

Levels 5–6: Overview of Learning and Teaching Activities for Reading

At this level students improve their ability to read, interpret and respond to a range of literary and multimedia texts in a range of topics from the various subjects. These texts have a readability rating in the 9–10 grade range. For the sample texts related to this developmental overview

At this level there is a learning and teaching sequence for a non fiction text [Australia Leader in Trashing Refugee Rights](#) which is a newspaper article.

This overview provides Teaching Strategies, Student Reading Behaviours and Word Level Knowledge.

The types of texts include:

- Shorter, more concentrated extracts of prose such as factual area teaching text in the subject areas, academic articles and notes, encyclopedia entries and reference materials.
- Operational manuals, texts that specify sets of procedures that need to be implemented in various familiar, everyday contexts. For example, procedures in science practical work, technology, physical education and domestic science.
- Longer texts with one or more sub themes contributing to the main themes, for example, contemporary, classical and popular texts, novels, biographies, imaginative fiction, fantasies and science fiction.
- Current affairs and news articles; newspaper editorials; reports that target complex adolescent or world themes, issues and attitudes; evaluations; critiques; multiple treatments of the same topic; persuasive and opinion oriented versus factual text such as letters to the editor, editorials, political text and argumentative text.
- Satirical, metaphoric and figurative text.
- Poetry (verse and songs) and informative text about relatively concrete topics.
- Dramatic writing and historical plays.

Over Levels 5–6, the complexity of texts increases from earlier texts in the following ways:

- concepts are less literal and more abstract than at earlier levels and include a greater range of symbolic ideas
- sentences contain 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
- a text may have two or more sub themes that develop in parallel with the main theme.

Teaching assists students to learn to:

- Comprehend themes and topics that will usually be less familiar and improve their ability to read in order to learn.
- Think about the ideas in these texts in more abstract ways, without reference back to their everyday experiences.

- Make multiple interpretations of texts and greater use of inferential devices.
- Comprehend metaphoric, figurative and satirical language.
- Comprehend contexts that may be referenced either in the past, the future or in alternative contexts such as science fiction or fantasy.
- Detect and understand sophisticated language devices for persuading and communicating opinions.
- Comprehend longer texts that may have two or more sub themes that evolve in parallel with the main theme and need, at various points, to be integrated with it.

Teaching Strategies

Over Levels 5–6 students are taught to use the following types of reading strategies to comprehend these types of texts:

Describe their reading plan for these types of texts. Each student's plan explicitly mentions skimming the text to link its likely topic with what they know; why the text was written; what it might tell them; the actions they might use while reading; and how they will add new ideas to what they know in order to deal with the more complex language of the text. Gradually students modify their plan to note the use of imagery in the text and to select the main ideas in conceptually dense or extended texts.

Skim and scan in order to select the main ideas in more complex informational text that has high conceptual density as well as in extended texts that use figurative language and sociocultural perspectives. Gradually students learn to apply this to text that uses metaphoric language; historical and sociocultural perspectives; in argumentative, persuasive or extended texts; and then to text that uses symbolic language.

Identify how a text is organised, how this influences how they read it and what it might tell them. This includes identifying the extent to which the text uses figurative versus literal language; where is it referenced in time and place and what these mean for what they might know having read it; where metaphor or satire are used; where symbolism is used; and where is it referenced in time and place.

Read these texts independently, either silently or aloud as appropriate, switching from one mode to the other if necessary for comprehension or other communication purposes.

Use vocabulary enhancement strategies to work out the subject specific meanings of unfamiliar topic words. Students decontextualise unfamiliar topic words or make them more abstract by talking about the meaning in a more general way. They link unfamiliar topic words with other abstract concepts specified in the text and link the meanings with more general or more specific concepts mentioned in the text.

Use sentence strategies necessary for comprehending the more complex sentences in text at this level. Students use arcing, paraphrasing and visualising to understand the meanings of the different types of statements, for example, particular, procedural, general and conditional general statements. They switch between using different strategies depending on the type of statement.

Gradually students:

- Recognise figural ideas in sentences and use the appropriate strategies for comprehending these, for example, constructing a literal interpretation.

- Recognise metaphoric ideas in sentences and use the appropriate strategies for comprehending these. For example, using cultural analogy and constructing a literal interpretation and for comprehending cultural influences in the text.
- Recognise symbolic ideas in sentences and use the appropriate strategies for comprehending these, for example, using analogy and constructing a literal interpretation.

- Use paragraph comprehending strategies for more complex text by:
 - Identifying the main and subordinate ideas across sentences and integrating these into a summary.
 - Identifying or inferring the questions answered by each sentence and using these to identify the main questions answered by a paragraph.
 - Reading between the lines to infer cause and effect and the nature of possible changes across a paragraph. Visualising successive sentences in a paragraph to infer and read between the lines.
 - Linking the main issues and specific events represented in a paragraph.

Use paragraph synthesis strategies by:

- Identifying the main and subordinate ideas across text comprising up to five paragraphs and integrating these into a summary.
- Identifying the theme and sub-theme of a chapter in a longer fictional text and integrating these into a summary.
- Identifying the main and subordinate ideas across a chapter in an informative text and integrating these into a summary.
- Identifying the theme and sub-themes in a chapter of fiction across two or more chapters in a longer fictional text. Integrating these into a summary of each chapter and using these to compare the chapters.

Use various strategies to record key ideas in the text. Students employ note taking for longer fictional texts, informational texts and opinion and argumentative texts by drawing a network of meanings from the text.

Consolidate and review what they read in a range of ways. Students construct or select a summary of a text read and then implement the set of actions described in a text.

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

Student Reading Behaviours

Over Levels 5–6 students are taught to display the following outcomes for the types of texts read in this phase:

Show literal comprehension of the relevant text. For example, students retell the key and subordinate ideas in the text; answer questions using several strategies to locate, select and record targeted information; support their interpretations with information drawn from the text; and say questions that the text answers. Gradually students are taught to show literal comprehension of:

- Figurative language and cultural or historical perspectives in their retelling.
- Metaphoric language and cultural or historical perspectives in their retelling. Students implement the more complex action sequences described in the operational texts.
- Read several texts that address an issue; identify the perspective of each and the information used to support it; and compare and evaluate various criteria two actions sequences described in texts.

Show inferential comprehension of the relevant texts in a range of ways. Students read between the lines and infer features and characteristics of key concepts; infer cause and effect across paragraphs and predict possible events and consequences; infer 'What would happen if...?' by changing conditions in the text and predict the nature of changes; develop critical and personal responses, such as interpretive pieces or character profiles. Gradually students are taught to:

- Suggest why concepts, characters or events are described in particular ways; suggest what might be alternative ways of describing them; and identify how sociocultural values, attitudes and beliefs are presented in particular texts.
- Identify how sociocultural values, attitudes and beliefs are presented in particular texts; how these affect text comprehension; and how persuasive techniques are used in simple written arguments and debates.
- Analyse the ideas in two or more articles that debate an issue; evaluate the argument in each; interpret texts both subjectively and in more objective and critical ways to identify multiple perspectives; and explain the ways in which a text could change if set in a different social, cultural, historical or industrial context.

Suggest the author's purpose for writing the text, infer the author's point of view or attitudes and how well the text achieved its purpose. Students evaluate the quality of the information presented and analyse how social values or attitudes (for example, social values in historical or Humanities texts) are conveyed. Gradually students are taught to:

- Produce personal interpretive responses to texts, for example, character profiles. Students identify the themes and issues explored in texts, providing supporting evidence to justify their interpretations.
- Infer meanings and messages in texts and compare the presentation of information and ideas in different texts. For example, in two persuasive texts targeting the same topic or two biographies describing the same character.
- Infer the purposes of two or three texts targeting the same topic and identify the dispositions and attitudes of each author.

Describe the characteristics of texts and how these influence how the texts achieve their purposes. Students analyse how writers use language in various ways, for example, use imagery, characterisation and setting in novels and persuasive texts to convey their intention. Gradually students are taught to

- Analyse how writers differ in their use of language to represent characters, people, plot and events. For example, by comparing two reports about the same topic or issue and comparing the language used by each. Students analyse how figurative language and metaphor can sometimes assist text interpretation over literal language in informational text as well as in persuasive and fiction text.
- Analyse multiple texts that address an issue; compare the language used by each; identify how a writer's attitudes and intentions are reflected in the information used; and evaluate the logic of the argument provided by each.
- Analyse and explain similarities and differences between texts and discuss how the ideas in a text are determined by the context, time or culture in which they are based. Students identify the language used to present points of view from particular social, political or cultural perspectives, for example, how different groups would construct conservation in text.

Talk about the actions they use to comprehend the texts at this level. For example, students discuss how they pursue the argument presented by a writer; identify cultural or historical influences on the ideas presented; and read to learn.

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