MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

The English Language Learning Progressions

Years 1–4

A resource for mainstream and ESOL teachers

Acknowledgments

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Contents

Introduction

This booklet describes the learning pathways that learners in years 1–4 typically follow as they acquire an additional language (New Zealand English).

English language learners in years 1–4 are usually between five and nine years of age. Learners in this group may have begun school in New Zealand at the age of five. They may have arrived in New Zealand when they were six, seven, eight, or nine, with or without previous experience of formal education (in English or in any other language). The English language level of learners in years 1–4 may be anywhere from the Foundation Stage to Stage 2 of the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP), so this booklet includes examples of oral language, texts for reading, and learners' writing that are appropriate for this age group at these three stages.

Teachers' expectations of an English language learner's use of language need to be aligned with the individual's developmental stage. Teachers' expectations of progress should also take the learner's stage of cognitive development into account.

An English language learner's level of English is usually related closely to their education levels in their first language and their previous English language learning. (There are also many other factors that affect a learner's progress – see pages 6–8 of the introductory booklet for information about these.)

As a group, English language learners in years 1–4 are closer in English proficiency to **native speakers** of the same age than are English language learners in later years. Teachers can, therefore, select or adapt resources that are designed for native speakers of English in years 1–4. This booklet can help you to decide how far to adapt the content of oral and written resources to personalise learning for your diverse learners (as recommended in *Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis*).

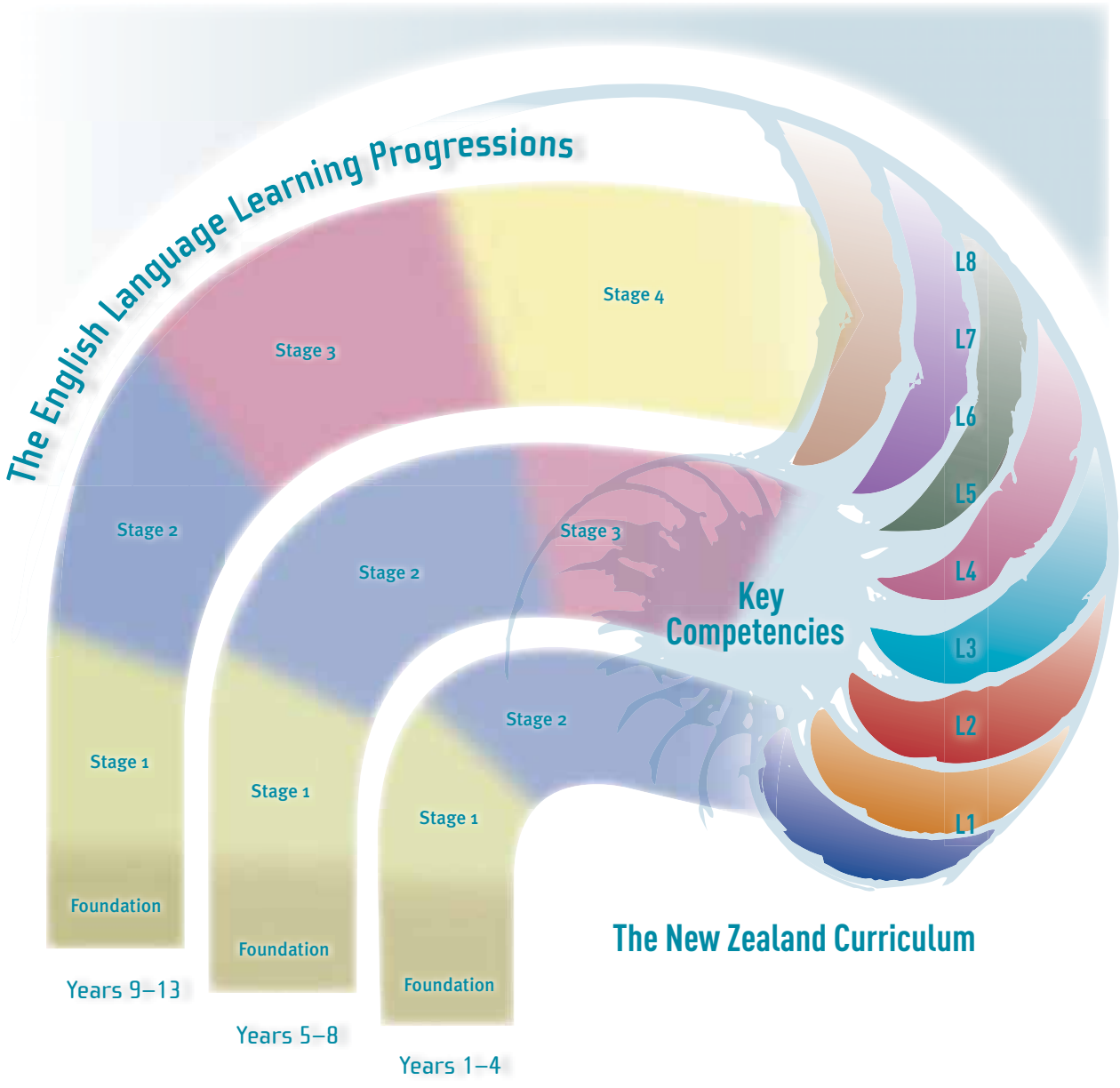
It's vital that the language-learning needs of learners in years 1–4 are diagnosed accurately so that they can get the kind of help they need. ESOL specialists (and other relevant specialists) should be involved in diagnosing each learner's language-learning needs and in adapting the content of learning resources to meet these needs. You can look at some successful adaptations of content for English language learners in mainstream classes on ESOL Online (www.tki.org.nz/r/esol/esolonline/).

It's also important to reinforce the value of an English language learner's first language.[1] Research shows that when a learner is encouraged to discuss concepts and tasks in their first language, their achievement is likely to be higher.

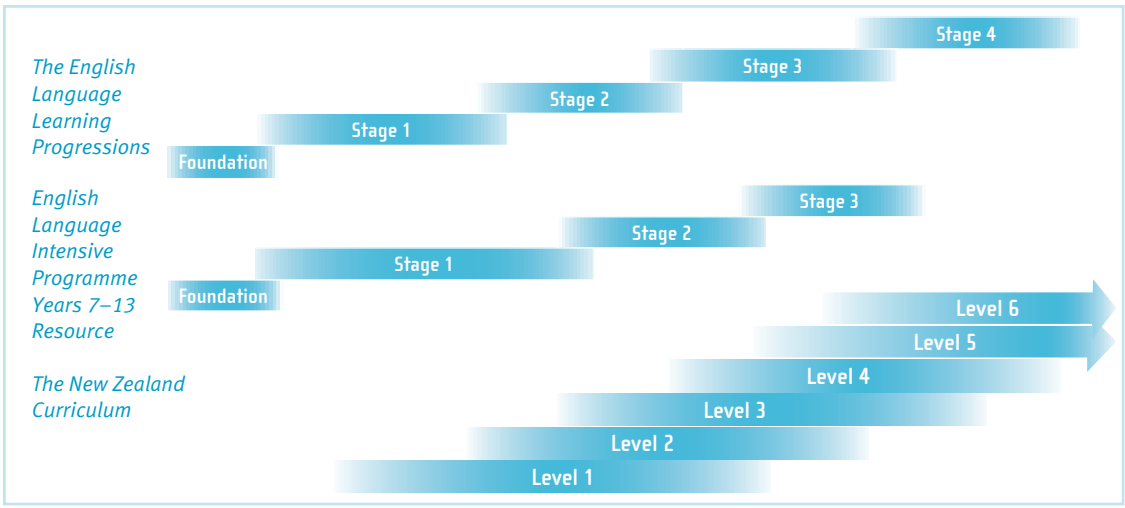
This booklet is arranged into three sections: Oral Language, Reading, and Writing, each relevant to teachers of learners in years 1–4. It also includes a section with learning prompts that are appropriate for this age group. The Record of Progress form on page 64 allows teachers to record the progress of individual learners.

[1] Although the term "first language" is commonly used in the singular, some learners may have more than one first language.

The English Language Learning Progressions and related resources



Oral language – speaking and listening



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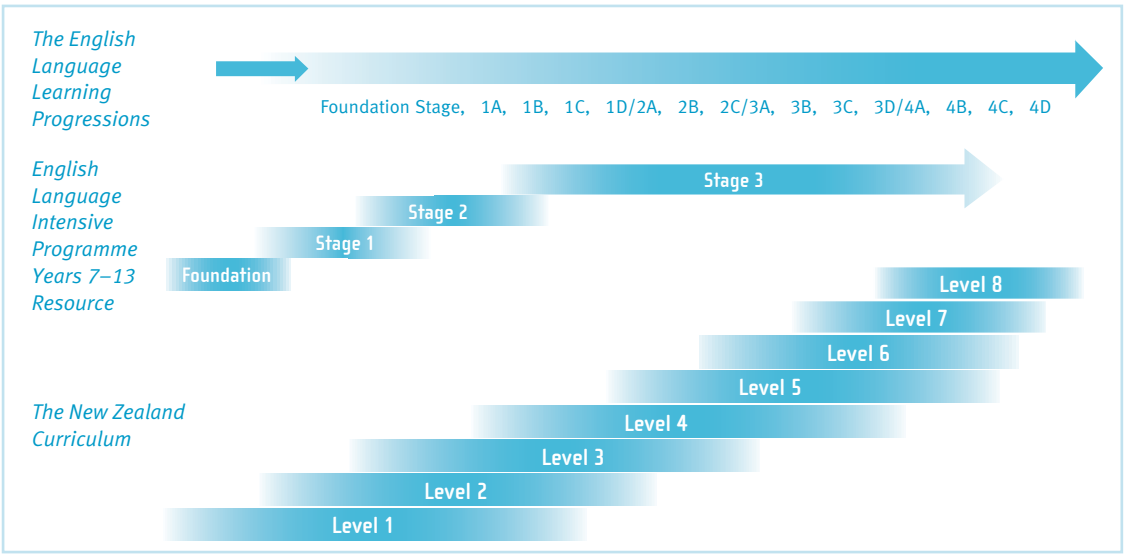

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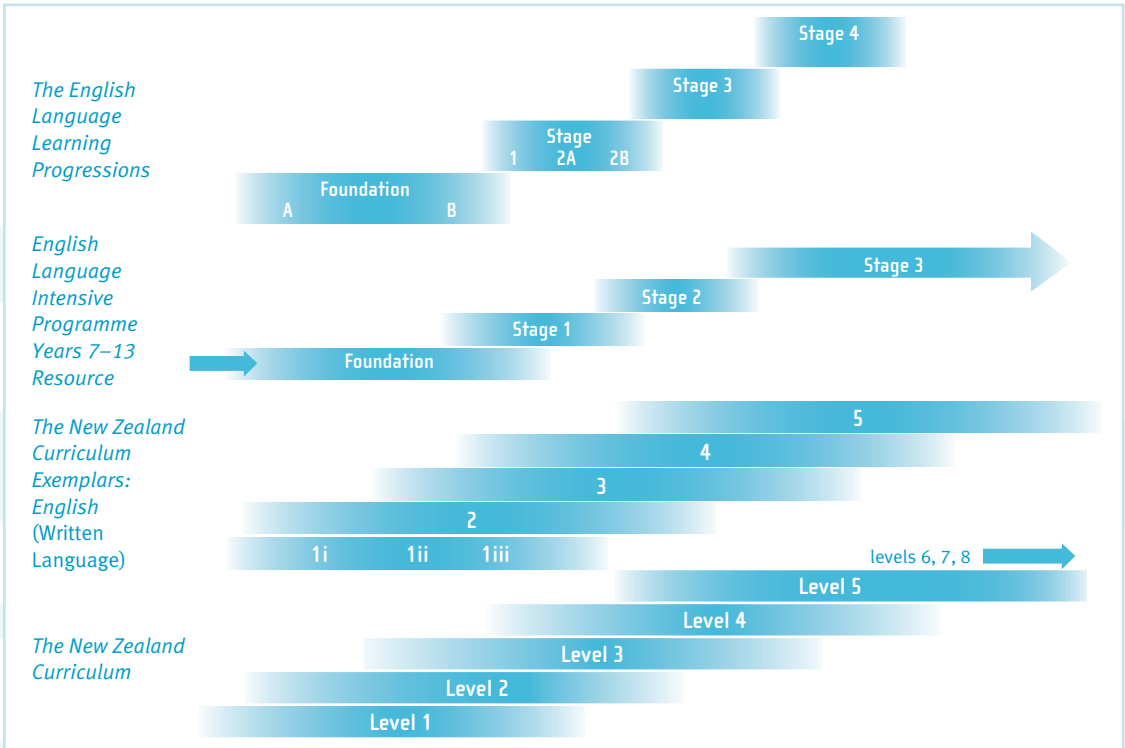


Relating the English Language Learning Progressions to other frameworks and resources

The oral language, reading, and writing progression diagrams on page 5 show the relationships between the stages of the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP), the New Zealand Curriculum, and the *English Language Intensive Programme Years 7–13 Resource* (ELIP). For writing, the stages of the New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for English (Written Language) are also shown.

The oral language progression diagram shows the relationship between the stages of the ELLP, the New Zealand Curriculum, and ELIP. The foundation stages of the ELLP and the ELIP begin at an earlier point than the levels of the New Zealand Curriculum. This reflects the difference between a native speaker of English who already has an oral language base in English before they start school and an English language learner who is just beginning to learn English.

The reading progression diagram shows the relationship between the stages of text development in the ELLP, the language outcomes of the ELIP, and the eight levels of the New Zealand Curriculum.

The writing progression diagram shows the relationship between the stages of writing development in the ELLP, the ELIP, and the New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for English (Written Language), and the eight levels of the New Zealand Curriculum.

In the oral language, reading, and writing progression diagrams, there is no clearly defined beginning or end to any of the stages. A learner's performance varies in different contexts and always depends on what they bring to the task, their age, the demands of the task, their level of first-language literacy, and the quality and extent of the teacher's scaffolding. The progressions are not restricted to the English curriculum area: oral language, reading, and writing need to be developed in all the learning areas.

Oral Language – Listening and Speaking

Oral language is sometimes assumed to be less complex than written language. Spoken language that occurs in face-to-face contexts and is about things that the learner can see is often easier to comprehend than written language that refers to abstract concepts or unfamiliar ideas. However, oral language can also involve abstract concepts and ideas that are new to the learner, and (unlike written language) it can't usually be reviewed by the listener. Oral language is often as complex as written language and is sometimes more difficult to process. It challenges the learner in different ways from written language.

What's different about speaking and listening in an additional language?

Children learn to speak their first language before they learn to read and write it, and it's widely known that they will learn to read and write more easily if they have first developed a rich bank of oral language. However, unlike a native speaker of English, an English language learner hasn't necessarily established an oral language base in English as part of their development before they start school. An English language learner may, therefore, not have an existing basis in oral language on which to build English literacy skills.

There are many interrelated factors that may influence an English language learner's proficiency in oral language, including:

- the content of their previous English language instruction (if any);
- the teaching approaches used in previous English language instruction (if any);
- the age at which they begin (or began) learning English;
- their level of confidence in speaking English.

English language learners in New Zealand are learning English in a context where it's the everyday language of the majority of the community. All new English language learners face significant challenges when speaking and listening to New Zealand English. At the same time as they are learning the vocabulary and grammatical structures of the new language, they're also working to gain control over other features of oral language. They need to learn the sounds of English words, the subtle meanings conveyed by changes in tone and speed, and the differences in meaning that a change in stress can make. (For example, "*ref*use", with the stress on the first syllable, is a noun that means "rubbish", but "re*fuse*", with the stress on the second syllable, is a verb that means "to say no to something".) These are called the **prosodic features**[2] of a language. Prosodic features combine with **non-verbal language** features, such as facial expressions, to create and convey meaning, and both are culturally determined dimensions of the language. It takes time to learn the significance of the prosodic features of a new language.

Why can some learners read and write in English before they learn to speak it?

Some learners who can already read and write in their first language may learn to do the same in the new language before they are able to comprehend it orally. This is especially likely if they first learned English at school in a context where:

- English was not the language of the community;
- teachers focused more on written English than on oral English;
- there were few opportunities to listen to or speak with native speakers of English.

[2] *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*, by David Crystal, discusses different aspects of spoken and written language. It explains how the prosodic features of each language differ and how they are interpreted and expressed in different cultures. Prosodic features are also described in *Exploring Language*, Ministry of Education, 1996.

Learners will generally understand more than they can say – their receptive language will be more advanced than their productive language.

Many English language learners who come to New Zealand schools are from backgrounds like this. Because they have some knowledge of the language structures and vocabulary, they have an initial advantage over those who have never learned English. However, these learners, in particular, will need their teachers to provide explicit support for their oral language development.

Learners need to develop oral language in all the learning areas, not just in English.

On the other hand, there are learners who can communicate effectively in English in social contexts but who have very little experience in understanding and speaking English in curriculum contexts. These learners will need their teachers to provide explicit support to help them extend their bank of spoken English to include the English vocabulary and structures needed for classroom learning.

There are also English language learners who will begin learning oral and written English at the same time. They will be learning the grammatical structures, vocabulary, sound system, and writing system of the new language all at once and will need explicit support in all aspects of language learning.

When English language learners begin to speak English, their first language is likely to have a strong influence on their grammar and pronunciation. But if they begin learning English at an early age, they may eventually show few if any indications (such as in stress patterns or accent) that it's not their native tongue.

Why should we wait longer before expecting a response from an English language learner?

Many factors can affect a learner's speaking proficiency. Each time a learner speaks, what they say will be affected not only by their knowledge of the language but also by the sociocultural context, for example, whether they know the person they are speaking to. The English language learner may also need to explore and discuss the differences between non-verbal and prosodic features of their first language (such as body language and intonation) and those of English, as these features are often culturally specific. Because of the complexity of oral language production, teachers (and other listeners) often need to allow additional "wait time" to give learners a chance to initiate, respond, and interact with others.

English language learners need continuing access to oral input in their first language and encouragement and opportunities to think and talk in their first language.

English language learners should be encouraged to continue to develop oral language skills in their first language and to use critical-thinking skills (and other oral language skills) in their first language to help them develop oral language in English. **Cognitive academic language proficiency** (CALP) develops better when the first language develops alongside the additional language.

When working with an English language learner in years 1–4, effective teachers provide continuing affirmation of their first language and opportunities for them to use their first language wherever possible. Effective teachers also help learners to make links between their use of written and oral language to ensure that both aspects of their language develop together. Teaching approaches such as shared and guided reading and writing and experienced-based learning support these very close links between reading, writing, and oral language. These links are further supported by the use of manipulative materials (for example, magnetic letters, picture cards and labels, and board games), audio materials, and digital media.

While much of the information in *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4* applies as much to English language learners as it does to native speakers of English, it's especially important for young English language learners to be given a range of models of oral language and to be supported by explicit teaching of vocabulary and grammar. (See *Oral Language in Years 1–3* [forthcoming] and *Expanding Oral Language in the Classroom* [van Hees, 2007].)

The oral language progression

The oral language progression that follows is set out in two matrices. The first matrix (output) indicates the **verbal** and **non-verbal language** that learners are likely to produce at the first three stages of the ELLP (Foundation Stage to Stage 2). Learners may produce only a selection of the suggested output at any one time, and whether what they say is appropriate or not will depend on the context and the purpose for speaking.

The second matrix (input) lists what learners at the first three stages are likely to understand of what they hear with varying levels of support. At the early stages, processing all aspects of spoken language at the same time is a significant challenge because the listener can't review spoken language unless it's recorded or repeated. Teachers can use this matrix to help them to speak appropriately so that learners at each stage can understand them. Teachers can support learners to increase their comprehension of input by **elaborating on** or expanding oral text.

Output and input levels should not be seen as parallel because, for most learners of a new language, receptive understanding is usually ahead of production for quite a long time (as noted in the introductory booklet on pages 5 and 15).

For exemplars of oral language at the various stages, please see the accompanying DVD *Oral Language Exemplars for the English Language Learning Progressions.*

The oral language matrix: output

	Interpersonal context	Content	Delivery	Non-verbal responses	Language structures
	The learner may:				
Foundation Stage	– respond in face-to-face social or curriculum contexts – respond with a mixture of their first language and English – participate in limited interactions in pair, small-group, and whole-class contexts	– say a few words in English – give a formulaic but appropriate response – use a gesture or facial expression to indicate that they do or don't understand – remain silent or give an inappropriate response	– not respond at all or pause for a long time before responding – have pronunciation that is strongly influenced by their first language	– respond with a relevant action, gesture, or facial expression – respond with silence, which may indicate respect for the speaker, a lack of comprehension, or a lack of confidence	– say single words – echo **phrases** that they hear – respond in their first language
Stage 1	– respond with a mixture of their first language and English – participate in limited interactions in pair, small-group, and whole-class contexts	– retell the main ideas or messages from their reading or listening and present one or two ideas – use a gesture, facial expression, or phrase to indicate that they do or don't understand – initiate communication (e.g., by making requests or comments or by offering information)	– pause and hesitate when speaking – make some distinctions between **minimal pairs** in English (e.g., "pin" and "bin", "ship" and "sheep") – have pronunciation that shows features of their first language	– follow an instruction or complete a task – respond with silence, which may indicate respect for the speaker, a lack of comprehension, or a lack of confidence	– use mostly **high-frequency words** and leave out **structural words** – use non-standard vocabulary and sentence structures – use the subject–verb–object structure if they have had a chance to plan what they are going to say
Stage 2	– respond in an appropriate or relevant way for the audience and the purpose for communicating – participate in different interactive group situations, such as pairs, groups, and whole-class discussions – use English confidently and appropriately in a range of situations.	– ask questions, give instructions, negotiate disagreements, buy something in a shop, arrange appointments, or explain a problem.	– use a larger vocabulary and give detailed responses – speak fluently, with occasional pauses and hesitation – pronounce most words in a way that is usually clear to the listener, although they may retain some features of their first language – make distinctions between minimal pairs in English (e.g., "pin" and "bin", "ship" and "sheep").	– begin to make use of non-verbal features of the English language.	– include structural vocabulary to produce fairly coherent and accurate standard English – rely less on **formulaic chunks** and use more independently generated language structures.

The oral language matrix: input

	Interpersonal context	Content	Delivery	Language structures	First-language support
	The learner may understand:				*The learner needs:*
Foundation Stage	– language use in face-to-face contexts, often with support from pictures or objects – limited interactions in pairs (student to student and student to teacher) – limited interactions in small-group contexts – limited interactions in whole-class contexts	– basic concepts expressed in simple English (e.g., colours, shapes, time, dates, numbers, body parts, feelings) – some basic instructions and simple questions – models of different types of oral texts (see *Supporting English Language Learning in Primary Schools*) – words that are significant to or for them	– slow and clear speech, using simple language – direct address, with key words repeated often – gestures and facial expressions that accompany simple instructions, information, or questions	– individual words and some short chunks of language (formulaic chunks)	– extensive first-language support (e.g., through bilingual helpers or bilingual picture dictionaries and first-language texts)
Stage 1	– limited interactions in pairs (student to student and student to teacher) – limited interactions in small-group contexts – limited interactions in whole-class contexts	– curriculum content that reflects what their peers are learning in mainstream classes – simple, repetitive texts, such as songs, rhymes, poems, and raps – one or two clusters of ideas in familiar curriculum and social contexts – carefully scaffolded texts in unfamiliar curriculum contexts – simple oral texts, which may be presented on CDs, CD-ROMs, or DVDs (e.g., the CD *Junior Journal 34 and 35*)	– the meaning of gestures, facial expressions, and changes in volume or tone – slow and clear speech, using longer phrases of simple language, with key ideas repeated – standard New Zealand English, including slang and **idioms** that are limited and/or explained	– **simple sentences** and longer common phrases – short passages of natural speech, such as in conversations and instructions	– extensive first-language support (e.g., through bilingual helpers or bilingual picture dictionaries and first-language texts)
Stage 2	– interactions in pairs (student to student and student to teacher) – interactions in small-group contexts – interactions in whole-class contexts – interactions through extended speech (e.g., listening to a debate).	– curriculum content that reflects what their peers are learning in mainstream classes – some commonly used colloquial expressions and some Māori words and phrases – extended speech in familiar curriculum and social contexts – extended speech in unfamiliar contexts with support – oral texts, which may be presented on CDs, CD-ROMs, or DVDs.	– short passages of standard New Zealand English in a range of accents, spoken at a natural speed – extended speech that allows pauses for them to process what they have heard – the meaning of non-verbal language features (body language and prosodic features).	– some **complex sentences** – complete and incomplete sentences.	– continued first-language support wherever possible, from bilingual helpers, bilingual dictionaries, and first-language texts.

Reading

Learning to read in a new language is different from learning to read in a first language, and it's important to have specific knowledge about the differences in order to teach English language learners effectively.

Young English language learners will often have come from countries and cultures that are significantly different from New Zealand and so will need their knowledge of the unfamiliar culture and concepts built up through reading. At the same time, it's also important to use fictional and factual reading materials that include contexts and concepts that will be familiar to them.

Many young learners will have developed and be able to draw on early concepts about print in their first language. However, text in their first language may be significantly different from text in English. For example, the script of their first language may be read in a different direction (right to left) or in vertical columns. Beginners, therefore, need explicit instruction about how to approach books in English, in addition to information about how to **decode** in a different script or about different letter–sound relationships if their first language is in the same script as English.

Levels of text complexity

What makes a text easy or difficult for a learner?

As a learner makes progress in reading (either in additional or first languages), they're able to comprehend increasingly complex texts. It's important for teachers to be able to recognise what makes a reading text easy or difficult for a particular learner so that they can choose the right text for that learner. There are many aspects of texts that may be considered when determining their level of complexity, including topic, vocabulary, sentence length and construction, **cohesion**, layout, length, and support from illustrations.

One system of text levelling (used in the Ready to Read series) is the colour wheel. There are suggested levels for shared, guided, and independent reading printed on the colour wheel on the back of Ready to Read books. The colour wheel is divided into nine colour segments that indicate a gradient of complexity, beginning with Magenta (the emergent level), which is followed by Red, Yellow, Blue, and Green (the early levels), and Orange, Turquoise, Purple, and Gold (the fluency levels). Each text's colour wheel level is determined by considering a wide range of features, such as the amount of text, the vocabulary, the support from illustrations, the complexity of the sentences, the number of characters, the familiarity of the context, the text structure, the layout, and so on. Ready to Read books are used mainly by junior classes in primary schools.

There are also a number of other ways to determine the complexity of a text. Many of these involve analysis of vocabulary, for example, the Elley Noun Count, which is used to assign "reading age" levels to *School Journal* texts.

Most of these methods analyse text features that are relevant for English language learners. However, there are aspects of these interpretations of complexity that are inappropriate for these learners (such as the assumption that a very simple text must be for a very young reader). Teachers also need to consider some other text features, for example, idioms and other kinds of colloquial language, which may be difficult for an English language learner.

Making the most of a text

When teachers carefully choose a text, build on learners' experiences linked to the text, and engage in meaningful conversations about the concepts in the text, learners are able to engage more purposefully in building their understanding and their knowledge of new structures and vocabulary. It's important to draw specific attention to text features in a deliberate and explicit way when teaching English language learners how to read in English.

Teachers need to plan the steps in reading instruction carefully to ensure that pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading activities are appropriate and effective. English language learners need to be able to respond thoughtfully and to be actively engaged in a range of text-based experiences. Pre-reading instruction and activities are particularly important for English language learners as they can help to activate the learners' prior knowledge, not only of the topic but also of the relevant vocabulary. Pre-reading instruction also enables teachers to highlight potential language difficulties. Elaborating on meaning in a text by providing supplementary visuals or explanations can often increase comprehension for learners.

Reading for different purposes

Reading a text to gain information or for other curriculum purposes requires a different approach from reading for personal interest or recreation. Within any curriculum area, learners are required to read different types of texts for different purposes, especially as they progress through curriculum levels. The different ways of reading texts for different purposes need to be explicitly taught. Teachers can find guidance on how to foster reading for personal interest, how to approach "reading to learn", and how to teach reading comprehension in the publications listed on page 70.

Text-processing strategies

Effective readers, including English language learners, decode, make meaning, and think critically.

Right from the start of learning to read in English, learners should focus on the three key aspects of reading: decoding, making meaning, and thinking critically (see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 24). These aspects need to be integrated when learners are reading for a purpose. Decoding in itself is not reading, so if a learner is able to decode a text but can't read for meaning, they can't yet read. In order to read effectively and efficiently, English language learners need a repertoire of reading processing strategies. They need to be able to attend and search, predict, cross-check, confirm, and self-correct (see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, pages 38–39). Learners who have limited control of the strategies may sometimes apply a processing strategy in a way that is not appropriate for their reading purpose. For example, they may sound out every single word when their purpose for reading is to gain a general understanding of the main ideas in the text.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, learners will be able to decode and make meaning from simple texts, and they will use critical-thinking skills appropriate to their age. They're likely to rely on support through their first language to aid their comprehension.

Learners at the end of Stages 1 and 2 will have developed the ability to gain meaning and identify the main ideas of phrases rather than just individual words. They will have gradually developed confidence, fluency, and depth of comprehension as they read increasingly complex texts in an increasing variety of contexts. They will master a wider range of vocabulary and gain an understanding of increasingly complex language structures.

English language learners who have literacy skills in their first language should be encouraged to continue reading in their first language and to use critical-thinking skills (and other skills used for reading) in their first language in order to better access and process concepts in English. Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) develops better when the first language develops alongside the additional language.

English language learners need access to dictionaries and reading materials in their first language, and they need encouragement to think and talk in their first language about new ideas. They also need texts in English about culturally familiar topics as well as about less familiar topics.

Drawing on sources of information

Learners need to draw on various sources of information in order to make sense of what they read. They draw on:

- their prior knowledge, including their background knowledge and experience and their literacy-related knowledge;
- visual and grapho-phonic sources of information in the text, using knowledge about printed text (and especially about the relationship between particular written shapes and spoken sounds);
- syntactic sources of information in the text (using their knowledge about the structure of the English language);
- semantic sources of information in the text (using their knowledge of the meanings of words and images).

(See *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, pages 28–31.)

Learners need to be able to draw on, integrate, and co-ordinate information from these sources simultaneously in order to decode and make meaning from text.

When a learner has limited prior experience of a context or lacks specific knowledge of a concept, they may have difficulty in reading texts on some topics. They may rely heavily on one source of information (for example, their grapho-phonic knowledge or their prior experiences) without fully understanding the text. For example, a recent immigrant from an urban Asian background may have difficulty in making sense of a text about sheep shearing in Central Otago. On the other hand, when reading about a topic they are very familiar with, a learner may rely on their background knowledge to make sense of the text rather than fully comprehending it.

Factors affecting progress

A learner's level of literacy in their first language strongly influences their rate of progress in reading in English.

English language learners develop proficiency in reading at very different rates. There are many factors that affect the starting point for learners and that have a strong influence on their rates of progress. Perhaps the most important factor, especially for learners beyond the first two or three years of schooling, is the level of literacy that they have attained in their first language. Learners who have had no previous formal education and who can't read or write in their first language will take much longer to learn written English than learners who are literate in their first language. The older an English language learner is when they begin schooling, the greater and more noticeable the gap will be between them and their native-speaker peers and the greater their need will be for intensive, long-term support.

Assessing and reporting on reading

Judgments about progress can only be made over time and based on a variety of assessment methods.

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve students' learning and teachers' teaching. By focusing on giving useful feedback (a key component of formative assessment) throughout the learning process, teachers can work with their English language learners to close the gap between their current performance and what is expected of their native-speaker peers. A teacher can assess and report on a learner's progress in reading by using standardised tests conducted at regular intervals and by making informal judgments about the learner's comprehension of reading texts at different levels of complexity. It's unwise to make broad judgments about "reading ages" or "reading levels" based on the occasional use of a reading assessment tool. Reading proficiency is influenced by many factors (such as the learner's familiarity with the content of the texts, the cultural knowledge required to understand the texts, the quality of the teacher's scaffolding, and the learner's motivation). A single assessment provides only a snapshot of a learner's proficiency in relation to the task at the time, although it may also indicate areas of strength and weakness in reading.

Making decisions about a learner's progress is complex because it requires ongoing diagnostic assessment to gain information about what a learner needs, integrated with summative assessments that define a point the learner has reached. Assessment of reading development should include making informal observations about the learner's attitudes and approaches to both extensive reading and reading for deeper understanding, how much reading they are doing, their ability to choose appropriate reading materials for different purposes, and their awareness of reading strategies. For further information on reading assessment, see the *ESOL Progress Assessment Guidelines*.

The reading progression

The following matrix gives a broad overview of the features of texts that are suitable for learners at the first three stages of the ELLP (Foundation Stage to Stage 2). There is no matrix provided to indicate reading behaviours at the various stages because the interplay between the level of complexity of a text, factors affecting text difficulty for individual learners, and learners' text-processing skills is too complex to be presented in this way. A learner will be able to read more complex texts when they receive a lot of support from the teacher, already know something about and are interested in what they are reading, and feel confident. The same learner will cope with reading less complex texts when they are reading independently, have little background knowledge, feel insecure, and/or are not very interested in the text.

The matrix is indicative only; it is not a complete inventory of text features, and some features of later-stage texts may occur in texts at earlier stages.

The reading matrix

	Topic development	Language structures	Vocabulary	Layout	Examples can be found on:
Foundation Stage	– Texts are very short. They contain one or two simple ideas and use a lot of repetition.	– Texts contain single words or short sentences, usually in the subject–verb–object order.	– Texts use repeated high-frequency words and some words that are lower frequency and topic-specific and that are strongly supported by the context.	– Texts have only a few words per page and are well supported by illustrations.	– pages 22–23
Stage 1	– Texts are short and often present ideas in a simple sequence.	– Texts contain simple and **compound sentences** with a variety of sentence beginnings. There are usually no more than two **clauses** per sentence.	– Texts use varied high-frequency words and some words that are lower frequency and topic-specific and that are strongly supported by the context.	– Texts have about three sentences per page and are well supported by illustrations.	– pages 24–31
Stage 2	– Topics are developed in more depth and assume more background knowledge. – Text types are more varied: they may be reports, arguments, procedures, explanations, recounts, or mixtures of these.	– Texts contain simple, compound, and some complex sentences. Sentences are sometimes expanded with **prepositional phrases** or other structures.	– Texts use varied high-frequency words and some words that are lower frequency and topic-specific or **technical**, and that should be clear from the context.	– Texts have several sentences or short paragraphs per page and may be supported by illustrations.	– pages 30–35

Sample texts for reading

The following progression of sample texts is arranged according to the stages of the matrix but is further divided into Foundation, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D/2A, 2B, and 2C/3A Stages. There is some overlap between the stages, as indicated by the labels 1D/2A and 2C/3A. Each text is analysed in terms of its topic development, language structures, vocabulary, and layout.

The analyses include vocabulary tables, which indicate the percentage of high- and low-frequency words that are found in each text. (Note that the vocabulary tables do not include the title and refer only to the words in the excerpt given, not to all the words in the whole text.) High-frequency words are words that occur often in oral and written text. Low-frequency words are those that occur less often. Some topic words are high frequency, for example, "wind" and "sun", and some are low frequency, for example, "battery". Most words in a simple text are found in a list of the first thousand high-frequency words. Many words in a complex text are found in an academic word list or are not in the lists. (See pages 45–46 and 54–55 in the introductory booklet for sources of the lists.) For further information about vocabulary, refer to the introductory booklet on pages 39–46.

The vocabulary analysis tables[3] include two types of percentages. They give the percentages for the number of running words (all of the words that occur in the text) and the percentages for the number of word types (different words). For example, "I bought some milk and eggs. Jane bought some eggs and some bread" has thirteen words but only eight word types because "bought", "some", "eggs", and "and" are repeated. Simple texts generally have a lower ratio of word types to running words because they use more repetition.

[3] The vocabulary analysis program is available online at www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation/RANGE.zip. Note that vocabulary analyses may count running words in different ways, for example, when counting contractions such as "I've" or when counting numbers or dates.

Foundation Stage

The following sample text is at the Foundation Stage because it is short and highly repetitive – only one word changes per page. The text contains simple sentences.

Texts at the Foundation Stage tend to have the following characteristics:

- only a few words per page;
- good support from illustrations;
- lots of repetition;
- use of high-frequency words and only a few topic words;
- very little **idiomatic** language;
- use of single words and/or short, simple sentences.

Other examples of texts at the Foundation Stage include those found at the emergent level of the colour wheel in the Ready to Read series books and their commercially published equivalents.

Sample text

Text: Tu'akoi, Feana (2000). *Going to the River*. Ready to Read series. Wellington: Learning Media.

Topic: Some animals go to the river and run away when the lion comes.

Text type: Narrative

Audience: An emergent reader of any age

Topic development

The text is short, and the ideas are simple and repetitive. One character acts at a time. The actions are presented in sequence. The reader needs some background knowledge or needs to use inference to distinguish between prey and predator.

Going to the River

Elephant is going to the river.
Zebra is going to the river.
Monkey is going to the river.
Hippopotamus is going to the river.
Buffalo is going to the river.
Lion is going to the river.
Run! Run! Run!

Language structures

The sentences are simple clauses (subject–verb–object). They are highly repetitive (only the first word changes until the last page).

The **verb phrases** are mostly in the third-person-singular present continuous form – *is going*. There is an **imperative verb** repeated twice on the last page.

The **noun phrases** are single nouns used as names for the animals – *Zebra*, *Buffalo*. There are no adjectives. (In grammatical terminology, a noun phrase can be a single word or a group of words that has a noun as the main part of the phrase and does not include a **finite verb**. For example, in the sentence "The fox loved children", "The fox" is a noun phrase and "children" is also a noun phrase.)

Vocabulary

The text contains a limited range of vocabulary. Most words are high-frequency words, but there are some low-frequency nouns with meanings that are easy to infer from the illustrations. The text is very repetitive – only twelve different words are used in the forty-three-word text. Most of the words are phonologically easy to unpack and pronounce.

Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	86%	50%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	4.7%	16.7%
List Three (academic word list)	0	0
Others (not in any list)	9.3%	33.3%
Total number	39 running words	12 word types

Text layout

There is one line of text per page, accompanied by an illustration that supports the meaning of the text.

Stage 1A

The following sample text is at Stage 1A because it has only one short sentence per page. The sentences are structurally repetitive and are simple, except for one compound sentence at the end.

Texts at Stage 1A tend to have the following characteristics:

- only one short sentence per page;
- good support from illustrations;
- repetition of language structures;
- use of high-frequency words and some topic words that are strongly supported by the context;
- very little idiomatic language;
- mainly simple sentences with only one clause.

Other examples of texts at Stage 1A include those found at Red on the colour wheel in the Ready to Read series books and their commercially published equivalents.

Sample text

Text: Meharry, Dot (2001). *Going Fishing*. Ready to Read series. Wellington: Learning Media.

Topic: Preparing to go fishing

Text type: Recount

Audience: A very young reader (indicated by the use of the voice of the young narrator and illustrations that attract young readers)

Topic development

The text is short, and the ideas are simple and repetitive. Each character acts twice. The actions are presented in sequence. The illustrations allow the reader to connect with the characters. The text describes the steps taken to prepare for an activity.

Going Fishing

I get the fishing line.
Dad gets the bait.
I get the net.
My dog gets the bucket.
Dad gets the lunch.
My dog gets in the car,
and we all go fishing.

Language structures

The sentences are simple clauses (subject–verb–object) except for the last sentence, which is a compound sentence (two simple clauses joined with the **conjunction** *and*). The actions and structures are highly repetitive, but the subjects (*I*, *Dad*, *my dog*) and the objects (*fishing lines*, *bait*, *net*, and so on) vary.

The verb phrases are in the simple present. Three of the verb phrases are in the first-person singular or plural (*get, go*), and four are in the third-person singular (*gets*). Only three verbs (*get*, *get in*,[4] *go*) are used.

The noun phrases are single nouns (*Dad*), **subject pronouns** (*I*, *we*), or **determiners** and nouns (*the bait*, *my dog*). There are no adjectives.

[4] "get in" is often classed as a **phrasal verb** and, because the meaning of "get" in "get in the car" is different from the meaning of "get" in the other instances in the text, it is listed as a separate verb.

Vocabulary

The text contains a limited range of vocabulary. Most words are high-frequency words, but there are some low-frequency nouns that are easy to infer from the context and illustrations, for example, *fishing lines, bait*. Most of the words are phonologically easy to unpack and pronounce.

Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	87.9%	79%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	9.1%	15.8%
List Three (academic word list)	0%	0%
Others (not in any list)	3%	5.3%
Total number	33 running words	19 word types

Text layout

There is one line of text per page, accompanied by an illustration that supports the meaning of the text.

Stage 1B

The following sample text is at Stage 1B because it is fairly short and conceptually simple, with ideas presented in a simple sequence. The sentences are simple.

Texts at Stage 1B tend to have the following characteristics:

- only a few short sentences per page;
- a variety of sentence beginnings;
- ideas presented in a simple sequence;
- good support from illustrations;
- use of high-frequency words and some topic words that are strongly supported by the context;
- use of simple or compound sentences.

Other examples of texts at Stage 1B include those found at the early levels on the colour wheel in the Ready to Read series books and their commercially published equivalents.

Sample text

Extract: Holt, Sharon (2003). *Skipper's Happy Tail*. Ready to Read series. Wellington: Learning Media, pages 2–5.

Topic: A dog's tail and its effect on family members

Text type: Narrative

Audience: A young reader – the text uses simple ideas and language

Topic development

The text is short, and the ideas are presented in sequence. The problem is shown rather than explained. The reader needs to distinguish between a number of characters and link them to their respective actions.

Skipper's Happy Tail

The children got out of the car.

They helped Mum pick up the shopping bags.
Skipper came to meet them.

Skipper wagged his happy tail.
His tail tickled Sophie's nose.
"Get away, Skipper!" said Sophie.
"Skipper, come here!" shouted Dad.

Dad was painting the shed.
Skipper wagged his happy tail.
His tail brushed the wet paint.

Language structures

The sentences are mostly short and use simple clauses (subject–verb–object). They are not repetitive and have a variety of beginnings. Some direct speech is used.

The verb phrases are mostly in the third-person singular simple past – *came, shouted*. There are two imperative verbs used in direct speech – *Get away, come*. Some complex verb phrases are included – *came to meet, was painting*. The text also contains some phrasal verbs – *got out of, pick up*.

The noun phrases are mainly simple. Some noun phrases include determiners – *the car, his tail*. Some consist of a determiner, an adjective, and a noun – *his happy tail, the wet paint*. Some noun phrases also contain **pronouns** or **possessive adjectives** that are close to the noun they refer to – *The children ... They; Skipper ... his*.

Vocabulary

The text contains a high percentage of high-frequency words, but there is a significant number of low-frequency words as well, for example, *wagged*. There are four character names. The concepts are mostly concrete, with the exception of *happy tail.*

Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	58.9%	63.2%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	19.6%	21.1%
List Three (academic word list)	0%	0%
Others (not in any list)	21.4%	15.8%
Total number	56 running words	38 word types

Text layout

The vocabulary and meaning of the text are clearly supported by the illustrations.

Stage 1C

The following sample text is at Stage 1C because it is fairly short and the sentences are mostly simple or compound.

Texts at Stage 1C tend to have the following characteristics:

- about three sentences per page;
- a variety of sentence beginnings;
- ideas presented in a simple sequence;
- good support from illustrations;
- little repetition;
- use of high-frequency words and some lower-frequency, topic-specific words;
- use of simple and compound sentences.

Other examples of texts at Stage 1C include those found at the fluency levels on the colour wheel in the Ready to Read series books and their commercially published equivalents.

Sample text

Text: Quinn, Pat and Gaynor, Bill (1995). *Wind Power*. Ready to Read series. Wellington: Learning Media.

Topic: The generation of electricity through wind power, using a wind turbine

Text type: Explanation

Audience: A reader who wants to know about wind turbines

Topic development

The text begins with a personal description and then moves into the explanation. The narrator describes the location of the wind turbine, why it's there, what it looks like, and how it works. Although it is a personal account, the text is also technically accurate and informative. There is a diagram on the inside back cover.

Language structures

The sentences are sometimes simple, but these are often expanded through **adverbial phrases** of time, place, or manner – *We love to walk* ***up the hill behind our house***. They are sometimes complex, with at least two clauses – *It sounds like a windmill* (**main clause**) *as the blades twirl around* (**subordinate clause**).

Wind Power

We love to walk up the hill behind our house.
You can see the whole city.
You can see right out to the ocean.

The wind blows there most of the time.
It blows the grass flat.
It's too windy for trees to grow.

At the top of the hill there is a big machine.
A wind turbine.

The turbine looks like a windmill.

It sounds like a windmill as the blades twirl around.
Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

The wind blows the blades around.
The blades turn the generator.
The generator makes electricity.

And we use electricity every day,
for all kinds of things ...

There is also a sentence fragment (*A wind turbine*), which is used to name the big machine. The sentences are sometimes structurally repetitive.

The verb phrases are mostly simple, with action in the simple present. Mainly action verbs (*blows, turn*) or **sensory verbs** (*love, sounds*) are used.

The noun phrases are fairly simple – *trees* (noun), *a windmill* (a determiner and a noun), *the whole city* (a determiner, an adjective, and a noun). First- or second-person pronouns (*We, You*) and third-person pronouns (*It*) are used. There are some pronouns that are used close to the noun they refer to – *The wind ... It, The turbine ... It.*

Vocabulary

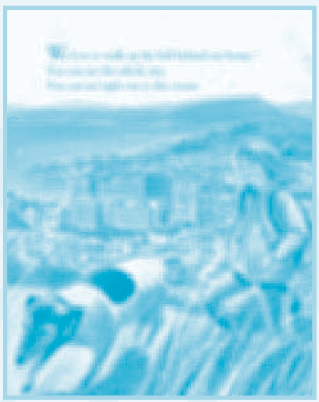
The text contains a high percentage of relatively high-frequency words (within the first 1000 words) and a few words beyond the first 1000, for example, *whole, ocean, Swoosh*. There is a significant number of technical words related to the topic (ten word types). These technical words are supported by large, clear illustrations and by the context.

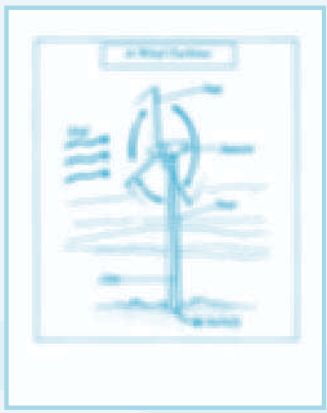
Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	81.6%	83.1%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	7.8%	10%
List Three (academic word list)	0%	0%
Others (not in any list)	10.7%	8.5%
Total number	103 running words	59 word types

Text layout

Large, brightly coloured illustrations support the printed text. They also support exploration of meaning beyond the text. The book uses a relatively small font and generous line spacing.





Stage 1D/2A

The following sample text is at Stage 1D/2A because the ideas are presented in clear stages and it contains expanded sentences.

Texts at Stage 1D/2A tend to have the following characteristics:

- around three or more sentences per page;
- little repetition;
- support from illustrations;
- use of high-frequency words and some lower-frequency, technical, or topic words;
- use of simple, compound, and some complex sentences;
- sentences that are expanded with prepositional phrases or other structures.

Other examples of texts at Stage 1D/2A include those found at the fluency levels of the colour wheel in the Ready to Read series books and their commercially published equivalents.

Sample text

Extract: Aiono-Iosefa, Sarona (2003). *White Sunday in Sāmoa*. Ready to Read series. Wellington: Learning Media, pages 4–5.

Topic: A religious celebration important in Sāmoan culture

Text type: Explanation and recount

Audience: Younger readers – the text is simply written, from a child's perspective

Topic development

The topic develops through preparation for the event. The present preparation and the future event (White Sunday) are interwoven.

White Sunday in Sāmoa

White Sunday will be a very special day.
The children all have a Bible verse to say,
and they will sing hymns together.
They must practise hard.

Tafu practises his Bible verse.
It takes ages for everyone
to have their turn.
Tafu falls asleep!
So does his best friend.

Language structures

The sentences are mostly simple clauses (subject–verb[–object]) or compound sentences (two simple clauses joined with a conjunction). There is a variety of sentence beginnings and there is no repetition of whole or part sentences.

Many of the verb phrases are in the simple present – *practises, falls asleep*. Some are in the future – *will be, will sing*. There is also use of **modal verbs** that imply obligation – *must practise*.

The noun phrases are mainly simple, consisting of a single noun or a determiner and a noun – *Tafu, The children*. Some are more complex, consisting of a determiner, an **intensifier**, an adjective, and

a noun – *a very special day*. Some pronouns are used close to the noun they refer to – *The children … they … They*. There are also some pronouns with no direct **referent**, for example, *It*, which refers to the process of taking turns to practise.

Vocabulary

The text contains mainly high-frequency vocabulary, but there is significant number of lower-frequency, topic-specific words – *Bible verse, hymns, practise*.

Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	79.6%	82.5%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	10.2%	10%
List Three (academic word list)	0%	0%
Others (not in any list)	10.2%	7.5%
Total number	45 running words	40 word types

Text layout

The book has two or three sentences per page. The text and photographs are interdependent and complementary.

Stage 2B

The following sample text is at Stage 2B because it uses varied kinds of sentences that are often expanded.

Texts at Stage 2B tend to have the following characteristics:

- several sentences per page;
- little repetition;
- some illustrations;
- use of varied high-frequency words and some technical or topic words;
- topics that are developed in depth or that assume background knowledge;
- use of simple, compound, and complex sentences;
- sentences that are expanded with prepositional phrases or other structures.

Other examples of texts at Stage 2B include those found at the late fluency levels on the colour wheel in the Ready to Read series books, in the *Junior Journal*, and in Part 1 of the *School Journal*.

Sample text

Extract: Meharry, Dot (2002). "Breakfast in the Bus". *School Journal*, Part 1 Number 4, 2002. Wellington: Learning Media, pages 27–28.

Topic: A dog swallowing a hearing aid

Text type: Narrative

Audience: A young reader

Topic development

The characters and setting are introduced, and then much of the action is conveyed through dialogue.

Breakfast in the Bus

One night, Grandad arrived in his house bus. He parked it on our lawn. I woke up in the morning, and there it was.

I had breakfast in the bus with Grandad. My dog, Five, wanted to have breakfast in the bus, too.

"You can't come in," said Grandad. "This house bus is for people, not dogs."

Five howled and howled.

"Oh, all right, then," said Grandad. Five jumped in and sat under Grandad's table.

I gave Five a piece of toast. He licked my hand. He liked toast.

Grandad couldn't hear very well. Every morning, he put his hearing aid in his right ear.

"That's better," he would say. "Now I can hear the birds."

But this morning, he was having trouble with the hearing aid.

"I can't hear the birds very well this morning," he said. "The battery must be flat."

He pulled the hearing aid out of his ear and looked at it. Suddenly, it slipped out of his hands.

"I'll get it, Grandad," I said.

I got down under the table with Five. I looked and looked for the hearing aid. Five wagged his tail. He licked my hand.

"You didn't," I whispered.

Five licked my hand again.

"You really swallowed the hearing aid?" I asked.

Language structures

There are various types of sentences, including statements and direct speech, and they vary widely in how they begin. They are mostly simple clauses (subject–verb[–object]) or compound sentences (consisting of two simple clauses joined with "and" – *I woke up in the morning, and there it was*). The sentences are sometimes expanded with prepositional phrases (*I had breakfast* ***in the bus with Grandad***) or with adverbial phrases (*But this morning, ...*). They do not use repetitive structures. They include conventions for signalling direct speech.

The verb phrases include a variety of tenses and verb forms. They are sometimes simple (*arrived, howled*), but are often complex (*wanted to have*). Some phrasal verbs are used, for example, *woke up*.

The noun phrases are almost all simple – *breakfast, My dog, toast*. Pronouns are sometimes distant from the original noun that they refer to – *Grandad couldn't hear very well ... He pulled the hearing aid out ...*

Vocabulary

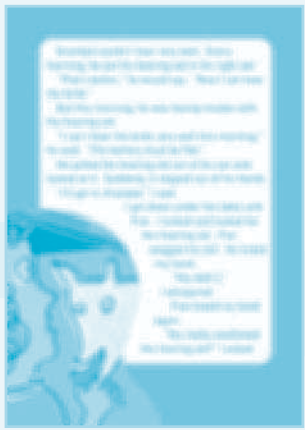
The text contains a high percentage of high-frequency vocabulary and everyday words linked to common experiences. The text requires the background knowledge that because the first letter of the word *Five* is capitalised in the middle of sentences, it is being used as a name (of a dog), and that an animal, like a person, can be referred to as he or she.

Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	79.9%	78%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	7.7%	12%
List Three (academic word list)	2.4%	1%
Others (not in any list)	10.1%	9%
Total number	209 running words	100 word types

Text layout

The text dominates the pages, and there are very stylised illustrations. The images only marginally support comprehension.



Stage 2C/3A

The following sample text is at Stage 2C/3A. It describes and explains a technical process. The sentences are mostly compound or complex.

Texts at Stage 2C/3A tend to have the following characteristics:

- ideas arranged into paragraphs;
- support from diagrams, illustrations, or photographs;
- topics that are developed in depth, using linking words to connect ideas;
- varied high-frequency words and some technical or topic words that are not easy to infer from the context;
- simple, compound, or complex sentences, sometimes containing passive constructions or direct speech.

Other examples of texts at Stage 2C/3A include those found in the *Junior Journal* or in Part 1 of the *School Journal*.

Sample text

Extract: Gibbison, Sue (2003). "Moving Old Houses". *Junior Journal* 28. Wellington: Learning Media, page 17.

Topic: Explaining how a house is moved to a new location

Text type: Explanation

Audience: A reader of any age

Topic development

The topic is developed with a question (as a heading at the top), which is answered in the text below. The text preceding this excerpt answers the questions "Where do the old houses come from?" and "Why do people move old houses instead of building new ones?" This section of the text explains how the old houses are moved.

Language structures

The sentences are mostly complex, for example, *Then it is joined together again* (main clause) *when all the pieces get to the new section* (subordinate clause), or compound complex (*If a house is too wide for the road, it can be cut in half or thirds and moved in pieces*).

Moving Old Houses

Wouldn't a house get damaged from being loaded on and off trucks?

Houses built from wood are very flexible and can bend quite a lot. If a house is too wide for the road, it can be cut in half or thirds and moved in pieces. Then it is joined together again when all the pieces get to the new section.

Sometimes there are accidents, and windows get broken or parts of a house fall off. These things are fixed up when the house is safely on its new piles. Fireplaces are always taken out before the house is moved. They are put back again when it's on its new section.

Adverbial phrases indicate the sequence of events (*then*, *when* ..., *before* ...) and conditional events (*Sometimes*, *always*). There is **ellipsis** of **relative pronouns** and verbs – *Houses [that are] built from wood*.

The verb phrases are often complex – *is joined together*. They include passive constructions – *can be cut in half, is joined, are fixed up*. Phrasal verbs are also included – *are fixed up, are taken out*.

The noun phrases include very few adjectives. The determiners *a* (indefinite **article**) and *the* (definite article) are used to indicate nouns that are generic (*a house*) and specific (*the house*). Some pronouns are distant from the nouns that they refer to – *Fireplaces* ... *They*.

Vocabulary

The text contains a significant number of high-frequency words, many of them repeated, and some lower-frequency words that are explained in the text – *flexible and can bend quite a lot*. There is some technical vocabulary (*piles*), with no clear context clues to help the reader infer the meaning.

Vocabulary analysis

	Percentage of words in each list	Percentage of word types in each list
List One (first 1000 high-frequency words)	90.1%	85.7%
List Two (second 1000 high-frequency words)	5.4%	8.6%
List Three (academic word list)	2.7%	2.9%
Others (not in any list)	1.8%	2.9%
Total number	111 running words	70 word types

Text layout

The article is laid out with a photograph at the top of each page, followed by a question that is used as a heading, which is answered by the text below it. The images aid comprehension.

Writing

There are many similarities between the ways in which native speakers and English language learners develop writing skills. However, there are also noticeable differences in their patterns of progress. (For example, older native speakers hardly ever misuse the articles "a", "an", and "the", but this is a common error for English language learners.) The differences result from English language learners bringing different knowledge, approaches, and experiences to writing in English.

It's important to remember that progress is individual and depends on a number of factors specific to the learner and the context of each task. Factors that affect progress include the English language learner's previous education in their first language, their prior experiences, and culturally specific ways of representing the world through writing. As with reading and oral language, writing development in years 1–4 will reflect developmental stages appropriate to the learner's age.

Writers produce better texts when they are clear about their purpose and the audience and know about the features of effective texts and the writing process.

The better English language learners are prepared for writing, the better their writing will be. Like all writers, they need to understand the purpose for writing and know who their audience will be. They need to be reminded of what they already know about the topic and to have time to plan ideas, including time to plan in their first language. They need to be familiar with the typical features of the kind of text they're planning to write, and they need to have a bank of **general vocabulary** and vocabulary for curriculum contexts that is appropriate to the writing task. English language learners should also have opportunities to unpack model texts appropriate to their year level to see how the English language works in a variety of written texts – first in a group context and later independently.

Writers often produce more accurate, comprehensive, and effective texts when they are writing on a familiar topic. Texts on unfamiliar or complex technical topics are likely to have more errors and to communicate a less effective message.

English language learners need continuing opportunities and encouragement to think, talk, read, and write in their first language about new ideas. They also need opportunities to write in English about culturally familiar topics as well as about less familiar topics.

Some errors in an English language learner's writing may be attributable to their developmental stage and some to their level of proficiency in English. The attitude of the learner towards editing and proofreading their work will also have an impact. The nature and quality of their English language instruction will be another factor affecting a learner's writing development.

English language learners should be encouraged to continue writing in their first language and to use critical-thinking skills (and other writing skills) in their first language to help them develop their writing in English. Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) develops better when the first language develops alongside the additional language.

The writing progression

Pages 41–60 contain descriptors of texts written by English language learners, followed by samples of their writing. These are arranged to show a typical progression in writing development that illustrates the stages of the writing matrix on page 39. A learner makes progress in writing in many ways, including by:

- increasing their awareness of their purpose and audience;
- learning to develop topics in more depth;
- learning to use a wider range of text types appropriately;
- increasing their use and control of language structures;
- learning more vocabulary;
- increasing their control of script;
- improving their spelling;
- using a wider range of appropriate punctuation.

As a learner's writing improves, they become able to produce longer texts in a wider range of forms.

In some ways, the sample texts are similar to those in the early levels of *The New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars: English* (Written Language), which represent the writing of native speakers of English. However, although there are many parallel features between the writing development of English language learners and that of native speakers of English, there are also many differences. The nature of these differences depends on a range of factors, including the learner's age, their level of literacy in their first language, and the characteristics of their first language.

The samples have been analysed to highlight some typical features of English language learners' writing at each stage and to demonstrate how to notice both writing strengths and learning needs in a piece of writing. Using the writing progression descriptors, teachers can make judgments about the stages that their learners have reached. More importantly, teachers can see where their learners should be heading and what priorities they should set for teaching and learning.

Surface and deeper features of texts

The texts have been analysed in terms of both deeper features (topic development, language structures, and vocabulary) and surface features (script control, spelling, and punctuation). There is a crossover between some deeper and surface features. For example, if a learner leaves "-ed" off a verb or adds it inappropriately, this may be interpreted as a spelling error, which is usually seen as a surface feature. However, it may indicate lack of knowledge of the past tense form of the verb, which is a deeper feature. Similarly, punctuation is usually categorised as a surface feature, but if a text includes run-on sentences or "sentences" with no main verb, it's likely that the writer lacks knowledge about the structure of an English sentence.

Teachers need to analyse errors carefully to discover what is causing them.

Deeper features also include text organisation, sentence structure, and the extent to which the text fits the purpose for writing. The writer's choice of vocabulary may fall into either category – deep if it indicates lack of knowledge of word families or surface if it's just a spelling mistake.

Best fit

Judgments about what stage a learner is at can never be "absolutely accurate"; they can only indicate the "best fit" for that learner.

Assigning a text to a stage is complex and requires careful judgment and a "best fit" approach, based on a range of criteria. A learner's written text may have some features that seem to fit into a lower stage and some that seem to fit into a higher stage.

The decisions that a teacher makes about where a learner's text fits are generalisations, but they should always be informed by the teacher's knowledge about language. Teachers need to make their judgments on the basis of an analysis of the text at whole-text, sentence, and word levels, taking into account both deeper and surface features.

Information about supporting writing development can be found in *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4, Supporting English Language Learning in Primary Schools* (forthcoming), *The New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars: English* (Written Language), *asTTle: Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning*,[5] and ESOL Online.

There are many different ways of describing progress in writing. The following very broad matrix is generalised to all types of text. It gives an overview of important aspects of English language learners' writing progress rather than identifying every aspect in detail. Teachers also need to be aware that a learner's writing will always be affected by the context of the writing task and by the prior knowledge and skills the learner brings to it.

Specific indicators for different text types can be identified, for example, in the asTTle Writing Progress Indicators.

This matrix focuses mainly on how writers within each broad stage of development typically organise and develop a text. It indicates the ways that a learner's writing develops, as they move through the Foundation Stage, Stage 1, and Stage 2, in terms of their use of structures (at whole-text, paragraph, sentence, and phrase levels) and word forms in their texts. Appropriateness (in terms of purpose and audience) of content, vocabulary, and stylistic choices are also important indicators of progress.

[5] It is not generally suitable to use asTTle for English language learners who are in years 1–4 and are in the early stages of learning English, because asTTle levels relate to curriculum levels for native speakers of English.

The writing matrix

	Topic development	Sentence development and language structures	Vocabulary development	Script control	Editing, spelling, and punctuation
Foundation Stage	– Texts may be exact copies of a model. – Original texts are very short (two or three ideas) with minimal topic development. – Ideas may be presented randomly. – Towards the end of the Foundation Stage, ideas may be organised in an order appropriate to the text type.	– Sentences show frequent or repeated use of a restricted range of modelled (learned) structures. – Sentences are simple or compound (e.g., linked with "and"). – There may be a range of different errors, some attributable to the learner's age and some to their proficiency in English. These errors may include a lack of agreement of subject and verb ("he go"), incorrect word endings, omitted or overused articles ("the China"), incorrect verb forms, or **overgeneralised** use of a grammar rule ("I broked it").	– Most words are high frequency, and there is little topic-specific vocabulary (unless it has been provided).	– Letter formation is developing but is often variable. – Towards the end of the Foundation Stage, writing usually shows appropriate use of upper- and lower-case letters.	– The writing may show evidence of self-correction. – Some words are spelt correctly, and there are attempts to spell words as they sound. – There are often errors in the use of simple punctuation.
Stage 1	– Texts are longer (at least 6–8 sentences), with some organisation of the ideas. – The main ideas may be expanded with details.	– Sentences are mainly simple or compound (e.g., linked with "and"). – The writing shows a reduced reliance on formulaic structures. – Words like "because" indicate that the learner is beginning to expand texts by using complex sentence structures. – Texts include linking words to signal the development of ideas (such as markers of time in a narrative or of cause and effect in an explanation). – Errors in words and structures are likely to be frequent and obvious. – Texts by learners who are literate in their first language may show attempts to use more complex structures but will often have intrusive errors.	– Texts use a greater range of vocabulary. Most familiar vocabulary is likely to be accurately spelt or show **phonemic awareness**. Attempts to use unfamiliar vocabulary show evidence of phonemic awareness. – Texts use some learned topic-specific vocabulary. Words may be chosen to create an effect.	– The script is generally readable.	– There is some evidence of editing, usually teacher-directed. – Many high-frequency words are spelt correctly, but there may be intrusive errors. – Writing may show some awareness of additional punctuation features and control over full stops.
Stage 2	– Topics are developed in stages, using an appropriate paragraph structure. – Ideas are linked and organised, although they may simply be listed at times.	– Texts include a range of different sentence beginnings and structures (such as use of **relative clauses**). – The writing shows an increasing use of **subordinate clauses**. – The writing may use **modal verbs** (e.g., "might", "should"). – A range of errors in language forms and structures is likely to be evident (e.g., run-on sentences or inaccuracies in, or omissions of, elements of a complex verb phrase). – Texts may show overuse of a recently learned structure.	– The writing shows a strong personal voice developing through deliberate choice of appropriate vocabulary. – There may be some evidence of less appropriate language choices, perhaps from direct translation, e.g., use of "companion" instead of "friend". – Texts may have insufficient topic-specific or formal vocabulary for the task or context.	– The script is controlled and legible.	– The text shows some evidence of accurate editing. – The writing shows evidence of attention to specific points, such as distinguishing between **homonyms** ("their" and "there"; "to", "too", and "two"; and so on). – Contractions are used appropriately.

Samples of learners' writing

Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage contains two bands of texts that illustrate emergent writing. Foundation learners are beginning to master the basics of surface features of writing, such as the direction of print, how to form letters, the difference between upper- and lower-case letters, separation of words, and simple punctuation. Generally, beginners initially find it more difficult to master the written form of English if the script of their first language does not use the Roman alphabet.

Beginning writers are getting a sense of the purposes for writing, deciding what they want to say, working out how to organise their ideas, and (in some cases) finding it challenging to move from oral language to writing. Learners who are beginning to write in a new language are often frustrated by their lack of knowledge of vocabulary and language structures.

The first text in the samples of writing at the Foundation Stage is an example of a teacher-written text that the learner has copied by writing each word underneath the word in the teacher's model. This process is sometimes called "mirror writing". Learners who are in the first stages of developing literacy will benefit from this sort of support until they have learned to write letters and words and have sufficient linguistic resources to be able to convey meaning in their writing.

Typical features of writing at Foundation Stage A

Topic development

- Texts may be exact copies of a model.
- Original texts are very short (two or three ideas) with minimal topic development, constrained by a limited vocabulary.
- Ideas may be presented randomly.

Sentence development and language structures

- Sentences show frequent or repeated use of a restricted range of modelled (learned) structures.
- Sentences are simple or compound (for example, linked with "and").
- There may be a range of different errors, some attributable to the learner's age and some to their proficiency in English. These errors may include a lack of agreement of subject and verb ("6 people *is*"), incorrect word endings ("car is *fast* than"), omitted or overused articles ("*the* pakn save"), incorrect verb forms ("was find"), or over-generalised use of a grammar rule.
- Learners are beginning to develop the standard sentence structures of English and show some knowledge of standard English word order.
- Learners use some incorrect structures.
- Because learners don't yet use linking words or phrases, sentences are unlikely to flow well.

Vocabulary development

- Most words are high frequency, and there is little topic-specific vocabulary (unless it has been provided).
- Simple repetition of vocabulary is common.
- There is often no linking vocabulary.

Script control

- The writing shows variable letter formation, including slope, and may be on and off the lines.
- Some writing shows inappropriate use of upper- and lower-case letters.

Editing, spelling, and punctuation

- The writing may show evidence of self-correction.
- Some words are spelt correctly, and there are attempts to spell words as they sound. However, learners have limited **phonological knowledge**.
- There are often errors in the use of simple punctuation.

Where to next?

Teachers could help learners to:

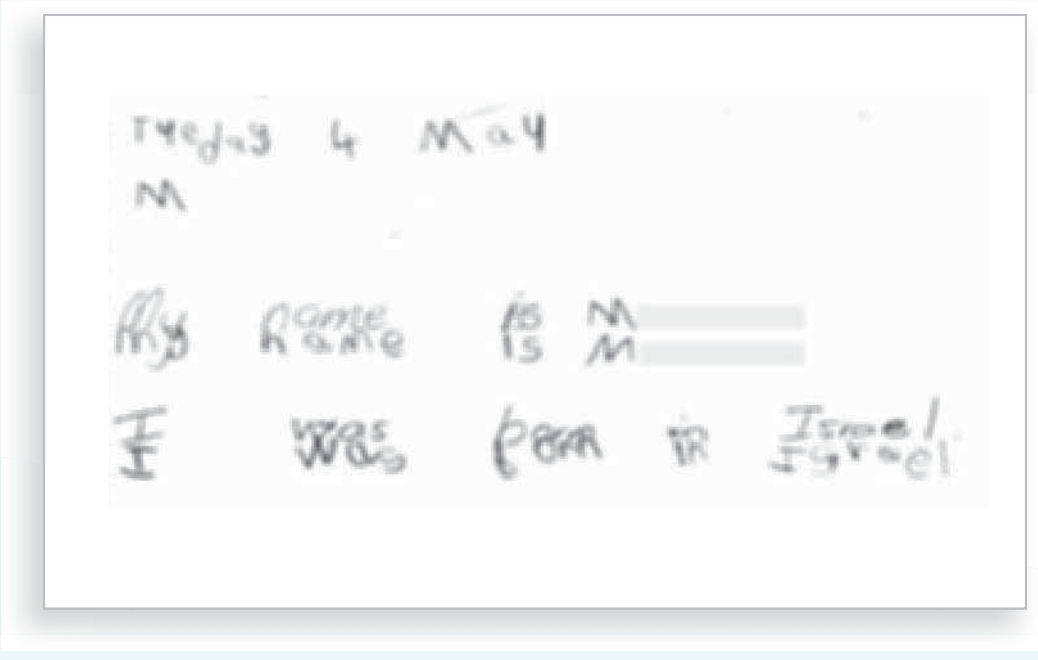
- use oral language to identify, develop, and practise the language for ideas and concepts and to build the context, vocabulary, and sentence structures for fluency and confidence;
- say each sentence out loud before writing.

Teachers could:

- guide and scaffold as learners write, paying attention to basic punctuation, high-frequency vocabulary, vocabulary enrichment and accuracy, and letter formation and position;
- encourage rereading for sense;
- use the shared and guided writing approaches to scaffold learning, for example, when co-constructing or co-editing a text. (See *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, pages 102–109, for further information about approaches to writing.)
- use simple dictation tasks to model correct language structures.

Samples of learners' writing at Foundation Stage A

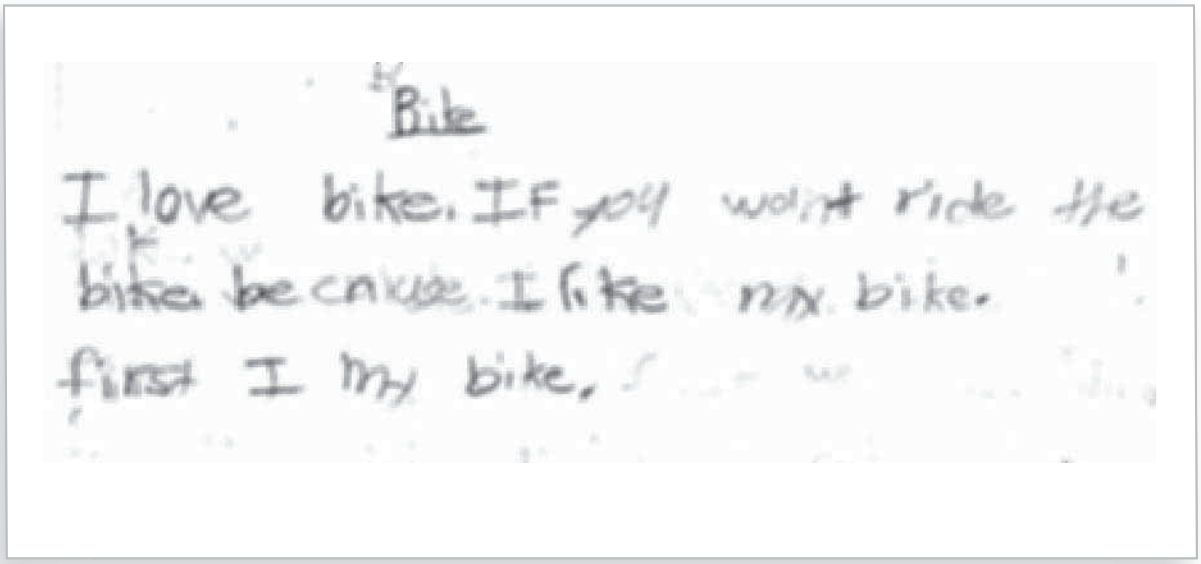
About Me (1)



This text is an example of "mirror writing", where the learner has copied what the teacher has written. This technique can be used with very new writers. The learner's script is on and off the lines, but their letter formation is clear.

Bikes (1)

Task: To write a factual description of a bike, explaining what bikes are used for and whether you think bikes are important and why



Topic development	– The writer shares their enthusiasm for bikes through a short text containing two ideas: that the writer likes bikes and that the reader should ride one.
Sentence development and language structures	– There are three sentences. The first is a simple sentence, correct except that it should either say "bikes" or "my bike". The second shows an attempt at expansion using the word *because*. The third sentence is incomplete because it does not contain a verb. – The learner shows an understanding of subject–verb–object word order.
Vocabulary development	– All the words are high frequency. – The word *bike* is repeated several times. – The writer attempts to use linking vocabulary (*first*).
Script control	– Letter formation is mostly clear and on the lines. – A lower-case *f* is used to begin the last sentence.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– There is evidence of the writer rubbing out letters and correcting them. – All words are spelt correctly. – Full stops are used correctly.

Typical features of writing at Foundation Stage B

Topic development

- Original texts are short, with minimal topic development.
- There is some logic behind the organisation of ideas, and readers are able to follow this.
- Texts are more coherent when learners are writing on a familiar topic.
- Most sentences are relevant to the topic and are clearly connected.
- Ideas are not arranged into paragraphs.
- Texts may be presented as lists of ideas.

Sentence development and language structures

- Learned (modelled) sentence structures are used effectively.
- All sentences are statements.
- Sentences are simple or compound (for example, linked with "and").
- Compound and complex sentences are sometimes attempted, to expand ideas and to give more detail.
- There may be a range of different errors, some attributable to the learner's age and some to their proficiency in English. These errors may include a lack of agreement of subject and verb ("6 people *is*"), incorrect word endings ("car is *fast* than"), omitted or overused articles ("*the* pakn save"), incorrect verb forms ("was find"), or overgeneralised use of a grammar rule.
- The writing is less like transcribed speech – there is evidence that the learner is developing a consciousness of being a writer.
- Learners are beginning to develop control of the sentence structures of standard English.
- Sentence beginnings are often repetitive.
- Learners are beginning to use linking words.

Vocabulary development

- Most words are high frequency, and there is some attempt to use lower-frequency, topic-specific vocabulary.
- Repetition of vocabulary is common.
- High-frequency vocabulary is used correctly.

Script control

- The form and position of letters is generally appropriate, and the script is easily readable.
- The writing shows generally correct use of upper- and lower-case letters.

Editing, spelling, and punctuation

- Some words are spelt correctly, and there are attempts to spell words as they sound. However, learners have limited phonological knowledge.
- Learners are developing control over simple punctuation, although errors may still be frequent.
- Writing may show evidence of self-correction.

Where to next?

Teachers could help learners to:

- identify ideas and organise them into a basic sequence, initially shaping their ideas and concepts into well-structured sentences orally and then transferring them into print;
- build a greater variety of sentence structures, especially at the beginning of sentences;
- add details to sentences and expand sentences that elaborate on a core idea;
- expand their use of high-frequency vocabulary and increase their use of lower-frequency, topic-specific vocabulary.

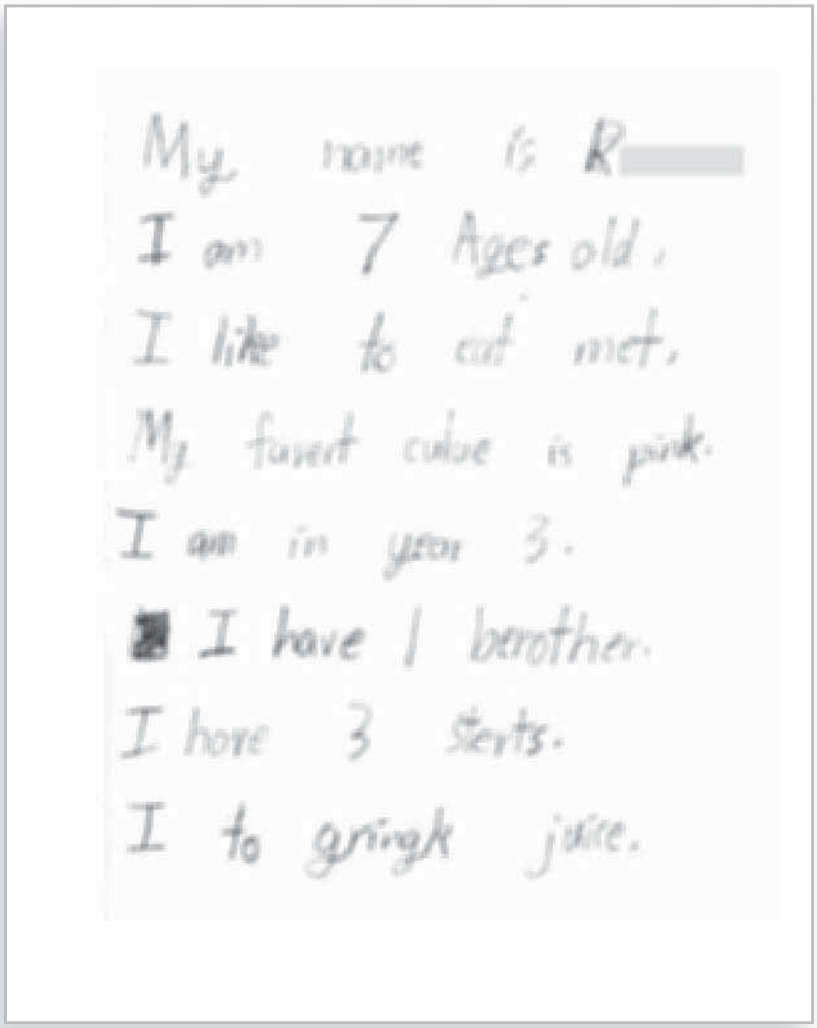
Teachers could:

- support learners in applying phonological knowledge to spelling unknown words;
- model spelling words that are not easily worked out phonologically;
- continue to use the approaches suggested for Foundation Stage A.

Samples of learners' writing at Foundation Stage B

About Me (2)

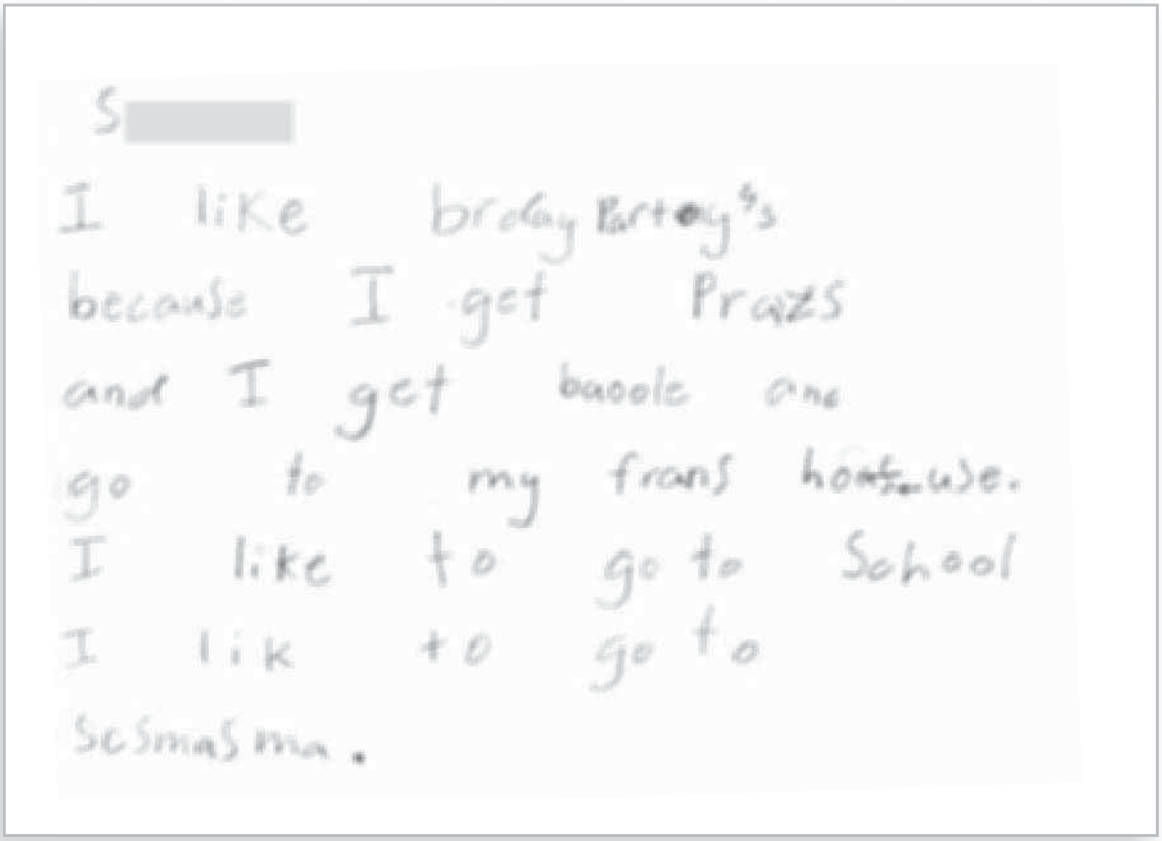
Task: To explain the important things about you



Topic development	– The text is presented as a list of ideas. – Some related ideas are grouped together (for example, the sentences about *berother* and *sterts*). – All sentences are relevant to the topic.
Sentence development and language structures	– The writer uses modelled (learned) sentence structures effectively. – All the sentences are simple statements. – The grammar is correct except for the omission of a verb in the final sentence. – The writer has a small repertoire of sentence beginnings.
Vocabulary development	– Most words are high frequency, and there is some attempt to use lower-frequency vocabulary – *favert*. – High-frequency vocabulary is used correctly, except for *Ages* in the second sentence.
Script control	– The form and position of letters is appropriate, and the script is easily readable. – The writing shows generally correct use of upper- and lower-case letters, except for the capital on *Ages*.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The writing shows evidence of self-correction. – Some vocabulary is spelt correctly, and there are attempts to spell words as they sound, although this is not always successful – *sterts*. – The writer uses full stops correctly.

My Special Time

Task: To describe a time that is special for you and your family

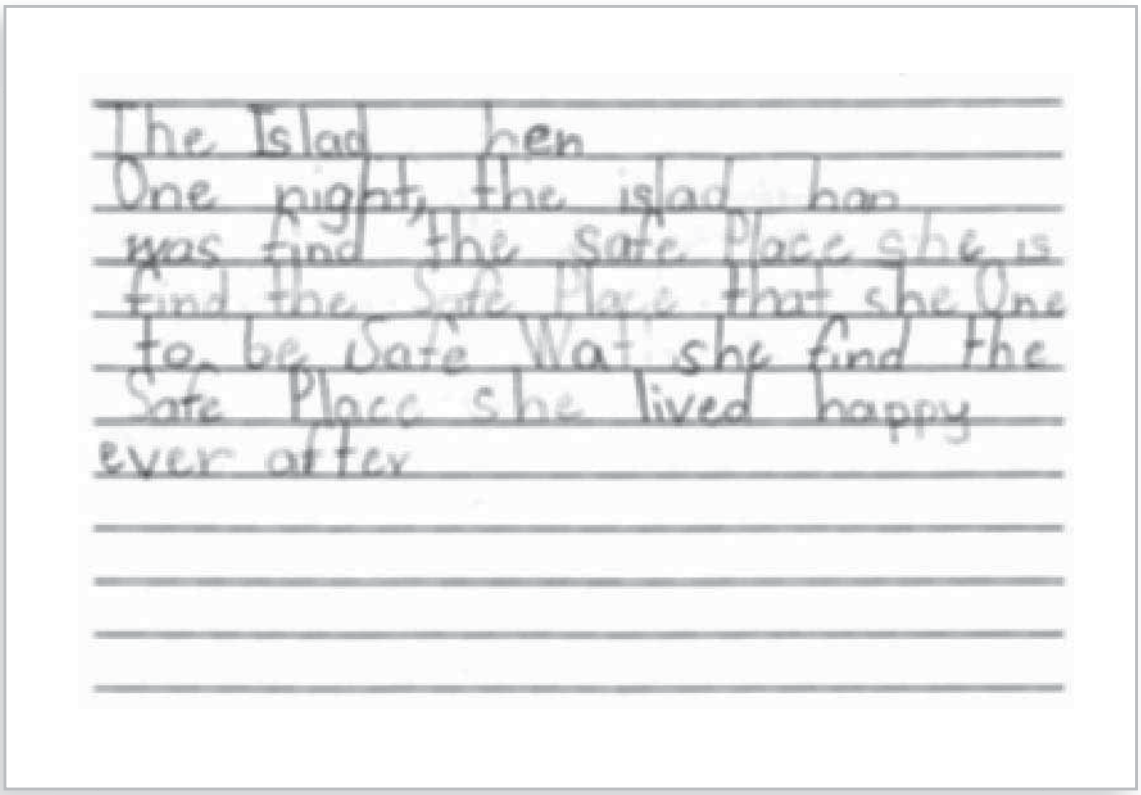


I like birday Partey's
because I get Praizs
and I get baoole ans
go to my frans hoteuse.
I like to go to School
I lik to go to
Scsmasma.

Topic development	– The writer lists three places they like to go and gives three reasons for enjoying one of them (birthday parties).
Sentence development and language structures	– Modelled (learned) sentence structures are used effectively – *I like to go to School*. – All sentences are statements. – The writer uses the verb phrase *like to go to* correctly. – One sentence is expanded with *because*, followed by three clauses linked with *and*. – The grammar is generally correct. – The sentence beginning *I like* is used three times.
Vocabulary development	– The writer attempts to use more complex vocabulary – *Praizs* [prizes], *baoole* [balloon], *scsmasma* [cinema]. – High-frequency vocabulary is used correctly.
Script control	– The form and position of letters is generally appropriate (except that *s* and *p* are capitalised when they should not be), and the script is readable.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The writing shows evidence of self-correction. – Some vocabulary is spelt correctly, and there are attempts to spell words as they sound, although this is sometimes unsuccessful – *baoole* [balloon], *scsmasma* [cinema]. – The writer sometimes uses full stops.

The Island Hen

Task: A written retelling of a narrative



Topic development	– The text presents the main ideas of a hen looking for and then finding a safe place. There is little detail provided. – With some effort, readers are able to follow the sequence of ideas. – The sentences are relevant to the topic.
Sentence development and language structures	– The writer shows some control over verb forms (*she lived*), but *was find* and *is find* are not used correctly. – modelled (learned) language structures are used effectively – *happy ever after*. – There are three sentences, but they are not marked with punctuation. – The writer uses complex sentences to expand ideas – *she is find the Safe Place that she One to be Safe; Wat she find the Safe Place she lived happy ever after.* – The writer uses words that signal the sequence of events – *One night*; *Wat* [When].
Vocabulary development	– Most words are high frequency, and there is some attempt to use more complex vocabulary –*islad*. – There are a lot of repeated words – especially *safe*, *Place*, and *find*.
Script control	– The form and position of letters is generally appropriate, and the script is easily readable. – The writing shows some incorrect use of upper- and lower-case letters – in particular, there are almost always capitals on *Safe Place*, no capital on *she* at the start of the middle sentence, and a capital on *One* [wants] in the middle of a sentence.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– Many words are spelt correctly. Exceptions are *islad*, *han*, *One,* and *Wat*. – There is little punctuation other than a comma.

Stage 1

Stage 1 texts are written by learners who have developed enough knowledge of vocabulary and language structures in English to begin to write short original texts.

Typical features of writing at Stage 1

Topic development

- Texts are longer (at least 6–8 sentences), with some organisation of ideas.
- Ideas are not generally arranged into paragraphs.
- The main ideas may be expanded with details and will generally be clear to the reader.

Sentence development and language structures

- Sentences are mainly simple or compound (for example, linked with "and").
- The writing shows a reduced reliance on formulaic structures.
- Sentence beginnings are likely to be repetitive.
- Words like "because" indicate that the learner is beginning to expand texts by using complex sentence structures.
- Texts include linking words to signal the development of ideas (such as markers of time in a narrative or of cause and effect in an explanation).
- Errors in words and structures are likely to be frequent and obvious. Texts that use modelled structures will have fewer errors than texts that show more original use of language.
- Texts by learners who are literate in their first language may show attempts to use more complex structures, including direct speech or questions, but will often have errors that impede successful communication.
- Additional details may be presented through a series of short sentences or through subordinate clauses.

Vocabulary development

- Texts use a greater range of vocabulary. Most familiar vocabulary is likely to be accurately spelt or show phonemic awareness. Attempts to use vocabulary that learners know orally show evidence of phonemic awareness.
- Texts use some learned, topic-specific or lower-frequency vocabulary. Words may be chosen to create an effect.

Script control

- The script is generally readable. It may still be variable, especially with younger learners, but the form and position of letters and words are generally clearer, more consistent, and more accurately used than at earlier stages.

Editing, spelling, and punctuation

- There is some evidence of editing, usually teacher-directed.
- Spelling may show errors that impede successful communication.
- Punctuation use may range from accurate to weak or inconsistent.
- Writing may show some awareness of additional punctuation features (such as speech marks and question marks) and control over full stops.

Where to next?

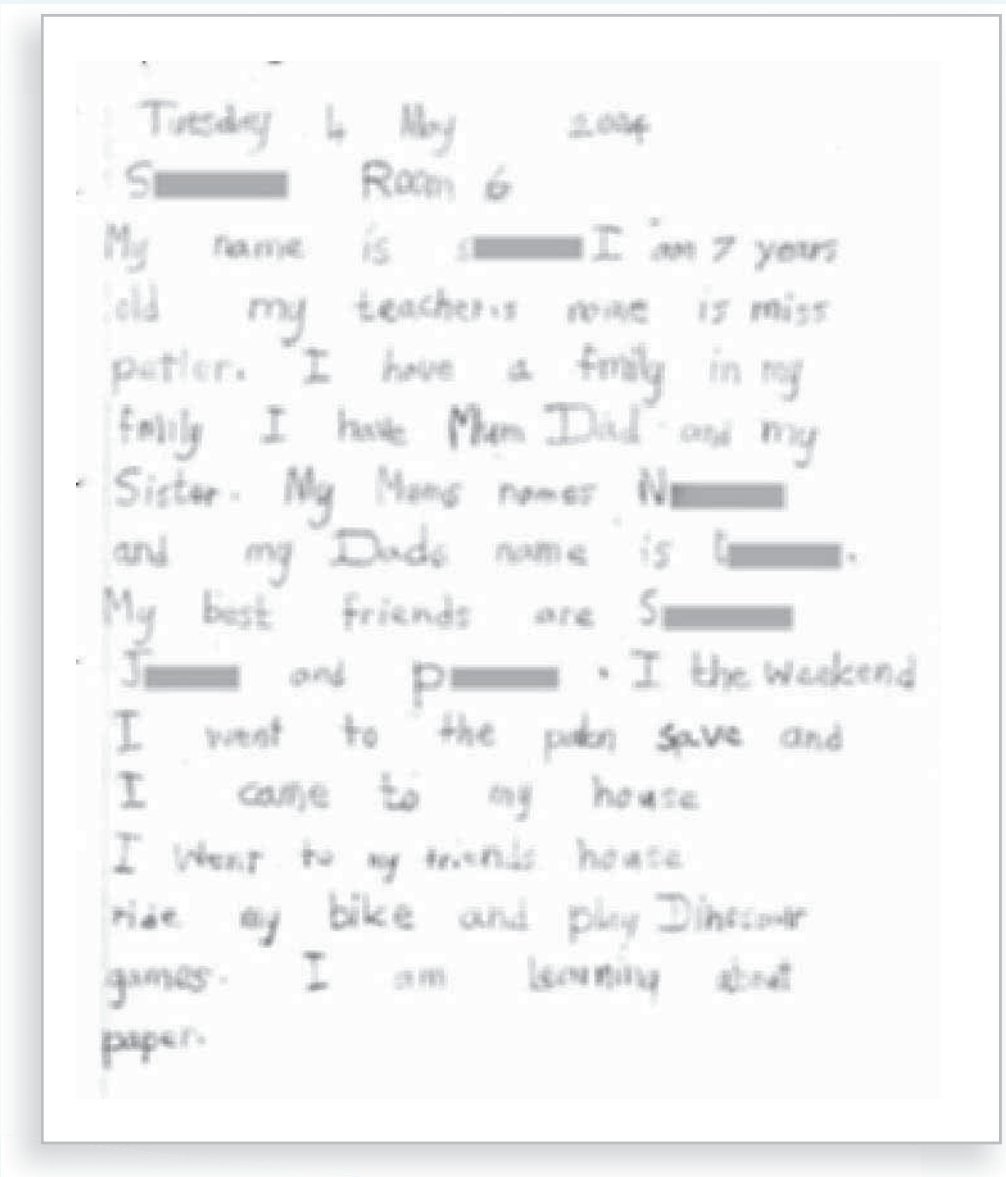
Teachers could help learners to:

- organise the main ideas into a logical sequence according to topic, purpose, and audience;
- form well-structured sentences relating to each main idea;
- ensure that sentences are correctly punctuated and grammatically structured and that structural and content vocabulary is included;
- construct varied sentence beginnings and use sentences of different lengths;
- construct "tighter" sentences, with fewer simple conjunctions and more prepositional and adverbial phrases and expanded noun phrases;
- improve their vocabulary, using both high-frequency and lower-frequency, topic-specific words;
- continue to pay attention to script form and position.

Samples of learners' writing at Stage 1

About Me (3)

Task: To explain the important things about you



Topic development	– The text is about nine sentences long (though some are run-on sentences). – The ideas are not arranged into paragraphs. – The main ideas are expanded with details – for example, the learner says they have a family, lists their family members, and then names them. The learner also elaborates on what they did at their friend's house – *ride my bike and play Dinosaur games*.
Sentence development and language structures	– Sentences are simple or compound (linked with *and*). – The text includes some markers of time – *I* [In] *the weekend*. – Some of the sentences are run on – *I have a fmily in my fmily I have Mum Dad and my Sister*. – The writer generally uses verb forms correctly (including the complex verb phrase *am learning about*). – Details are presented through additional clauses or simple sentences.
Vocabulary development	– The writer uses mostly high-frequency vocabulary but includes some lower-frequency words, such as *Dinosaur*. – The writer uses a definite article (*the*) with a **proper noun** (*pakn save*).
Script control	– The script is clear and readable. – The writer mostly uses upper- and lower-case letters appropriately, although they don't use capitals for the teacher's name or for the name of the supermarket.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The writer spells most words correctly – misspelling *fmily* [family] but spelling the lower-frequency word *Dinosaur* correctly. – The writer uses some full stops and an apostrophe.

Holiday at School

Task: To write a journal entry

Tuesday 3 April 2007.
On the holiday I went to the School
We had Some food at home
My brother is go too the School
today I have a baby girl She is come
to the hall to do jump Jam with us
I went up the Clibs My mum is going to
the church We have a Rest at School I went
to the Shop today after Schools My dad
is not going to the Churchs today
because he work outside

Topic development	– The text is ten sentences long. – The text is presented as a stream of ideas that are not arranged into paragraphs. The sequence and the relationships between ideas are unclear. – The writer expands on some ideas – *I have a baby girl She is come to the hall to do jump Jam with us*.
Sentence development and language structures	– The writer uses some markers of time – *On the holiday; today*. – Most sentences are simple, but there are some complex sentences – *She is come to the hall to do jump Jam with us*. – The writer uses some verb forms correctly (*is going to*) but not others (*is go too; is come to*). – Pronouns are used correctly – *baby girl … She; My dad … he*. – Verbs mostly agree with their subjects (*We had; mum is*) except for *he work*. – Articles are sometimes used incorrectly – *We have a fuit* [fruit] *at School*. – The writer expands a sentence using "because" – *not going to the Churchs today because he work outside*.
Vocabulary development	– The text uses mostly high-frequency vocabulary. – The writer confuses some homonyms – *too* [to] *the school*.
Script control	– The script is clear and easy to read. Most capital letters are used appropriately, although words that begin with "s" have it as a capital.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– There is some evidence of editing. – The writer uses full stops, although some appear to be missing. – Most words are spelt correctly, except *clibs* [meaning unclear], *Apirl* [April], and *fuit* [fruit]. The writer sometimes makes words plural unnecessarily – *Schools; Churchs*.

Stage 2

The samples of writing at Stage 2 are in two bands, showing the diversity of writing features at this stage. The 2A band texts are generally less complex in structure. The 2B band texts show more attempts to vary sentence beginnings, to expand noun and verb phrases and use adverbial phrases, and to develop cohesion and coherence through the text by using different types of linking words. This also results in longer texts.

Typical features of writing at Stage 2A

Topic development

- Topics are developed in stages, and learners may begin to arrange ideas into paragraphs.
- Ideas are linked and organised, although they may simply be listed at times. Links between ideas may include adding ideas ("and"), contrasting ideas ("but"), indicating sequence ("when", "first"), and indicating consequence ("so").
- A personal voice is developing.
- Texts usually make sense to the reader.

Sentence development and language structures

- There is some use of different sentence beginnings and choice of structures.
- The writing shows increasing use of subordinate clauses.
- Texts use linking words to connect ideas, for example, "and", "but", "when", "first", "so".
- The writing may use modal verbs (for example, "might", "should").
- A range of errors in language forms and structures is likely to be evident (for example, run-on sentences or inaccuracies in, or omissions of, elements of a complex verb phrase).
- With more technical and complex topics, there will be a greater number of errors in language structures and forms.
- Writers may have problems with using articles and other determiners correctly and with subject–verb agreement.

Vocabulary development

- The writing shows a strong personal voice developing through deliberate choice of appropriate vocabulary.
- There may be some evidence of less appropriate language choices, perhaps from direct translation, for example, use of "companion" instead of "friend".
- Texts include some lower-frequency and technical vocabulary but may have insufficient topic-specific or formal vocabulary for the task or context.
- Singular and plural forms may not always be accurately used.
- Learners are developing control over contracted verb forms, for example, "wouldn't".

Script control

- The script is controlled and legible. Upper- and lower-case letters are almost always used appropriately.

Editing, spelling, and punctuation

- The text shows evidence of accurate editing.
- Most high-frequency words are spelt correctly, and some lower-frequency technical words are spelt correctly.
- The writing shows evidence of attention to specific points, such as distinguishing between homonyms ("their" and "there"; "to", "too", and "two"; and so on).
- Punctuation is mostly accurate.
- Contractions are used appropriately.

Where to next?

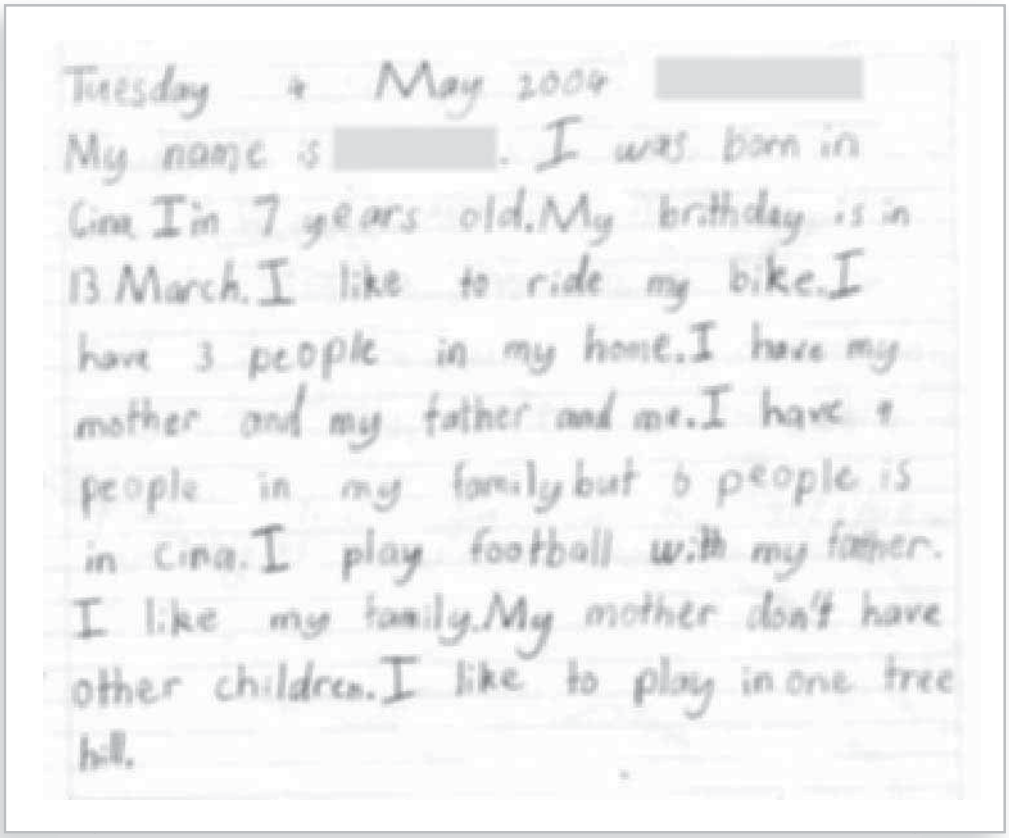
Teachers could help learners to:

- identify key ideas and concepts and organise them into an appropriate sequence according to topic, purpose, audience, and text type;
- organise their text to include paragraphing;
- build variety in their sentence structures, especially phrases at the beginnings of sentences;
- build connecting sentences onto the core idea sentence, thus forming paragraphs;
- develop the use of complex noun phrases and prepositional and adverbial phrases to add detail and expand sentence structures;
- expand their vocabulary, using more topic-specific, low-frequency vocabulary and choosing appropriate vocabulary for impact;
- continue to pay attention to high-frequency words and increase their use of low-frequency words, as well as improving spelling accuracy and choosing appropriate words;
- punctuate their work accurately, including using the appropriate sentence length and separating sentences by identifying main verb phrases.

Samples of learners' writing at Stage 2A

About Me (4)

Task: To explain the important things about you



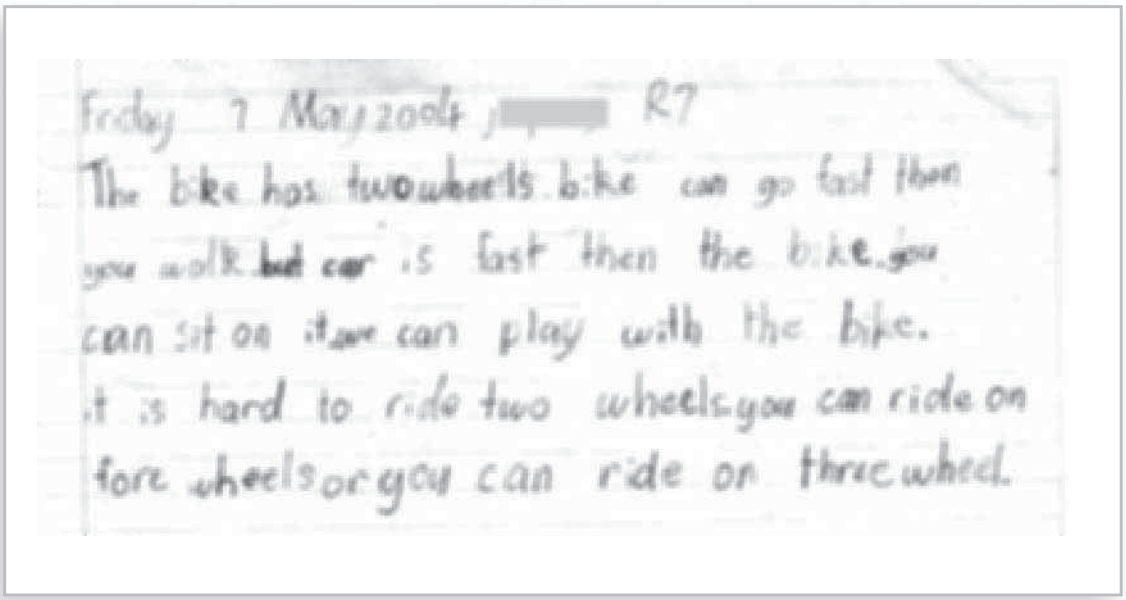
Tuesday 4 May 2009

My name is [redacted]. I was born in Cina. I'm 7 years old. My brithday is in 13 March. I like to ride my bike. I have 3 people in my home. I have my mother and my father and me. I have 9 people in my family but 6 people is in Cina. I play football with my father. I like my family. My mother don't have other children. I like to play in one tree hill.

Topic development	– The writer doesn't use paragraphs, but the ideas flow reasonably well. – The writer uses some words to link ideas – *I have 9 people in my family* ***but*** *6 people is in Cina*.
Sentence development and language structures	– There is a restricted range of different sentence beginnings – several sentences begin with *I like* or *I have*. – The writer uses some prepositional phrases, not always accurately – *in Cina; in my home; in one tree hill* – Some verbs don't agree with their subjects – *people is; mother don't*.
Vocabulary development	– Most words are high frequency. – The writer uses the contracted forms *I'm* and *don't*.
Script control	– The script is controlled and legible. Upper- and lower-case letters are used appropriately except for the lack of capitals on *one tree hill*.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The text does not show evidence of editing. – All words are spelt correctly except for *brithday* and *Cina*. – The writer uses full stops consistently.

Bikes (2)

Task: To write a factual description of a bike, explaining what bikes are used for and whether you think bikes are important and why



Friday 7 May 2004 [redacted] R7

The bike has two wheels bike can go fast then you walk but car is fast then the bike. you can sit on it we can play with the bike. it is hard to ride two wheels you can ride on fore wheels or you can ride on three wheel.

Topic development	– The ideas are grouped but not paragraphed: the writer begins by describing a bike as having two wheels, discusses how fast a bike can travel by comparing it to other forms of transport, moves on to what people do with bikes, and then finishes by discussing the number of wheels. – The writer uses *but* to introduce a contrasting idea (*bike can go fast then* [faster than] *you walk.* ***but*** *car is fast then* [faster than] *the bike)* and *or* to show an alternative (*you can ride on fore wheels* ***or*** *you can ride on three wheel*), and compares bikes, walking, and cars (*bike can go fast then* [than] *you walk. but car is fast then* [than] *the bike*).
Sentence development and language structures	– The writer attempts to use complex sentences – *bike can go fast then* [faster than] *you walk.* – Some complex verb phrases are used – *is hard to ride*. – Verbs agree with their subjects (*bike has; car is*).
Vocabulary development	– The writer confuses some homonyms – *fore/four*. – The writing has some errors with articles, often using *the* instead of *a* or omitting them altogether. – The writer doesn't seem to be familiar with comparative adjectives and uses *fast* instead of *faster*. – The writing has an error with a plural – *three wheel*. – Vocabulary is high frequency, and there is little topic vocabulary.
Script control	– The script is controlled and legible. The writer only uses a capital letter at the beginning. (Most writers at this stage have better control of upper- and lower-case letters.)
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The text shows evidence of accurate editing. – Apart from the homonym confusion, all words are spelt correctly. – The writer uses full stops consistently.

Typical features of writing at Stage 2B

Topic development

- Topics are developed in stages, and ideas are linked and organised.
- Texts show a greater variety of ideas and ability to express a range of original ideas.
- Texts are longer and rely less on modelled (learned) structures.
- Learners show increased awareness of writing for different purposes and audiences.

Sentence development and language structures

- Texts use a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentence structures.
- Texts may use a variety of verb forms, contracted verb forms, and expanded noun phrases.
- There is a range of different sentence beginnings and chosen structures (such as use of relative clauses).
- The writing shows an increasing use of subordinate clauses.
- The writing may use modal verbs (for example, "might", "should").
- Texts use linking words to connect ideas, for example, "but", "because", "so".

Vocabulary development

- The writing shows a strong personal voice developing through deliberate choice of appropriate vocabulary.
- There may be some evidence of less appropriate language choices, perhaps from direct translation, for example, use of "companion" instead of "friend".
- Most vocabulary is high frequency.
- Texts include some lower-frequency and technical vocabulary but may have insufficient topic-specific or formal vocabulary for the task or context.
- Learners may have difficulty with choosing the correct preposition.

Script control

- The script is controlled and legible. Upper- and lower-case letters are almost always used appropriately.

Editing, spelling, and punctuation

- The text shows evidence of accurate editing.
- The writing shows evidence of attention to specific points, such as distinguishing between homonyms ("their" and "there"; "to", "too", and "two"; and so on).
- Most high-frequency words are spelt correctly, and some lower-frequency technical words are spelt correctly.
- Contractions are used appropriately.
- Learners may begin to use a greater range of punctuation, for example, question marks and exclamation marks.

Where to next?

Teachers could help learners to:

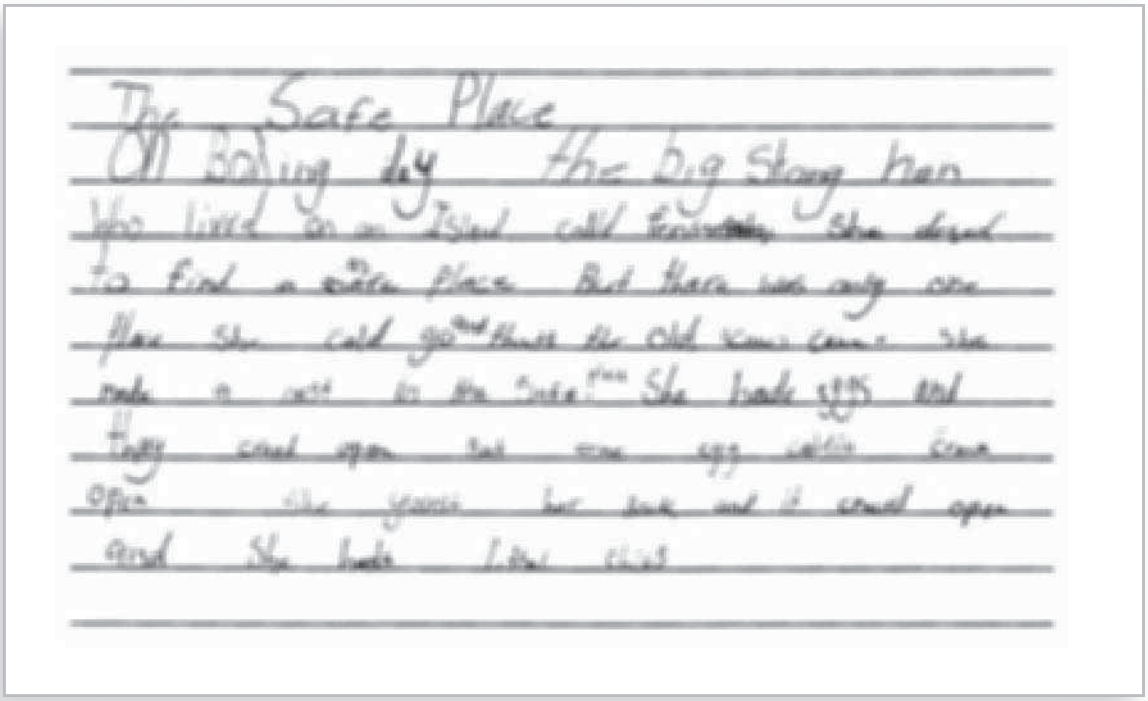
- organise their ideas and concepts into an appropriate sequence, according to topic, purpose, audience, and text type;

- expand or elaborate each core idea through supporting and connecting sentences organised into paragraphs;
- increase the variety of sentence beginnings and length by including prepositional and adverbial phrases and additional clauses;
- use correct and effective punctuation;
- improve their vocabulary, especially by pre-teaching academic or technical topic-related words, and by further expanding their high-frequency vocabulary;
- increase their knowledge and use of expanded structures, for example, noun phrases and prepositional and adverbial phrases;
- learn the structure of complex verb phrases and how to clarify the main verb role in main clauses, that is, the differences between finite and **non-finite verbs**;
- clarify their understanding and use of articles;
- continue to pay attention to script form and position.

Samples of learners' writing at Stage 2B

The Safe Place

Task: To retell a narrative



Topic development	– There are several ideas, and they are arranged logically. – The text involves quite detailed ideas.
Sentence development and language structures	– The writer uses the past tense consistently and correctly. – The text has a variety of sentence structures. The writer expands some sentences with prepositional phrases (*She made a nest **in the Safe place***) and uses some relative clauses (*Who lived on an Island calld fenuafala*). – Most language structures are used correctly. – The writer uses linking words to connect ideas – *On BoXing day; But*.
Vocabulary development	– The writer uses a good range of topic vocabulary (*nest, egg, craed, Beck, chics*) but often has errors with the spelling. – The writer uses some expanded noun phrases – *big stong hen; the old cane; littel chics*.
Script control	– The writer forms letters inconsistently and uses upper- and lower-case letters inappropriately. (Most learners at this stage have better control of capitals.)
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The text shows evidence of editing for sense but not for spelling, except with *cane* [canoe] and *fenuafala*. – The text has many spelling errors, even in high-frequency words – *hade* [had], *thay* [they], *youst* [used], *littel* [little]. (Most learners at this stage have more consistent spelling.) – Contractions are used – *thats* [that's], *coldin* [couldn't]. – The writer uses some full stops.

When I Went to Sāmoa

Task: To write a journal entry

Topic development	– The text is a logical sequence of a number of ideas. – The writer uses a range of linking words to connect ideas – *When, But, because, then, so*.
Sentence development and language structures	– The text uses a variety of sentence structures. – Some sentences include subordinate clauses – *When I went to Samoa I fill* [felt] *like I didn't want to come at Samoa; I filled* [felt] *sorry for them because they didn't have any nice clothes so …* – The writing shows good control over verb forms, with only a few errors – *Every day I always **play** with my sisters and my cousins; they waved and **say** good-bye.* – The writer has some difficulty with choosing the correct preposition – *didn't want to come **at** Samoa*.
Vocabulary development	– The writer confuses some words they are likely to pronounce as homonyms – *filled* [feeled or felt]. – Most vocabulary is high frequency. – The writer uses some expanded noun phrases – *my Samoa house; my whole family; some more nice clothes.* – The writing shows a personal voice developing.
Script control	– The script is adequately formed. – Lower- and upper-case letters are used appropriately.
Editing, spelling, and punctuation	– The text shows evidence of editing for spelling, sense, and missing words. – Most words are spelt correctly. – Contractions are used appropriately – *didn't*. – The writer uses full stops correctly.

Developing Independent Learners

Using "learning to learn" strategies can improve a learner's achievement.

Cognition (thinking and learning) and metacognition (thinking about thinking and learning) are both important components of learning. Learners who have **metacognitive** awareness are aware of how they approach a particular learning task. They can monitor the progress of their learning and can think about their own thinking and learning processes.

> This term [metacognition] is often used to describe the processes of thinking and talking about one's own learning. Being able to articulate what they know and can do helps students to set themselves new goals and meet new challenges.
>
> *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, page 26

Three different types of metacognitive knowledge have been identified (see Biggs and Moore, 1993):

- *knowing what*, or having knowledge about your own learning processes (declarative knowledge);
- *knowing how*, or having knowledge about what skills and strategies to use (procedural knowledge);
- *knowing when*, or having knowledge about when and why to use various strategies (conditional knowledge).

Learners need to be taught how to use learning prompts and strategies and then encouraged to use them. Teachers should explain each prompt or strategy, describe its purpose, model how to use it, give learners chances to practise using it, and then encourage them to use it at different points in the learning tasks until it becomes part of how they learn.

A prompt is a reminder to a learner to use what they already know and can do (for example, by selecting a known strategy to solve a learning problem). In this book, common prompts are usually written in the first person so that learners can use them independently, for example, *Are my ideas in the right order?* Prompts like this could be displayed around the room, or they could be listed in the learners' books and numbered (so that the teacher can say, "Remember to use prompts 1 and 3 for this task.")

In the early stages, the learners can use symbols and icons (such as smiley faces or question marks) to show what they do or don't understand. Teachers can use cards to prompt the use of a learning strategy.

Checklists will only have a meaningful use if they are carefully designed and linked to a specific task.

Checklists can also be displayed in the classroom to encourage self-monitoring and independent learning. Teachers can use them to focus on specific aspects of learning at different times and for different purposes. Checklists should be short and should relate to a specific task.

Checklists for speaking could focus on fluency or on specific aspects of speaking, such as stress patterns, pronunciation of a particular sound, or minimal pair differences (for example, "pin" and "pen").

Checklists for reading can be used to make sure that learners draw on and use appropriate reading strategies, including the reading processing strategies and the reading comprehension strategies described on pages 127–135 of *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*.

For example, readers can use the comprehension strategies of:

- inferring and evaluating, when completing three-level thinking guides to gain a deeper understanding of a text;
- analysing and synthesising, when using comment codes to annotate texts (I = interesting, D = disagree, A = agree, F = fact, O = opinion);
- asking questions, identifying main ideas, or analysing and synthesising, when using highlighters to identify different aspects of the text.

Checklists for writing could focus on different aspects of texts at different times, depending on the teaching and learning focus. A checklist could include features of a specific text type, a punctuation feature, appropriate vocabulary choices, a spelling rule, a grammar rule (such as the use of "s" at the end of verbs in the third-person singular present tense), or use of prepositions.

Example of a writing checklist for Foundation Stage and Stage 1

Task: To write a recount of a school trip

Language focus: Use of full stops and capital letters; use of past tense

Prompts: (may be spoken to the learner by the teacher):

Have I checked that I have used capital letters at the beginning of my sentences?
Have I checked that I have used capital letters for the names of people and places?
Are my ideas in the right order?
Does each sentence end with a full stop?
Are my verbs showing that the trip happened in the past?

Learning strategies:

Think in your first language about what you remember and what you want to say about the trip.
Use a dictionary to check words that you're not sure how to spell.
After writing your recount, check with a partner to see that your work makes sense and has no mistakes.

Remember that English language learners eventually need to move beyond checklists in order to become independent learners. They need to learn to draw on and use their knowledge, skills, and strategies consciously and deliberately for cognitive and metacognitive purposes in all areas of learning.

The following table includes examples of learning prompts and strategies from the Foundation Stage to Stage 2 in oral language, reading, writing, and thinking about learning.

Examples of learning prompts and strategies

	Oral language	Reading	Writing	Thinking about learning
Foundation Stage and Stage 1 (At these stages, prompts may be explained by pictures, mime, symbols, teacher/peer modelling, or saying, not reading.)	**Prompts** *Am I easy to hear?* *Do I need to say it again?* *Did I hear what you said?* *Do I need to hear it again?* *What are some important words I remember?* **Strategies** Say your question (or idea) to yourself in your head before you talk. Listen for words said more than once, or loudly and slowly. Ask yourself if you understand, then nod your head or use "thumbs up" to show you understand.	**Prompts** ***Before reading:*** *What is this about?* *How do I know?* *Do I know some words for this in my first language?* ***During reading:*** *Can I use the pictures to help me understand the words and ideas?* ***After reading:*** *What words and ideas do I remember?* *Is this idea or topic easy or hard for me to understand?* *How can I get better at understanding?* **Strategy** Point to words as you read and listen to texts to help you link sounds and words.	**Prompts** *Do I know what I need to write about?* *Are my words and letters easy to read?* *Does my writing make sense?* **Strategies** Ask yourself if you need to follow a model for writing. Draw pictures to help show what you're writing about. Read your writing back to yourself to check that it makes sense.	**Prompt** *What do I remember from yesterday when we were learning about this?* **Strategy** Practise different ways of learning new words and decide which ones work best for you, e.g., look, say, spell, cover, write, check.
Stage 2	**Prompts** *Am I speaking clearly?* *Can my friends and teacher understand what I say?* *Am I trying to talk a lot so I'll get better?* *Can I pick out the main ideas from what I hear?* *What should I do if I don't understand what I hear?* **Strategies** Work out ways to get the main ideas from what you hear, both in class and out of class. Tell a buddy what the main ideas are, and see if your buddy agrees. Practise the sentences you need to say a lot.	**Prompts** *What questions can I ask as I read to help me understand?* *Can I follow a text without pointing to words, as I listen to a tape or CD?* **Strategy** Use different ways (charts, mind maps) to make notes about the main ideas. This can help you to notice and understand what you read.	**Prompt** *Have I checked that my work makes sense and has capital letters, full stops, and correct spelling?* **Strategy** Check that you followed the instructions for the writing task.	**Strategies** Practise different ways of learning new words, e.g., look, say, spell, cover, write, check. Act out words to see if this helps you to remember them. Ask a friend or a teacher if you don't know how to do something.

Record of Progress

It would be useful to photocopy this form and complete it three times per year for each learner, to track progress over time, and keep it with student records.

Name: _____

Year level: _____

ESOL number (if funded): _____

Assessment date: _____

	Oral language: listening	Oral language: speaking	Reading	Writing
Stage (please circle)	F 1 2	F 1 2	F 1A 1B 1C 1D/2A 2B 2C/3A	FA FB 1 2A 2B
Assessment tool (see pp. 17–28 of *ESOL Progress Assessment Guidelines*)				
Level of assistance (teacher-guided, peer, or independent)				
Task type (e.g., a speech, a journal entry, a test)				
Context of assessment (ESOL class or mainstream)				
Hours per week of ESOL specialist classes				
Next steps				
Other comments				

Glossary

academic vocabulary	words that are used in academic contexts or with academic topics. These words include words for specific subjects or disciplines and general academic vocabulary that is used for many different subjects (see *Effective Literacy Strategies in Years 9 to 13*, page 28). Some words have meanings that are different when the word is used in a specific academic subject rather than in everyday contexts, for example, in the subject of mathematics "mean" refers to the average of a set of scores, whereas its everyday meanings include "stingy", "cruel", and "unkind".
adverb	An adverb is any word (or sometimes a group of words) that modifies or adds to the meaning of verbs, adjectives (including numbers), clauses, sentences, and other adverbs. Adverbs typically answer questions such as how?, when?, or where? For example, "In the wintertime they *usually* treated her *well*", "An *extremely* small child entered the room *quietly*."
adverbial phrase	a group of words functioning as an **adverb** in a sentence, for example, "I'm going to the shop *to buy a drink*."
article	"A" is called an indefinite article; "the" is called a definite article. (For more information about articles, see *Exploring Language: A Handbook for Teachers*, page 47.)
clause	a group of words containing a subject and verb, for example, "I'm going." A clause may be a **subordinate [dependent] clause** or a **main [independent]** clause.
cognitive academic language proficiency	The ability to use academic language is sometimes called cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The ability to use social language is sometimes called basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS). CALP usually takes more time to acquire than BICS.
cohesion	the way a text is formed into a united whole through the use of linking words, nouns and pronouns, synonyms, and other cohesive devices
collocate with	(of two or more words) to be commonly used together. For example, "go" collocates with "swimming", as in "go swimming", but it does not collocate with "tennis". A verb that collocates with "tennis" is "play", as in "play tennis".
collocation	two (or more) words that are commonly used together
complex sentence	a sentence that has a **main clause** and at least one **subordinate clause**, for example, "The bike was smaller [main clause] than I had expected [subordinate clause]."
compound sentence	a sentence containing at least two **main clauses**, linked by a **conjunction** ("and", "but", "or", and so on)
conjunction	a joining word, for example, "and", "but", "or"

content words	words that have some meaning on their own and refer to an action, state, object, idea, and so on. (In contrast, functional words or **structural words** indicate relationships between other words and don't tend to have a clear meaning on their own.)
decode	read individual words, that is, translate them from the shapes of written language into the sounds of oral language (often silently) by making links between letters or letter clusters and their associated sounds, using visual and grapho-phonic sources of information in a text in conjunction with semantic and syntactic sources of information in the text and prior knowledge of literacy learning
dependent clause	see **subordinate clause**
determiner	a word that quantifies or identifies nouns, including **articles**, numbers, and **possessive adjectives**
discourse	Discourse is the level of language beyond the sentence. Spoken discourse can refer to oral texts such as dialogues or monologues, while written discourse can refer to parts of written texts or entire written texts.
elaborate on	to enhance understanding of texts (oral, audio, visual, or written) by using supplementary information, explanations, or other material (which may include visuals). It is preferable to elaborate on language structures or vocabulary rather than to simplify them for learners after the Foundation Stage or Stage 1.
ellipsis	leaving out one or more implied words from a sentence, for example, "[I've] Got it."
finite verb	A finite verb changes according to person, number, tense, and so on. It is a verb that has a subject–verb relationship within a sentence or a **clause**, for example, "the dog *ran* away", "I *like* people who *are* polite." A **non-finite verb** does not have this relationship, for example, "I want *to run* away", "It's easy *to like* children", "*Being* polite is very important."
formulaic chunk	a phrase or sentence that learners remember and use without necessarily understanding the individual words, such as "How are you?"
general vocabulary	words that are used in many different everyday contexts
high-frequency word	a word that occurs often in speech or writing
homonym	words that have the same sound but different spellings and/or meanings, for example, "their" and "there"
idiom	a saying that has a different meaning from the individual meanings of the words that it consists of and is often used in informal contexts, for example, "She's *over the moon* about the baby."
idiomatic	containing **idioms**
imperative verb	a verb expressing a command or request, for example, "come" in "Come here!" and "remember" in "Please remember me."

independent clause	see **main clause**
intensifier	a word used to make the meaning of another word or phrase stronger, for example, "very" in "very hot", "so" in "so fast", and "really" in "really angry"
interlanguage	the language used in transitional phases of learning an additional language. This language is not a standard form of either the learner's first language or the **target language** but has elements of each, and may also include elements that come from aspects of language learning, such as "**overgeneralising**" grammar rules.
lexical	referring to the lexis or lexicon (all of the **content words**) of a language
lexical item	a word or group of words that has a specific meaning. For example, "drink milk" contains two lexical items, but "traffic light" contains only one.
main clause	(independent clause) a **clause** that can function as a sentence by itself, for example, "If we all go outside [**subordinate/dependent clause**], we can play in the sunshine [main clause]."
metacognitive	referring to a learner's awareness of how they think and learn
minimal pair	two words that have only one different sound, for example, "ship" and "sheep" – these can be hard for English language learners to differentiate
modal verb	a verb that expresses obligation, permission, possibility, ability, or degrees of probability or obligation, for example, "can", "could", "may", "might", "must", "should", "will", "would" (refer to *Exploring Language*, pages 66–68)
modes	Speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting are sometimes referred to as the modes of language use. There are two oral language modes, two written language modes, and two visual language modes. There are three modes for the production of language (speaking, writing, and presenting) and three modes for its comprehension (listening, reading, and viewing).
modifier	a word, phrase, or clause that occurs before and/or after a noun and modifies the meaning of that noun, for example, "*the shining* eyes *of my daughter*"
morphology	the study of the meaning-related structure of words. Morphemes are units of meaning that make up words; some words consist of one morpheme (such as "cat"), and some are combinations of morphemes (for example, "un+interest+ed").
native speaker	a person who speaks a language (in this booklet, usually English) as their first language
non-finite verb	a verb that does not have a direct subject–verb relationship and does not change according to person, number, tense, and so on, for example, "I want *to run* away", "It's easy *to like* children", "*Being* polite is very important."

non-verbal language	all types of body language, such as gestures, movements, and facial expressions. This is considered part of oral language.
noun phrase	in linguistics, "phrase" refers to a group of words that has a meaning but does not have both a subject and a **finite verb** (so it is not a **clause**). A phrase is categorised by its most important part, for example, "the big dog" is a noun phrase. A noun phrase may be a single word, for example, "I".
overgeneralising	In linguistics, "overgeneralising" means applying a grammar rule in a language context in which it is incorrect, for example, using the plural suffix -s with the noun "sheep" and saying "sheeps". This is a sign that a language learner is beginning to know and understand the rules of the **target language**.
passive construction	a sentence construction in which the subject undergoes the action of the verb, for example, "He was remembered" (as opposed to an active construction, in which the subject performs or experiences the action, for example, "He remembered")
phonemic awareness	awareness of the separate sounds within words
phonological knowledge	knowledge of the sound system of a language
phrasal verb	a verb consisting of a verb and a preposition or adverb, or both. A phrasal verb as a whole has a meaning that differs from the meanings of each of the parts, for example, "He *caught on* very quickly." (Refer to *Exploring Language*, pages 68–69.)
phrase	a group of words that forms part of a sentence but does not express a complete thought. (In linguistics, it means a group of words that does not have both a subject and a **finite verb**.)
possessive adjective	a word that occurs before a noun and indicates the possession of this noun – "his", "her", "their", "your", "our"
prepositional phrase	a phrase that begins with a preposition, for example, "*in* the car", "*outside* the house"
pronoun	a word that stands in place of a noun, for example, "I", "he", "you"
proper noun	a name of a person or place, beginning with a capital letter, for example, "Li Ling", "Sāmoa"
prosodic features	the prosodic features of a language include pitch, volume, speed, intonation, and stress, all of which affect the way the sounds of the language are articulated. The way prosodic features are used can alter the meaning of what is said, for example, "John's bought a new *car*" (not a new bike) or "John's bought a *new* car" (not a second-hand one). Prosodic features are considered part of oral language.
referent	a person or thing that a word (often a **pronoun**) refers to
relative clause	a **subordinate clause** introduced by a **relative pronoun** (such as "who", "which", "that"), for example, "That is a good idea, *which we should remember*."
relative pronoun	the word used to introduce a **relative clause** – for example, "who", "which", "that"

sensory verbs	verbs that refer to feelings or senses, for example, “love” and “smell”
simple sentence	a sentence containing only one **main clause**
structural words	sometimes called functional or grammatical words; words such as “a”, “the”, “to”, and so on, which don’t have a specific meaning in themselves but which are crucial for making sense of texts, for example, “Mary *was* having *a* party.”
subject pronoun	a **pronoun** functioning as the subject of the sentence
subordinate clause	(dependent clause) a clause that is introduced by words like “when”, “if”, “after”, “because”, “unless”, “as”, “that”, or “whether” and that is incomplete as a sentence without a **main clause**, for example, “If we all go outside [subordinate clause], we can play in the sunshine [main clause].”
syntax	the ways in which words in a language can be combined to make sentences
target language	the language being learned
technical vocabulary	words that are subject-specific or have a subject-specific meaning, for example, “knock on” is a technical term used in the sport of rugby and “standard deviation” is a technical term used in the subject of statistics.
verbal language	language in the form of words. This is considered part of oral language.
verb phrase	in linguistics, “phrase” refers to a group of words that has a meaning but does not have both a subject and a **finite verb** (so it is not a **clause**). A phrase is categorised by its most important part. For example, in the sentence “I am going”, “am going” is a verb phrase. A verb phrase may be a single word.

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