**This Learning Progression begins at Foundation Level of the Victorian Curriculum and concludes at Level 1. Six progressions are provided in this span. Please see Understanding texts (Part B) for the remaining five progressions.**

*Description:* This Learning Progressiondescribes how a student becomes increasingly proficient in decoding, using, interacting with, analysing and evaluating texts to build meaning. Texts include components of print, image, sound, animated movements and symbolic representations. This Learning Progression is organised into three subheadings: comprehension, processes and vocabulary.

*Related Learning Progressions*: The Learning Progressions of *Phonological awareness, Phonic knowledge and word recognition* and *Fluency* provide detail for this Learning Progression and allow teachers to focus on specific aspects of reading where required.

Please note: This Learning Progression refers to four levels of text complexity: *simple, predictable, moderately complex* and *sophisticated*. Information about each of these levels is described in the appendix attached to this Learning Progression.

*Details of progression provide nuanced and detailed descriptions of student learning – what students can say, do, make or write. Examples of student learning in each step are not hierarchical, nor are they to be used as a checklist.*

| **Victorian Curriculum Foundation Level** | |  | | | **Victorian Curriculum Level 1** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Comprehension**  The student:   * demonstrates interest in texts * recognises illustrations in texts * recognises some icons or symbols from the environment (familiar logos). | **Comprehension**  The student:   * listens to texts read by an adult * repeats fragments of text * invents a spoken text based on images. | **Comprehension**  The student:   * listens actively to a range of texts read by others * engages in group discussion about a text * talks about images and/or some printed words in a text * answers and poses mainly literal questions about the text. | **Comprehension**  The student:   * reads and views simple texts with adult support * demonstrates understanding of a range of texts read by adults * makes relevant comments or asks relevant questions to demonstrate understanding of the text * makes connections between texts and personal experiences * retells a familiar story. | **Comprehension**  The student:   * reads and views simple texts independently * listens to texts to engage with learning area content (a text about family histories) * views and discusses the content and features of texts with predictable structures (identifies new or learnt information after reading) * expresses an opinion or preference for a topic or text * infers meaning by integrating print, visual and audio aspects of simple texts * identifies some differences between imaginative and informative texts (different styles of images in a fairy tale and instructions for a game) * recounts or describes sequenced ideas or information from simple texts with print and visual elements. | | **Comprehension**  The student:   * reads and views simple texts and some predictable texts * locates specific information in a predictable print text or a given set of digital sources * describes the purpose of informative, imaginative and persuasive texts * draws inferences and explains using background knowledge or text features (infers character’s feelings from actions) * makes connections within and between texts (between spoken and written texts that present similar information) * discusses how new information builds on current knowledge (I know that insects have wings but I didn’t know all insects have six legs) * recounts or describes the most relevant details from a text. |
| Please note: there is no Processes section in this progression. | **Processes**  The student:   * recognises symbols and words in texts (recognises own name) * shows awareness of correct orientation of text (the book is the right way up) * imitates reading behaviour, beginning at the front and finishing at the back of the book. | **Processes**  The student:   * distinguishes features of the text (images, words, numbers) * locates the front and back of a book and turns pages correctly * locates the starting point for reading on a page or screen * uses touch or click features to navigate a text (clicks arrow to move text along, uses pause/play button to start/stop text, clicks icons to view specific aspects of screen-based texts). | **Processes**  The student:   * demonstrates one-to-one correspondence by pointing to words in a continuous text or in the environment * uses some phonic and contextual knowledge to decode simple texts * tracks text left to right * uses return sweep * consistently reads left page before right page * makes predictions (uses the cover of a book or screen image to predict the content) * identifies simple grammatical features (identifies verbs to follow a set of instructions) * pauses or appeals for support when meaning is disrupted * identifies sentence boundary punctuation. | **Processes**  The student:   * uses phonic knowledge, word recognition, sentence structure, punctuation and contextual knowledge to read simple texts * pauses when meaning breaks down and attempts to self-correct * uses visual and auditory cues to build meaning in multimodal texts (colour, shape and size of images, sound effects) * selects appropriate reading paths when reading simple texts and navigates simple screen-based texts for specific purposes. | | **Processes**  The student:   * recognises when meaning breaks down, pauses and uses phonic knowledge, contextual knowledge, and strategies such as repeating words, re-reading and reading on to self-correct * identifies parts of text used to answer literal and inferential questions * identifies connectives that develop coherence between ideas or events (tracks pronoun referencing) * identifies phrases that provide ‘chunks of meaning’ within a sentence (noun, verb and adjectival groups) * recognises the effect of punctuation on meaning * identifies common features in similar texts (photographs in informative texts). |
| **Vocabulary**  The student:   * names familiar objects in texts (apple, table, boy) * names some familiar icons or symbols in the environment (school crossing sign). | **Vocabulary**  The student:   * names familiar objects in texts and adds some detail (the apple is red). | **Vocabulary**  The student:   * asks questions to find out meaning of unfamiliar words * knows and can use words in discussions that have been encountered in simple texts. | **Vocabulary**  The student:   * demonstrates understanding of common morphemic word families when reading (identifies the word run in running) * recognises repeated words in a simple text. | **Vocabulary**  The student:   * identifies key words and the meaning they carry (nouns, verbs) * shows awareness that homonyms have different meanings in different contexts (right, mean, bat) * shows awareness of words that sound the same but are spelt differently (their, there, know, no). | | **Vocabulary**  The student:   * uses morphological knowledge to explain words (help (base) + less (suffix) = helpless) * discusses the vocabulary and visual features of texts * identifies creative use of language (a very tall character is called ‘Tiny’) * uses context and grammar knowledge to understand unfamiliar words (the word vast in the phrase vast desert). |

Student learning in literacy has links beyond English in the Victorian Curriculum F–10.  Teachers are encouraged to identify links within their teaching and learning plans.

**Appendix 1: Literacy Learning Progression – *Understanding texts* – Identifying text complexity**

Throughout their learning, students will be exposed to texts with a range of complexity. This text complexity advice describes the features and scope of texts students work with and not what the students are doing.

There are four levels of text complexity: *simple, predictable, moderately complex* and *sophisticated*. Text complexity classifications are referenced throughout the Literacy Learning Progression of *Understanding texts* and can be applied to all Learning Progressions that focus on texts. A text is defined as a means for communication. Their forms and conventions have developed to help us communicate effectively with a variety of audiences for a range of purposes. Texts can be written, spoken or multimodal and in print or digital/online forms. Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communication, such as print text, visual images, soundtrack and spoken word as in film or computer presentation media.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Simple texts**  (including \*decodable texts) | **Predictable texts**  (including \*decodable texts) | **Moderately complex texts** | **Sophisticated texts** |
| **Vocabulary** | | | |
| * names of familiar people, places and things * common adjectives (red, big, happy) * mainly generic words (cut rather than slice) * words used reflect the most common and literal meaning of the words (sound meaning ‘noise’, not satisfactory) * a few interesting words that may be new, but are easy to understand and well supported within the text * high-frequency words * words that can be used as language play (rhyming words, nonsense words). | * learning area–specific vocabulary * large core of high-frequency words * new or less familiar words scaffolded or supported through context * synonyms for frequently occurring vocabulary * descriptive language including made-up words and words that are represented playfully. | * a range of synonyms and antonyms with subtle shades of meaning * technical and discipline-specific words and phrases * words with multiple connotations /meanings * figurative language (similes and metaphors) * idiomatic language (‘on thin ice’) * words that are used ironically to create humour * occasional words from languages other than English * words that can be understood using root words and knowledge of prefixes and suffixes (unsure, sleepily). | * words that appear in academic disciplines * extensive technical and learning area–specific vocabulary (increment) * substantial use of figurative language, including in non-fiction texts * subtle evaluative language reflecting author viewpoint * vocabulary that requires use of tools such as glossaries * less common affixes (mismanagement) * words requiring sophisticated word-solving strategies * some archaic words or phrases. |
| **Language** | | | |
| * mainly simple, predictable sentences * some compound sentences * mainly shorter sentences: 3–10 words in length * simple past tense or simple present tense * simple adverbial phrases of place, time (in the playground, before lunch) * a few simple contractions and possessives * sentences that are questions * simple punctuation marks (full stop, exclamation mark, comma) * simple rhythm to language. | * a range of cohesive devices including pronouns, determiners and temporal connectives * a range of sentences including complex sentences with dependent clauses * simple dialogue with the speaker clearly assigned * some poetic language (onomatopoeia, alliteration rhyme,) * adverbs and prepositional phrases for circumstantial details | * complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses * extended noun groups (forces of attraction and repulsion) * rhetorical devices (metaphor and hyperbole) * nominalisation * tense varied within the text * complex punctuation * longer passages of detailed description * modal language used to express degree of possibility, probability, obligation and permission * conditional/concessional cohesive devices (although, instead, compared to) * literary devices (sarcasm, irony) * active and passive voice * lexical cohesion across text (herbivore, nocturnal, tree-dwelling) | * multiclause sentences with less common constructs * wide range of declarative, imperative or interrogative sentences * passive voice * dense language with extensive nominalisation * rhetorical patterns (It is accepted that …) * extensive noun groups (The unexpected reaction to the presence of an acid indicates …) * modal nouns (assumption) |
| **Structure** | | | |
| * repeated or cumulative patterns * simple chronological patterns * images support meaning * structure is familiar and consistent with typical structure for the type of text (imaginative texts with orientation, complication and resolution) * simple cause-and-effect relationships * clear signals and transitions to lead the reader through a story, process or set of concepts. | * mainly follows a predictable structure (a persuasive text that opens with a statement of position) * explicit signposting using organisational markers such as paragraphs * some less predictable elements * little demand on a reader to reference forward or backward to comprehend the text * clearly signalled deviations from predictable structures * explicit and clear connections between parts of the text * clear text purpose * clear, logical constructs (cause-and-effect relationships or chronological relationships) * images that enhance the meaning of the text | * organisational markers such as subheadings, chapter headings, sidebars and breadcrumbs * connections between an expanded range of ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle * text structure related to specific disciplines (explanations and evaluative responses) * unique structure (narrative may include concurrent storylines and shifts in time) * multiple reading paths * images supplement and extend meaning of text * intertextuality through adaptation of structure and style | * structural features subverted * more than one organisational pattern in a text (conceptual, methodological) * several levels of inferred meaning conveyed through highly sophisticated literary devices * author’s position may be disguised or subsumed * includes citations * extensive, intricate, essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc., necessary to make meaning of text |
| **Content** | | | |
| * ideas close to children’s experience * content presented from a single perspective * purpose or main idea is explicit and clear from early in the text * one or two literal ideas explored * simple plot * realistic characters, settings and events * imaginary characters, events (some containing humour) * simply stated facts or information (The library is closed.) | * ideas or information clearly explained and described * levels of meaning * some implicit or inferred meaning * some implicit or subtle connections between events or ideas * prior or cultural knowledge may be required to understand content (some understanding of insects to read texts on butterflies) * obvious intertextual references (fairy tales) * low levels of abstraction * simple elements of fantasy (anthropomorphic characters) | * extensive descriptive detail * multiple perspectives represented * abstract concepts * topics or ideas presented with significant details or elaboration * main idea or message may need to be inferred * inferred or implicit meanings throughout text (intertextual references) * discipline-specific content (competition among species) * complex characters * multiple characters * images supplement and extend meaning of text | * ideas recontextualised for different times, modes, media and cultures * ideas with several levels of inferred meaning * cultural, historical or literary references * abstract ideas; complex, demanding concepts * theoretical content * complex issues/themes (the problems of society such as racism) * experiences portrayed are remote * connection of ideas may be subtle * sophisticated satire, irony and humour * relationships among characters are complex and often embedded * the purpose of the text is difficult to determine or deliberately disguised * critical thinking required to judge authenticity of informative texts |
| **Print and layout features** | | | |
| * read in one sitting * font mostly large and clear * occasional bolding of text * some print in speech or thought bubbles * digital texts navigable by icons with concise words to describe (print and colour, food, animals) * illustrations/images engaging, simple and provide visual support * some labels * title, author, illustrator listed on front cover and title page | * words with varying font sizes, colour and shape, bolding and italics * author dedication * end papers * simple table of contents * digital texts navigable by a combination of text and icons * digital texts that contain multiple pathways to navigate the same ‘page’ * some use of sidebar navigation * images in a variety of forms, labels, captions, maps, photographs, animations * special features that make the text interactive (flaps, buttons, sound) | * texts of variable length (chapter books, long illustrated texts, picture books) * digital texts containing multiple ‘pages’ and links with multimodal content * texts in a wide variety of forms (web pages, podcasts) * sidebar and breadcrumb navigation * acknowledgements, authors notes, index | * extended texts with unusual text features * collaborative information creation facility allowing the reader to contribute to the text (Wikipedia) * visuals that refine or subvert meaning * complex multimodal features, including an ensemble of print, image, sound and animation * footnotes, endnotes, references, bibliography and index |

\***Decodable texts**

Decodable texts support students to practice the phonic knowledge and skills they have learned, within a controlled text. A decodable text primarily made up of words containing the phonetic code (phoneme/grapheme relationships) the student has acquired, and some high-frequency words. Initially, decodable texts will include only phonetically simple words. Decodable texts increase in complexity as the student learns more of the phonetic code. When students read aloud decodable texts they are practicing and applying their knowledge and understanding of the phonetic code they have been taught. A decodable text may be either simple or predictable. The use of decodable texts does not preclude the use of other types of texts to support students’ development of comprehension or vocabulary skills.

**References for text complexity**

Fisher, D, Frey, N & Lapp, D 2012, Text Complexity: Raising rigor in reading, International Reading Association, Newark.

Shanahan, T and Shanahan on Literacy: Information for teachers and parents on teaching and assessing reading, writing, and literacy, <www.shanahanonliteracy.com>.

Pinnell, G & Fountas, I, 2012, The critical role of text complexity in teaching children to read [white paper], Heinemann.