiction sentences or paragraph. They then select the paragraph in a text that answers a particular question or that provides particular information. Students learn to adapt the consolidation strategies in Levels 2–3 to the current texts.

A guide for organising learning and teaching of reading strategies is provided in [Learning and Teaching Structure](#).

Student Reading Behaviours

Over Levels 3–4 students are taught to display the following outcomes for the types of texts read in this phase:

Show literal comprehension. Students use several strategies to locate, select and record key information from texts.

Show inferential and evaluative comprehension and support their interpretations with evidence both from the text and their general knowledge. As students improve their ability to analyse these texts, the evidence they use to support their interpretations improves. They gradually learn to use evidence that relates to different cultural or historical perspectives.

Show inferential comprehension in a range of ways. Students can:

- Infer possible antecedent motives and characteristics.
- Answer questions that ask readers to infer cause and effect across paragraphs.

- Read between the lines and infer the nature of possible changes.
- Answer questions that ask readers to infer 'What would happen if....?' by changing ideas in the text.
- Identify and synthesise the descriptions of characters and events across several paragraphs; suggest why the characters and events are described in particular ways; and suggest alternative ways of describing them.

Identify or suggest a writer's intended audience and purpose for a text and evaluate how well the purpose is achieved. For example, 'Did text A help you understand why X did Y?' Gradually students learn to link the writer's purpose with how a text is written and to recognise that texts are written from particular cultural or historical perspectives.

Locate, compare and contrast some of the structures of fiction, reports and arguments. Students can:

- Describe the techniques writers use to link sentences in more complex ways.
- Identify how language is used in different ways by different writers to represent characters, people and events in different ways
- Compare and contrast two texts on a range of criteria that relate to the same topic on a range of criteria. For example, two reports or news articles from different newspapers or two factual internet sources.

Analyse the use of imagery and dialogue for specific events, plot and setting in these types of texts. Analysis is initially from within the reader's context and then extended to other cultural and historical perspectives. Gradually this can be extended to include point of view and characterization.

Identify the attitudes and beliefs of various characters and how these are presented by writers.

Talk about the actions they use while reading to help themselves to read, for example, using topic sentences.

Describe how reading helps them and is a useful activity, for example, to discover what other people are thinking or to teach new ideas efficiently.

Word Level Knowledge

Over Levels 3–4 students continue to improve their ability to read unfamiliar two- and three-syllable words. They infer their meanings by integrating simple morphographic and graphophonic strategies.

This trend is scaffolded in part by automatising the phonological knowledge covered in Levels 2–2.75 and by changes in students' morphographic knowledge. The sequence in which the word knowledge and the related morphographic knowledge are taught is shown in the following:

<p>Stage 1 Morphographic knowledge Students learn that some word stems are words themselves convey meaning. For example, they analyse 'export', 'deport', 'portable', 'porter' and 'car port' and guess that 'port' is linked with moving or carrying something.</p>	<p>Corresponding word level knowledge Students read familiar isolated two- and three-syllable words; identify their morphographic features; link these with their meanings; use these to infer the meanings of the morphographic units; and make analogy between known words.</p>
<p>Stage 2 Students learn to identify morphographic suffixes and to use them to link unfamiliar words with ones they may know. They learn that '-tion' can be removed from nouns to show the related action, for example, 'attraction' = 'attract', 'station' = 'stay'; and that '-ness' can be removed from words to show the related adjective, for example, 'tidiness' = 'tidy'.</p>	<p>Students read less familiar isolated two- and three-syllable words and work out their possible meanings by using morphographic features and analogy with known words.</p>