Primary Language Curriculum

Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile

Support Material for teachers

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Developing Functional Language and Literacy Skills for the Child Learning English as an Additional Language

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- **Oral language:** sentence structure and grammar, acquisition and use of vocabulary, comprehension, requests and questions, retelling and elaborating
- **Reading:** comprehension
- **Writing:** vocabulary

Context

Most schools have some pupils who are learning English as an additional language (EAL) and, in some schools, a majority of pupils may be learning English as an additional language. Many children learning English as an additional language, depending on their age, will have age-appropriate competency in their first language(s). Some may be monolingual when they first arrive in an Irish classroom, some may be bilingual or multilingual in languages other than English. Depending on age, many may be reading and writing in their home languages.

It is important that children whose first language is neither English nor Irish are integrated into all activities in the classroom. During the early stages of language learning or language acquisition in the context of English immersion, some children may appear to be at sea, or silent. It is at this stage of language learning that children should be allowed to code-switch (use words or parts of sentences in the language(s) of the home). Good development in any second language (English/Irish) in the classroom normally involves code-switching as learners and teachers try to negotiate meaning in the teaching/learning situation. Children sharing their language is an important part of integrating them into all lesson activities. This will not only validate their home language, but it will also motivate them to participate and engage in classroom activities and conversations.

When working with children learning English as an additional language, it is necessary to first consider the child in an age-appropriate context rather than in a dependency perspective only. The child will, after all, have acquired the foundation elements of language in their home language(s), engagement, listening and attention in oral language and – possibly to some extent – in reading and writing. Chronological age

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may be helpful but is not the only criterion to be considered, depending on cultural and socio-economic circumstances. A child aged seven joining the Irish school system may or may not have been exposed to formal reading and writing in their first language, depending on background, whereas a child who joins at age ten would almost certainly have had this experience.

It is important to point out that language development will not happen automatically or in any ad hoc approach. A carefully planned policy and approach for language development is required, including code-switching from home language(s), acquisition and use of oral vocabulary in English/Irish, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and word recognition, spelling and vocabulary in writing.

An increasing number of children learning English as an additional language who arrive in Junior Infant classes will have experienced an English language pre-school via the free pre-school provision. It is imperative, for example, for the teacher to ascertain the above by communication with the parents/guardians and other stakeholders.
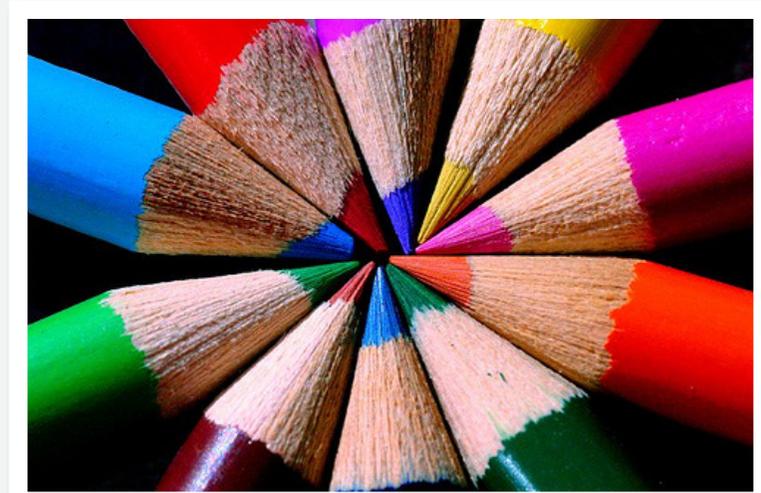
Common factors

Children learning English as an additional language may exhibit a **'silent period'**, which sometimes may last up to six months or more, during which they are listening to and absorbing language in context before feeling comfortable to use it. During this period, children may communicate via non-verbal means such as gestures. They may copy other children's language from context before using single word utterances and rote phrases. Over time, phrases grow in length and complexity.

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Suggestions for practice

- Speak clearly.

- Slow slightly the pace of speech (not artificially slow).

- Highlight/emphasise key language.

- Repeat instructions.

- Provide a running narration/ commentary on task in hand, e.g., *Now I am going to draw a circle. I am drawing the circle. Do you see the circle?*

- Invite children to volunteer equivalent of vocabulary items in their home language(s).

- Display words from children's home languages in the classroom.

- Use the whiteboard effectively.

- Expand one word utterances in an incremental fashion.

- Correct by modelling correct version.

- Support oral language by gesture, pointing, mime, photos, visuals, on-line materials, apps.

- Use reading as a support for developing oral competence.

- Allow for silent period; do not necessarily expect language production.

- Acknowledge home language(s).

- Boost confidence by errorless learning opportunities, *mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí.*

- All subjects offer potential for language learning, e.g., PE instructions for activities.

Plan the language development of children learning English as an additional language.

Use language of home as a resource and bridge to English language development.

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> As a native speaker of English, consider yourself as a rich resource for children learning English as an additional language and constantly provide input.

Teacher's role

Comprehensible input is critical for language learning, and adaptations made by teachers to facilitate understanding are essential. Teachers are required, therefore, to constantly provide rich oral and written language input, even in the sustained absence of English/Irish language usage (production) by the child.

Teachers may support English language learning by scaffolding the learner in a naturalistic fashion, such as providing a running commentary on activities in hand. This provides immediate, in-situ input and helps the learner make sense of the language happening around them. Teachers may find it useful to consider the Functions of Language/Feidhmeanna Teanga in *Curaclam na Bunscoile: Gaeilge* (p.20ff.) to help reinforce pupils' functional competence.

For children learning English as an additional language, all areas of the primary curriculum are rich sources of language and provide potential for language usage and development in terms of vocabulary acquisition, enrichment and pragmatics.

Resources and strategies used to support children with language and communication delays and difficulties may also be considered where appropriate, i.e., visual route to language, Lámh signs, PECS, etc. In order to provide effectively for pupils learning English as an additional language, schools may also need to liaise with the home, with the EAL teacher (where available) and possibly with learning support.

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Ideas to support a positive response to linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom

Positive response to linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom. Ideas:

8 ways to foster reading growth in multilingual learners

http://www.k12reader.com/8-ways-to-foster-reading-growth-in-multilingual-learners/

Code-switching lessons

http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/e02610/csl_introduction.pdf

Language Flower

http://mylanguages.org/write_name.php

Languages and Immigration : raising awareness of language and linguistic diversity in schools. ELODIL (Canada)

http://www.elodil.com/files/article%20PRIMAIREeng.pdf

Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative

http://www.mlpsi.ie/

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Developed in collaboration with Professor Muiris O Laoire and Gerard O Carroll, Institute of Technology, Tralee

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Infusing Playfulness into Language Teaching and Learning

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- Engagement, listening and attention (Oral Language)
- Retelling and elaborating (Oral Language)
- Playful and creative use of language (Oral Language)
- Engagement (Reading and Writing)
- Motivation and choice (Reading and Writing)

Why Make Teaching and Learning Playful?

We all know that young children love to play and, when fully engrossed in a high quality playful experience, evidence tells us that they display high levels of

- spontaneity and flow
- freedom, choice and control
- imagination and creativity
- curiosity and adventure

- motivation and challenge
- fun and excitement
- problem-solving and decision-making.

Reflecting the principles and practice guidelines in *Aistear* (2009), the Primary Language Curriculum shows the importance of play and playful experiences for children's language learning.

So, how can playful characteristics be infused purposefully and meaningfully into aspects of language teaching and learning in children's primary school experience?

How Can We Make Language Teaching and Learning Playful?

To do this effectively, the teacher initiates and maintains a degree of playfulness in all aspects of language learning and teaching. For example, the tone is light-hearted and the activity becomes self-sustaining because of its enjoyable nature. Unexpected turns and directions are followed while still allowing a degree of structure to support effective language learning.

Playful learning is much more than play in isolation. Rather, it embraces six key pillars:

1. Foster warm secure **relationships** with children.
2. Cultivate playful and engaging **interactions** with children.
3. Create playful **opportunities** in all teaching and learning experiences.
4. Ensure **sensitive** pacing and matching, based on knowledge of developmental pathways.
5. **Respect** individual differences in ability, personality, age and culture.
6. Manage **progression** and transitions.

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When thinking specifically about making language teaching and learning playful, it is important that children feel at ease to express their ideas and opinions and to 'have a go' at reading a book or writing down an idea without fear of making a mistake. The teacher also needs to be a proactive participant in the learning experience, displaying a degree of energy and enthusiasm to promote interest on the part of the children, while simulatenously progressing and extending their knowledge and understanding of language at a pace appropriate to the individual needs of each child. Opportunities to be playful extend beyond a daily hour of child-led play. Children's **entire school experience can be playful,** i.e., during both child-initiated **and** more teacher-directed, task-related activities, all of which can be beneficial for young children's language learning and development. Drawing on evidence from Van Oers (1996), playful language teaching and learning can embrace two differing approaches, as shown above on the top right.

PLAY — Language

Here play is the main focus but aspects of language are drip-fed into the experience, e.g., a reception and waiting area is added to the play hospital environment. This area includes pens, notebooks, a computer, magazines, comics, catalogues and so on.

LANGUAGE — Play

In the above scenario, the development of language skills is the main focus, while aspects of playfulness are infused into the experience. For example, the teacher might make use of puppets, jokes, popular culture, the outdoors or teacher-in-role as a means of grasping and maintaining the children's interest.

A high quality early primary experience requires playing, learning and teaching to become fully syncronised (Wood, 2007).

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The Role of the Playful Language Teacher

Playful teachers display their professional competence by

- having a sound knowledge and understanding of the three strands of the Language Curriculum

- knowing in what direction the children's skills and understanding may be expected to go next

- planning experiences in accordance with the needs and interests of individual children.

Playful teachers also 'let down their guard' by

- playing alongside the children

- following their lead

- encouraging creativity

- injecting ambiguity and originality into the learning experience.

Using a Topic-Based Approach

Using a **topic-based approach** embraces the fact that young children do not see concepts, skills and dispositions as belonging to discrete categories and curriculum areas. A topic affords children opportunities to make **meaningful connections.** It enables them to develop and **transfer** their skills and knowledge across different contexts. If children cannot make connections from one area to another, the learning experience is often discarded or forgotten.

An integrated approach recognises the importance of using children's own ideas and interests as a starting point for investigating a topic in more depth. This increases children's **motivation** to learn and their **engagement** with the topic. Learners' minds are

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more likely to be engaged cognitively when teaching is related to what is familiar to them and builds on the foundation of what they already know.

In addition, the more that is written about the brain and how it develops, it is becoming clearer that the emotional mind plays a critical role in young children's thinking and development. Offering

children a **topic-based** learning experience has the potential to nurture **positive dispositions** and **confidence,** as it allows each child to access the curriculum in a way that is playful and appropriate to his/her stage of development.

At the start of a new topic, a planning board allows the children to plan with the teacher. They talk about what they already know. They contribute their ideas about what they would like to find out. This encourages children to have ownership of their learning.

Listen to the case for why playful teaching and learning is essential in the early years of children's primary school experience.

Topic of 'Chocolate'

Let's consider 'Chocolate' as a suitable topic for young children. The choice of topic will be negotiated with the children and it is based on something that is of relevance and of interest to them. It also has a strong literacy focus, being based on a very engaging pop-up version of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* book.

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Child-Initiated Playful Experiences

Listed below are some of the playful learning experiences children might enjoy through the topic of 'Chocolate'. These have been organised into the three strands of the Language Curriculum.

Oral Language

- Engaging in natural conversations during role-play in *Wonka's Chocolate Café*

- Adopting the role of the chef or waitress and using the specialist vocabulary associated with the role

- Collaborating on the task of building a large-scale construction model of Wonka's factory. This encourages rich communication as children negotiate roles and discuss their plans.

- Enjoying playful language around the water-tray as children engage with the story and make up nonsense rhymes for Augustus Gloop

- Using subject-specific language as children investigate how to make the water flow through the marble-run

Reading

- Reading the menu and making choices in *Wonka's Chocolate Café*

- Reading mathematical language as children use their clipboards and non-standard measures to construct their models of the various rooms in Charlie's factory

- Navigating computer programmes associated with the topic, and reading as they explore and navigate through the website/programmes

- Reading instructions about how to make chocolate rice-krispie buns for *Wonka's Chocolate Café*

Writing

- Creating and redrafting menus for the café

- Writing orders for customers

- Using clipboards and colourful markers to plan their construction of Wonka's factory

- Strengthening fine motor skills by manipulating the malleable chocolate-scented dough to make items for the café

- Manipulating paintbrushes of varying sizes to paint with melted chocolate

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- Using tweezers at the sand-tray to search for golden coins in the coco-pops

Task-Related Teacher-Initiated Playful Experiences

Listed below are activities which, although more structured and teacher-initiated, still have playfulness infused in them. As earlier, these have been organised into the three strands of the Language Curriculum.

Oral Language

- Adopting the role of the book characters and using language and phrases gained from *Shared Reading* times; using recordable ICT sound buttons for children to record their interpretation of the voices of the characters

- Communication generated when discussing the 'Chocolate' topic **mind map.** A mind map can be helpful as a way of planning with the children at the start of the topic. The word 'Chocolate' is in the centre of the planning board and question words such as *who, where, when, what,* can help the children to think of directions their learning might go in.

- Generating descriptive words to describe settings from the book, e.g., on entering the 'Chocolate Room'…

- Using their imagination as they enter a world of make believe when their teacher arrives into the classroom in role as Willy Wonka and they are invited to become his factory workers

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Reading

- Sequencing the story or the order of the characters who won the golden tickets

- Sequencing the journey of the cocoa bean to the bar of chocolate (differentiated using picture cues and simple words and phrases)

- Clapping out the syllables of the characters' names using rhythm sticks

- Manipulating rhyme based on the Charlie and Chocolate Factory rhymes

Writing

- Writing topic words on gel-boards

- Using coloured gel pens, topic-bordered paper and clipboards to encourage creative story writing associated with the topic

- Doing procedural writing – how to make anything with chocolate!

- Writing a Mr Cadbury fact

- Designing a Wonka bar and wrapper

- Writing golden tickets for the Wonka bars

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Monitoring a Playful Learning and Teaching Experience

Tuning into the children's responses to the playful experience is of particular value as an aid to determining the overarching quality of the learning that is taking place. The following reflective questions may act as a starting point.

- Did the children display high levels of **interest and enthusiasm?**

- Did they show signs of **creativity and imagination** in the process?

- Were they **curious and inquisitive** about the learning experience?

- Did they **remain on task?**

- Did they show signs of **precision and care?**

- Did they offer **suggestions?**

- Were they able to **comment on their own work?**

- Did they show **interest** and a degree of **competence** in using language across the three strands of the Language Curriculum?

- Did they tackle the activities **without hesitation?**

- Did they **interact confidently** with others?

Infusing playfulness into language teaching and learning not only motivates young children to want to learn more, it can be an enriching experience for teachers also!

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Developed in collaboration with Dr. Glenda Walsh,
Stranmillis University College and Mrs Stephanie Gillespie, primary school teacher

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A College of Queen's University Belfast

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Organising for Play: Resources

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- Engagement, listening and attention (Oral Language)
- Engagement (Reading and Writing)
- Motivation and choice (Reading and Writing)
- Comprehension (Reading)

Introduction

Providing the resources for play is a large part of the teacher's contribution to the quality of the children's play. The purpose of this Support Material is to provide some information about the practicalities of resourcing **open-ended, child-led play.** Many of the resources described here can be used for teaching and learning throughout the school day. This can be a very effective way of linking the children's play to subject-specific lessons. Having five play areas means you only have to provide enough of each resource for one group, but it's important that there is plenty for that group.

This Support Material needs to be read in conjunction with the related short podcasts. It is a companion piece to the Support Material, *Organising for Play: Time and Routines.* The two pieces of Support Material and their related podcasts, reflect the principles of, and practice guidelines in *Aistear.*

Open-ended Resources for Play

Every child needs the opportunity to talk about his/her play, to be heard and, in turn, to be the listener so that another child can be heard.

The play areas are generally a combination of sand, water, socio-dramatic, small-world, junk art, playdough, and construction. While these are not the only options, the key thing is that the resources are **open-ended.**

While some resources are free (e.g., junk art, shoe-boxes), some need a bit of investment by schools. The suggestions here strike a balance between buying and gathering. Parents can be an important support in gathering resources.

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Sand/Water

Sand and water trays need to be deep enough to have roughly 7-8 cm depth of either resource without it spilling out constantly. Dust-pans and brushes for sand and old towels on the floor for mopping up water spills, help the children maintain the area. Keep resources for sand small and in proportion to the size of the sand-tray, e.g., buckets and spades are fine for the beach but of little use in a sand-tray.

Junk art

Junk art connects particularly well with science, especially with the skill of designing and making. It provides a context for the science strand unit, *Properties and characteristics of materials*. Additionally, it provides considerable scope for self-generated and therefore real problem-solving, and promotes fine motor skills and concentration. The junk can contribute to children's recognition of 3-D shapes in the environment, and provide a way of talking about recycling and other environmental issues. Above all else, it is a space for the children's creativity.

Construction

As an example of how careful planning can enhance the learning potential of the resources, shoe-boxes (as described in the podcast) can be arranged Russian-doll fashion in threes, with the sets picture-coded. Sorting the boxes into the sets supports the children's ability to sequence objects. This kind of planning also enhances the language potential of play, particularly during the tidy-up. Shoe-boxes and other construction resources connect explicitly with the *Construction* strand of the Visual Arts Curriculum.

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Organising for Play: Resources

Playdough

Playdough is easy to make and versatile. However, some children can find it difficult to get started. Teacher modelling can be very important when the playdough is first introduced. Don't tell the children what to do, just do it yourself and talk about your ideas. Playdough can support learning in visual arts through the strand units associated with clay.

PVC table-mats/cloth will keep the table clean. Position the table on the wet area or other uncarpeted area, add pasta shapes, straws, bottle caps, beads, pegs and other accessories and see what happens!

Small-world

Imaginative small-world play is often incorporated with construction resources which combine well with little dinosaurs, reptiles, insects, people, farm machinery, construction machinery, furniture and so on. It is through careful planning of the provision of these small-world items that the teacher can connect with the children's interests and any integrated topic which he/she is using for curriculum planning.

Socio-dramatic Play

Scenarios for socio-dramatic play should be, as far as possible, chosen in consultation with the children. What you can provide may be limited at first while you build a bank of resources, and these limitations can be part of the planning conversations with the children. See the Support Material, *Using Socio-Dramatic Play to Support Oral Language and Early Literacy.*

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Organising for Play: Resources

Literacy and Numeracy Resource Table

While environmental print and other print resources can be included at each play area, a dedicated literacy and numeracy table is a very worthwhile inclusion. This table of resources is not a play area of itself, but the resources are available to all the children during the play session. It can include sand-timers, magnifying glasses, giant measuring tapes, weighing scales of various types, sets of measuring spoons, metre-sticks, flexible rulers, post-it pads and other small notebooks, novelty

pens and pencils, markers, coloured paper, envelopes, chalks and lots more. The principle here is that the children use literacy and numeracy for their own reasons, giving them ownership and making literacy and numeracy meaningful for them.

Organising Space

The best place for play to happen is in the children's classroom as part of their everyday school experience. The classroom can look very crowded as the children spread their play across the floor and over the table tops, and make connections between the play

areas. This represents a real culture change in our infant classrooms and will take time to get used to. The children's ability to tidy-up independently and effectively is very important. Equally important are the discussions between teacher and children about how to manage the space available. Research has shown that children are very capable of coming up with solutions where space is a problem (Broadhead, 2004).

Children rarely feel a space is too small for play. They will make use of whatever space is made available.

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Organising for Play: Resources

Conclusion

As noted in the Support Material, *Organising for Play: Time and Resources, … adults cannot plan children's play, but can plan for children's play …* (Wood, 2013, p.68). The resources described, along with the linked podcasts, are intended to guide the teacher in choosing appropriate resources for **child-directed play.** These open-ended play resources help teachers support children *to be creative and adventurous, to develop working theories about their world, and to make decisions about themselves as learners* (NCCA, 2009, p.6).

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Organising for Play: Time and Routines

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- Social conventions and awareness of others (Oral Language)
- Demonstrating understanding (Oral Language)
- Description, prediction and reflection (Oral Language)
- Comprehension (Reading)
- Engagement (Writing)
- Motivation and choice (Writing)

Introduction

Play and playful approaches are very important to teaching and learning in infant classes. The purpose of this Support Material is to suggest practical ways to organise the routines that support **daily opportunities for open-ended, child-led play.** It is not meant to limit play and playfulness to a daily play session, but to help you to introduce and develop play in your classroom.

This Support Material is linked to six short podcasts which give more practical information and can help you to

- organise play opportunities for the children by **setting up a weekly sequence*** and a **daily routine**
- suggest ways to allow you to spend **time** each day **participating in play** with the children, thereby supporting learning, as well as future planning and assessment.

* In the podcasts, this is called a 'rota' but the language has evolved into the more flexible 'sequence'.

Time and Routines – Overview

For organising the **play session,** there are three interconnected routines:

- A weekly play sequence
- A daily 4-phase play session routine
- Routines to help the teacher spend time every day in playful interaction with a group of children as they play.

All of these routines are based on a system of **five groups** within the class playing in **five play areas** (see the Support Material, *Organising for Play: Resources*). While groups can be reassigned regularly, friendship groups in which children get to play with their special friends, should be a feature. Children whose social skills are still developing will need support to enter the play

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with the group, and careful observation can help to ensure that children who play alone are not doing so because of an uncertainty about how to join in. Gender issues might also have to be considered.

Children need plenty of time so that their play can develop and they feel it is worth their while investing in it. A minimum provision is **one hour per day.** Teachers' experience indicates that the best time is between little break and lunch-time, because this time period has a natural beginning and end.

Weekly Play Sequence

Weekly play sequence

FRIDAY Junk Art → **MONDAY** Sand → **TUESDAY** Playdough → **WEDNESDAY** Construction → **THURSDAY** Socio-dramatic → (back to Friday)
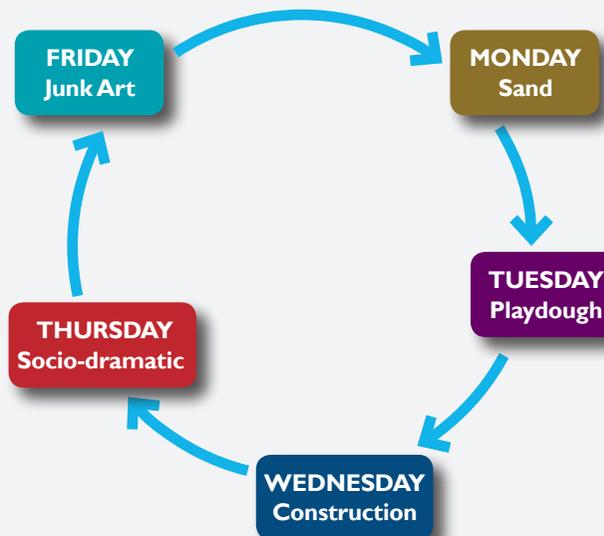
The sequence is simply the order in which each group plays in each play area on the consecutive days of the week. It is designed to make sure that children in large classes have a broad range of play opportunities, and that each child gets access. The sequence is also a practical way for teachers to keep track of what each child is doing when managing large numbers. It is helpful if the children have a visual, such as a rotating chart, to help them see when their turn will come at each play area. It gives them a sense of security that they will get their turn, and helps them to plan ahead.

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Organising for Play: Time and Routines

Daily Routine

1. **ORIENTATION**
2. **PLAY-TIME**
3. **TIDY-UP TIME**
4. **PAIR DISCUSSION & REPORTING**
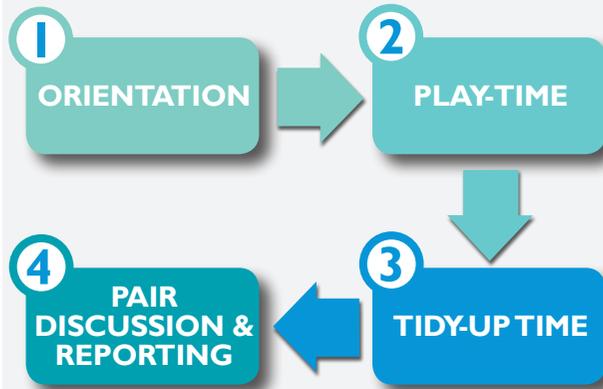
1. Orientation

Before play begins, the children are given time to **consider what they will do during play.** Research shows that this planning promotes higher quality play. The Orientation takes different forms depending on whether the class is junior or senior infants, or a combination of classes. The following are examples of what the children might do as part of the orientation.

Junior infants:

- Name the children in their group and in other groups.
- Describe the weekly sequence in terms of taking turns, understanding 'today, tomorrow, yesterday', and naming the days of the week.
- Begin to follow through on statements beginning with, *I'm going to …*

Senior infants – As above and also:

- Plan with a partner, progressing to planning collaboratively with a group.
- Record the plan through mark-making, drawing and/or writing.
- Talk about the plan, identifying the resources needed.
- Identify roles required for role-play, and describe what each might do.
- Refer back to the 'written' plan when reviewing their play.

The children are supported to be **very independent when playing** and this includes the set-up. Play resources are taken out and returned by the children, and resources are stored so that this can happen. It will become obvious which play areas the children prefer. Such preferences can help with planning, e.g., many children love junk art and teachers can respond by planning the weekly sequence so that each group has two consecutive days of junk art. This allows the children to finish what they started.

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Organising for Play: Time and Routines

3. Tidy-up Time

Through consistent experiences of putting away resources, children develop a **sense of responsibility** for their environment and develop an awareness of the needs of others who will use those materials after them. Where the storage of materials has been carefully planned, the children practise classifying, matching, comparing and ordering when they tidy up.

They also use the associated language in a meaningful way. It is important that the children tidy up independently, so the teacher focuses on supporting the children to do this rather than doing it himself/herself. While this can take time, it can be a valuable contribution to children's developing self-reliance, independence, self-confidence and self-efficacy.

4. Pair Discussion and Reporting

After the tidy-up is finished, each child is paired with a child he/she didn't play with. The children take five minutes or so to **talk about what they did,** then two or three pairs report to the class. Over time, this encourages the children to listen to the other child. Pair discussion works well as the main form of review. This can be alternated with, for example, having a question and answer session with the role-play group, integrating with role and character in the Drama Curriculum.

> Every child needs the opportunity to talk about his/her play, to be heard and, in turn, to be the listener so that another child can be heard.

> **Reporting**
> Each child reports on what his/her partner did rather than what he/she did.

Organising for Play: Time and Routines

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Interaction Time during Play

Sensitive participation by the teacher contributes to the quality of play in school. Spending **time playing with the children every day** will benefit you and the children. Every day, the teacher sits with **one group for at least 10 minutes.** Some call it the '10-minute contract', but you and the children can come up with your own title. The teacher and the children make an agreement, in advance, that for 10 minutes (or more), the teacher will have uninterrupted playtime with a particular group. It can help the children to keep to this if they know that their group will get a turn to play with the teacher as well, and you can tell them in advance when that will be. There are a couple of other things the teacher can do to help the children to help each other, and become more independent during play.

Using Assistants

One strategy is to have 'assistants' such as a problem solver or helpful person in each group. Any child who has a question or needs help goes first to a helper while the teacher is playing. Such roles give positive messages to the children about social skills like helpfulness and friendliness, and acting independently.

The Waiting Room

Any child who still wants to speak to the teacher after asking an assistant, can go to the Waiting Room until the teacher is free. All that's needed are two or three chairs, a box of reading material, pages on clipboards for writing, etc., and a sign saying *Waiting Room*. Having reading and writing materials in the Waiting Room means that, even when a child actually waits for a length of time, he/she can take part in literacy activities.

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Observing and Assessing Play

In addition to playful interaction being an opportunity, as described in the podcast, to extend the children's learning, the daily interaction time is an opportunity to gather **assessment information.** Listening to the children talking and having conversations with them will give you information about, for example, their sentence structure and grammar and their ability to listen and respond to others. You will also be able to observe and assess learning dispositions such as the ability to cope with difficulties and to persevere to complete what they want to do. The following are two suggestions for planning your interaction time during play.

- Sit at the **same play area** (e.g., blocks, playdough) **each day for the week** so that you get a chance to observe each child as part of the small group in that particular context.

- **Follow one group of children for a number of days,** even for the full five days of the weekly sequence. This allows for more intensive assessment of the children in that group, and gives the children more opportunities to interact playfully with the teacher. This is an opportunity, in the context of large classes, to give each child attention in a systematic way.

Building this playful interaction time into your daily play routine helps the teacher become more expert in developing and supporting the children's play. In terms of assessment, this approach facilitates child self-assessment, teacher-child conversations and teacher observation – three assessment methods appropriate for young children as outlined in *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009). It is also significant in providing information consistently over time about, for example, the children's developing vocabulary, the ways in which they are using their developing reading and writing skills, and their growing independence as learners.

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Organising for Play: Time and Routines

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Conclusion

… adults cannot plan children's play, but can plan for children's play … (Wood, 2013, p.68). The routines and strategies outlined in this Support Material and the linked podcasts, are designed to help teachers provide for children's play in the primary school classroom. Most importantly, the routines are aimed at making the children as independent as possible so that the teacher gets time every day to play with the children. Teaching and learning through play needs everyone to be a player.

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Developed in collaboration with Dr. Jacqueline Fallon, Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE)

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Using Socio-Dramatic Play to Support Oral Language and Early Literacy

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

Oral Language

- Engagement, listening and attention
- Social conventions and awareness of others
- Sentence structure and grammar
- Acquisition and use of vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Requests and questions
- Categorisation
- Retelling and elaborating
- Playful and creative use of language
- Information giving, explanation and justification
- Description, prediction and reflection

Reading and Writing

- Engagement
- Motivation and choice
- Reading vocabulary/Vocabulary
- Purpose, genre and voice
- Response and author's intent (Writing)

Introduction

Socio-dramatic play supports children's language and literacy development. *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (2009) highlights the importance of this for children in their early years of primary school. The play is led and controlled by children and supported, as appropriate, by the teacher. Opportunities to practise language and literacy occur naturally in contexts devised by the children.

Language is fluent in play because children are at ease when playing. Vocabulary develops well during socio-dramatic play because children are intent on communicating what they mean to one another (Harris, Golinkoff and Hirsh-Pasek, 2011).

In play, children imitate language and literacy behaviours that they have experienced in the wider environment. They chat on the mobile phone, make appointments, interview one another for

Using Socio-Dramatic Play to Support Oral Language and Early Literacy

Socio-dramatic play is improvisational in the sense that it is not scripted in advance but, in socio-dramatic play, young children communicate about the play as well as being involved in the play. They move in and out of role to alternately plan and play roles. For example, Molly breaks the play to declare she is changing roles, *Okay, I'm the customer now. My chips are cold. Can you take them back please…?* This movement out-of-character to suggest ideas for advancing the play is called **meta-play** (Sawyer and DeZutter, 2007; Williamson and Silvern, 1991) and is strongly connected to children's ability to comprehend, to retell stories, and to understand concepts about print.

jobs, serve in shops, banks, post-offices, bakeries, airports and railway stations, deal with customer complaints and role-play a myriad of professions and trades. Literacy contexts include reading and writing signage, e.g., *Special Offer!, No Parking!, Dogs must be kept on a leash,* writing shopping lists and to-do lists, making timetables, invitations and appointments, filling forms, writing letters and emails, devising advertisements and sending invoices.

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Using Socio-Dramatic Play to Support Oral Language and Early Literacy

This Support Material

- guides you through the **types of activities** that you might provide for children in their socio-dramatic play scenario (see the suggested planning framework on page 4)

- gives practical advice on **how to set up** a play scenario in the classroom and includes **examples of signage** and **literacy materials** to ensure that children's play is supported by a print-rich environment.

The ideas and strategies included in this Support Material are not prescriptive. Teachers need to adapt suggestions to their own classroom circumstances.

Choosing a Topic for Socio-Dramatic Play

The topic selected for socio-dramatic play and the activities chosen within the topic are decided **in collaboration with the children** and **supported by you,** the teacher. The idea might come from an event in the community or a visit from a professional to the school. Ideally, the topic will integrate with work in other areas of the curriculum. See the list for examples of suggested topics. This Support Material uses the suggested topic *The Paint Shop,* which integrates oral language and literacy with visual arts and mathematics. The example illustrates how socio-dramatic play might be adapted into a classroom situation.

Suggested Topics for Socio-Dramatic Play

Ideas for topics to support oral language and literacy through socio-dramatic play:

- Building an extension to your house, school, shop
- The airport
- The restaurant
- At the bus station
- At the train station
- Going camping
- The baker's shop
- The garage

- The paint shop
- The dentist's surgery
- The doctor's surgery
- Visiting the vet's clinic
- Visiting the moon/outer space
- On the boat
- In a submarine
- Locations from fairy-tales or nursery rhymes

Add your own ideas based on your children's interests.

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Suggested Planning Framework for Socio-Dramatic Play

1. Give children the opportunity to **talk about their own experiences** and knowledge about the topic.

2. Think about using non-fiction as well as fiction.

3. Plan **oral language lessons** based on the topic. Think about pair-work and strategies such as role-play, hot-seating and interviews.

4. Gather **resources** for the socio-dramatic play on *The Paint Shop,* e.g., colour-charts, pencils, paints, brushes, paper, a paint-mixing machine, overalls, rollers, trays, paint scrapers, wall-paper stripping machine, a queue ticket-dispenser machine.

5. Create **laminated signs** to make the play area a **print-rich environment,** e.g., shop directions such as *Queue here, Pay here, Toilets this way* ⟶, *Customer Service, Paint mixing area, Please take a colour chart, Please take a number and wait to be called.* These signs can be shared with the children during oral language lessons based on the topic. The children will also want to make their own signs as part of the play.

6. Think about **poems, rhymes, jokes** related to the topic.

7. Play **language games,** e.g., *I spy, Spot the difference, Find the odd one out* to familiarise the children with new vocabulary which they can use in their play.

8. Organise a **visit from a professional** in the field. Prepare questions with the children before the visit.

9. **Visit** a paint shop.

10. Model **literacy activities,** e.g., booking a painter to give an estimate, using a calendar to make appointments, creating signs for a business premises, sending invoices, reminder letters, notices of upcoming sales and special offers, writing the painter's curriculum vitae and testimonial letters from previous clients.

11. Give children **time to play freely** with the different resources. During this time, the teacher observes, documents, gives guidance (e.g., reinforces new vocabulary and models the language register used in the play situation) and sometimes participates in the play by taking on a role.

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Let's imagine that a new paint shop has opened in the community which the class will be able to visit with their teacher. One of the children's parents is a house painter by profession and she has agreed to visit the classroom to talk about her job. The class teacher explores the children's current knowledge of paint shops and house painting and, using this, she/he plans a number of oral language experiences based on the topic. The planning framework on page 4 lists the activities and resources the teacher uses to enrich children's socio-dramatic play. This work takes place **prior to** as well as **concurrently** with the actual socio-dramatic play scenarios.

Classroom Organisation and Layout

Classroom organisation will vary in accordance with each class context. For the purpose of this example, children are divided into groups, e.g., five groups of five children, and all groups are involved in some form of play. Use the perimeter of the classroom to create a series of areas for the children's play. At least one group is in the socio-dramatic play area which is based on the topic *The Paint Shop*. Other groups can build constructions with blocks, work in the small-world area, work with sand, playdough and use the reading and writing area in their play. For more information on this, see the Support Material, *Organising for Play: Time and Routines.*

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## Using Socio-Dramatic Play to Support Oral Language and Early Literacy

Step-by-Step Guide to Develop Socio-Dramatic Play

Steps taken so far

1. The topic *The Paint Shop* was selected and stories about colour, paint and painting were read by the teacher. A non-fiction book about a day in the life of a painter was also read.

2. The teacher planned and taught a number of oral language lessons during which the job of the painter was discussed and the tools of the painting trade explored. Vocabulary in the form of signage, e.g., colour chart, paint mixing area, brushes, rollers, white spirit, paint stripper, *Please take a colour chart, Please take a number and wait to be called* and *Sale now on,* was introduced and used. The children tried out role-play as part of their oral language lessons. This is important language preparation for the socio-dramatic play later.

3. A house painter visited the classroom, bringing with her some of the tools of her trade. She explained to the children about tendering for a job and how the painting process happened. The children asked her questions that they prepared in advance, supported by their teacher.

4. A visit to the new local paint shop is planned for the following week. It is now time to get working on the paint shop in a classroom play context.

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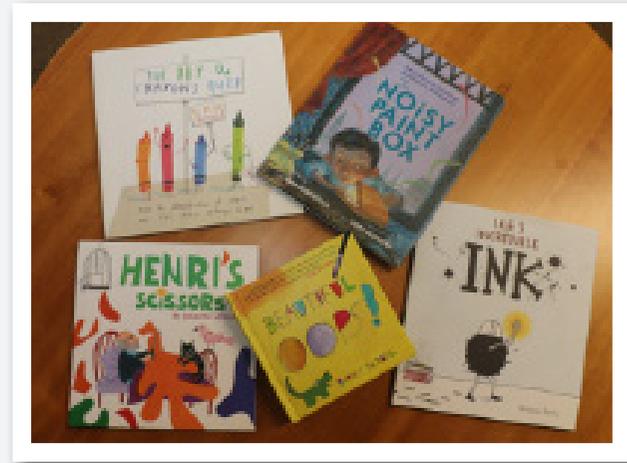
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Next Steps – Children Planning Orally and in Writing

The teacher gathers the children for a brainstorming session to discuss what they might do at the different play areas. The children put forward a number of ideas; not all of them will be embraced. Children often change their minds once they are in the play area. The teacher supports and works with the children's decisions. The following ideas for play are proposed by the children, and supported and guided by the teacher:

- A **paint shop** stocked with labelled painting materials and manned by two assistants. Paint rollers are made in the shop with household roll cylinders.

- A **paint mixing area** where paint scientists create new colours and colour charts.

- A **painter's workshop** where children are using rollers and brushes to paint a large surface. They are also experimenting with painting with sponges and potato cuts. This work has been done previously in an art lesson so the children are skilled in the area.

- A **painter's office** where the secretary takes queries on cost, and job descriptions. The secretary draws a gate, a door, a wall as appropriate to indicate the location of the job, and then books in the client for the painting job. She takes telephone queries, and makes up bills. A **queue ticket dispenser** is needed and can be created in the junk art area for use in the paint shop.

- Children can build **internal walls of a house** in the construction area and visit the colour-chart designers to decide on colours for their walls.

Once these ideas are discussed and decided upon, the play session proceeds using the four-step approach outlined in the Support Material, *Organising for Play: Time and Routines*. Children sit in their groups on the floor and discuss how they will proceed with the play. Using clipboards, they draw and write their play plan. After a few minutes, the teacher invites children to share their play plan with the group before going to the various play areas.

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The Teacher's Role in Socio-Dramatic Play

The teacher observes the socio-dramatic play for a while before entering into role. This observation is essential so that she/he can evaluate what type of intervention will progress the play and support the children. The teacher's involvement helps to extend the play and enhance the language and literacy used in the interactions taking place. The teacher's aim is not to interrupt the play or take on a starring role but to intervene in a way that develops the play and enhances the language and literacy interactions that are taking place. If control of the play is taken over by the teacher, it is no longer children's play but teaching disguised as play – *chocolate-covered broccoli* – as Bruckman (1999, p.75) called it. The teacher's work in documenting learning experiences during play will help to assess their language learning and plan for further steps in developing their oral language and literacy skills.

Review

At the end of the play session, the children review and give feedback. Sometimes they give feedback first and then tidy up and sometimes the order is reversed. The children gather on a mat in front of the interactive whiteboard.

The teacher shares photographs taken during the play and uploaded to the computer. The children use these photographs to support them as they share the story of their play with the whole class. The teacher guides the feedback further by providing prompts to the children, e.g., *What went well in your play? What bit was really fun? What would have been better...?* The children give feedback to one another initially and then a number of them are invited to report to the whole class. This brings the play session to an end.

See pages 9–11 for a teacher's story of how she used a topic approach to play.

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A teacher describes her children's play session on the topic of 'The Dentist'

The topic of **'The Dentist'** was introduced by inviting the children to talk about their experience and knowledge of the dentist initially. I then read some books about the dentist, fiction and non-fiction. We visited a local dentist's surgery and met with a dentist and dental nurse. Back in the classroom, we made a plan for our dentist's surgery. We also had a creative writing lesson and a visual arts lesson based on the visit. We participated in the SPHE programme, **Mighty Mouth.** Using this programme, the children used a chart to record their daily brushing of their teeth. They received a certificate and a new toothbrush and toothpaste on completion of the programme.

During SESE, we made a **Think Before You Drink** display to demonstrate how much sugar there is in well-known drinks. This integrated well with our dental topic and the children moved the display to their dentist's surgery. The child in role as dentist pointed out the sugar levels in the drinks to clients as he worked on their teeth.

Having consulted briefly with me, the children decided to paint roads on a large sheet of paper and to build a community of 'People who help us' integrating with geography. I helped them to lay a large piece of white construction paper over a table. The children made a list of services in the community such as hospital, school, church, shopping centre, hairdressers, dental clinic, chipper and playground, etc. Each day the group of children working in the small-world area added to our community and checked off the services that they had made on the list. One boy, who was a member of the Traveller community, was asked to make a camp in the community and he was very proud to do so. He answered lots of questions from both me and his classmates about life in the camp.

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Junk art area

At the junk art table, the children made various items for the dentist's surgery including a telescopic toothbrush, flosser, mouth camera, as well as dinosaurs, dolls and flags. One of the girls made a mouth with egg-carton teeth featuring green paper and foam as the germs in the mouth.

I placed the mouth and the telescopic toothbrush in the dentist's surgery so that he could demonstrate to the patients how to brush their teeth properly. I asked open-ended questions such as, 'That looks interesting…, I wonder how you did that?' or 'I love that you put green on your piece; can you tell me why you chose to do that?' I found that the children engaged more in conversation when invited in this way.

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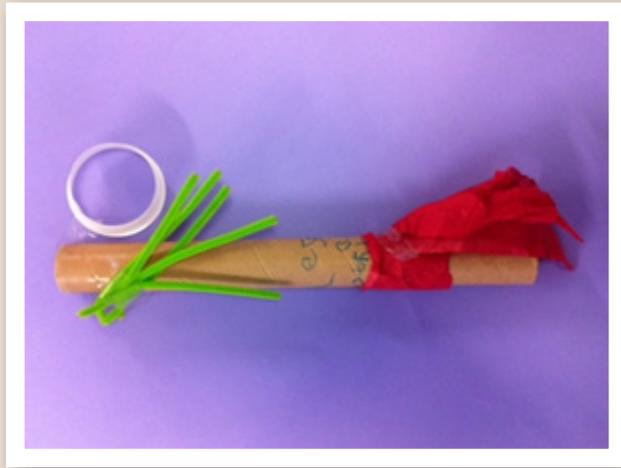
Review

The children had an opportunity to give feedback on their play. If I noticed a child playing particularly well with his/her group or making something special, I asked the rest of the class to gather around that person so that he/she could explain what was happening. It was on one of these occasions that the boy, mentioned earlier, spoke about life at his camp.

There was also an opportunity to give feedback at the end of the play session. I rang the wind chimes ten minutes before feedback time. I had a large sheet on a flip-chart which read, 'What went well…' and on the other side, 'Even better if…' I invited children from each group to report back about their play, based on these two criteria. I used photographs taken during the play and uploaded to my computer. These acted as an aide memoire for the children when they were describing their work. It also made them feel proud to see their work displayed on the interactive whiteboard.

This account was developed in collaboration with
Elaine Carton, primary school teacher

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Joan Kiely, Marino Institute of Education

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PRIMARY LANGUAGE CURRICULUM ENGLISH/IRISH

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Teaching for Transfer of Skills Across Languages

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This guide supports teaching for a transfer of skills across languages; the examples given illustrate a transfer of skills particular to the following outcomes:

- Reading/Writing: Conventions of Print/ Gnásanna cló

- Reading: Phonological and Phonemic awareness/ Feasacht fhóineolaíoch agus fhóinéimeach

- Reading: Comprehension/ Tuiscint

Teaching for transfer

Languages by their nature are interconnected. Children learn a second language in much the same way as they learn their first language – by interacting with other people in order to communicate their needs. The vast majority of children can speak at least one language on commencing school. This ability in one language affects how they will learn subsequent languages. Some features of the first language, such as pronunciation and syntax, may interfere with how the child will speak the second language. Other features, such as similarities in the alphabet and letter sounds, can transfer from one language to the other and thereby help the child learn the second language. The purpose of this guide is to help teachers in facilitating that transfer from one language to another.

From a teaching and learning perspective, teachers can make better use of class time if they draw children's attention to similarities and differences between the languages that they are learning, and give children opportunities to reflect on these similarities and differences. Many children do this naturally in an informal way. This process helps children to not only learn the second language more efficiently, but also, to gain a greater understanding of the structure of their first language. The process of learning

The process of learning Irish (or English) as a second language will be more efficient if teachers devote some instructional time to teaching for transfer across languages.

Irish (or English) as a second language will be more efficient if teachers devote some instructional time to teaching for transfer across languages in this way, rather than viewing each language in isolation. English and Irish share many similarities in terms of letters and phonemes which do not have to be learned separately in each language. An explicit focus on integration between languages enables children to make connections between languages and develop an awareness of how language works.

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The transfer of skills from one language to another can support children's learning in both languages. Teachers can facilitate this transfer of skills and can provide opportunities for children to make clear links across languages.

Previously learned skills and concepts in a first language (L1) can be applied to a child's learning in a second language (L2). Planning for a transfer of these skills in the areas of **oral language, reading** and **writing** can help children to develop an increased knowledge about language and an understanding of how languages work.

Learning Outcomes and identifying transferable skills

Learning outcomes describe what children should know and be able to do as a result of the teaching and learning process. Learning outcomes for oral language, reading and writing are outlined for schools in which English is the medium of instruction (English Language 1 and Gaeilge Teanga 2) and Irish-medium schools (Gaeilge Teanga 1 and English Language 2). The learning outcomes for the second language of the school (L2) clearly **link**, where appropriate, to the learning outcomes for the first language of the school (L1). Where a transfer of skills from the L1 to the L2 occurs, learning outcomes are denoted by the symbol §.

Planning for a transfer of skills across languages

Examining the similarities between learning outcomes for English and Irish can help teachers to identify the **skills, language features** and **contexts** where links can be made across languages. However, it is important to consider children's level of **knowledge and skills in their first language**, as this will impact on their level and development of knowledge and skills in a second language.

The sections below highlight some of the common **concepts and skills** which can be transferred from one language to another.

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Reading

- An awareness and understanding of the **conventions of print**, including left to right orientation and identification of the title and author of a text

- **Phonological awareness**, including the ability to recognise, hear and distinguish words within sentences, syllables within words, rhyming words and words with the same initial sound

- The skills associated with **word recognition** and **decoding**

- The use of **comprehension strategies** to interact with and make meaning of text

- The knowledge and development of a range of **vocabulary**

Writing

- The recognition that **writing** is **to communicate** with the reader

- Engagement in the **writing process,** including topic choice, planning, drafting, editing and presentation/sharing of work

- Extension of **vocabulary** and creation of wordlists in writing activities

- The use of **spelling strategies** and sound patterns to aid in the spelling of words

The language curriculum supports teachers to value the language experience of all children. It recognises that, when children develop skills in one language, they are not just learning the skills of that particular language. They are also developing an underlying knowledge base that enables the transfer of language skills and learning strategies to other languages.

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Whole school approaches to promote the transfer of skills

To support a whole school approach in promoting the transfer of skills across languages, schools can do the following:

- Use multi-lingual displays and labels in the school (in English and Irish).

- Display dual language work in English and Irish, e.g., children's writing, audio recorded videos and voice recordings.

- Involve children in the production of a bilingual video about the school where children speak in both English and Irish.

- Use common approaches, where suitable, to language teaching in both languages.

- Ensure that teachers engage in joint planning for adopting and developing cross-language initiatives and activities.

- Ensure common terminology is adopted throughout the school in relation to concepts, terms and skills so that children are repeatedly exposed to the same terminology.

- Ensure teachers are familiar with the gradual release of responsibility model where children are exposed to the modelled, shared, guided and independent phases of instruction.

EFFECTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE TRANSFER OF SKILLS

- Similarity in learning conditions, task and response, in both languages
- Making explicit to children, where possible, the connections and similarities between both languages
- Providing children with adequate exposure to the second language
- Teaching Irish through Irish in schools in which English is the medium of instruction
- Understanding of concepts and skills in L1
- Opportunity for practice in L1 before L2

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Practical classroom activities to promote a transfer of skills

Making initial links across languages involves identifying **common and similar learning outcomes** between languages, and planning activities to promote a transfer of skills. Planning for a transfer of skills across languages doesn't mean that children will be engaging in identical activities in English and Irish. It is important to remember that children will be at different places in their early communication skills, language learning and development in both languages. The levels of expectation will therefore differ between children's first and second languages. Children will develop at different rates and the progression continua for both L1 and L2 reflect this. With this in mind, teachers plan for progression by making judgements about where children are in their language learning and by planning for the next steps for their language learning.

The following activities are examples of **suggested activities** which can be adapted, according to children's ability, **across languages** to enable children to transfer their skills and knowledge from their first language to a second language.

- Teachers can explicitly highlight the **conventions of print** across languages, by drawing children's attention to left to right orientation, top to bottom orientation, front to back orientation and identification of the title, illustrations and author of texts. This can be done using large format books and picture books in both *English* and *Irish*. While reading large format books, attention can also be drawn to the similarities in punctuation – full stop, capital letters, comma, question mark.

- Phonological awareness is an oral and aural skill. Early **phonological awareness** skills include being able to recognise, hear and distinguish words within sentences, syllables within words, rhyming words and words beginning with the same initial sound. Playing with words and rhymes develops phonological awareness. Phonological awareness activities can be carried out interchangeably between English and Irish to highlight the transfer of phonological awareness skills from English to Irish. These include the following:

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- *Identification of words within sentences:* Teacher says some words/short sentences. The child repeats each word, placing a counter into a box as each individual word is repeated, e.g., Tá mé ag rith (four counters are placed in the box).

- *Syllable segmentation:* Recite simple poems and rhymes, asking children to tap their knees or clap on each syllable while they do so, e.g., Lámh, lámh eile, a haon, a dó.

- *Rhyming words:* Prompt children to identify rhyming words in both English and Irish by using pictures or concrete objects. *I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with 'bat'/Tá mé ag smaoineamh ar fhocal a bhfuil rím aige le 'lán'.*

- *Initial sounds identification:* Using pictures or concrete objects, children identify words beginning with a variety of initial sounds. This activity can be carried out in English and Irish. *Tá mé ag smaoineamh ar fhocal a thosaíonn le 'b'. Cad é?*

- *Identify letter patterns in words where possible:* Create word families of words with the same endings, e.g., _án, _ann/_eann.

Tomás na hOrdóige agus Scéalta Eile
Pacáiste Scéalta, Drámaí agus Cluichí do Mhúinteoirí Bunscoile
Nóirín Ní Nuadháin   Léaráidí le Martin Fagan

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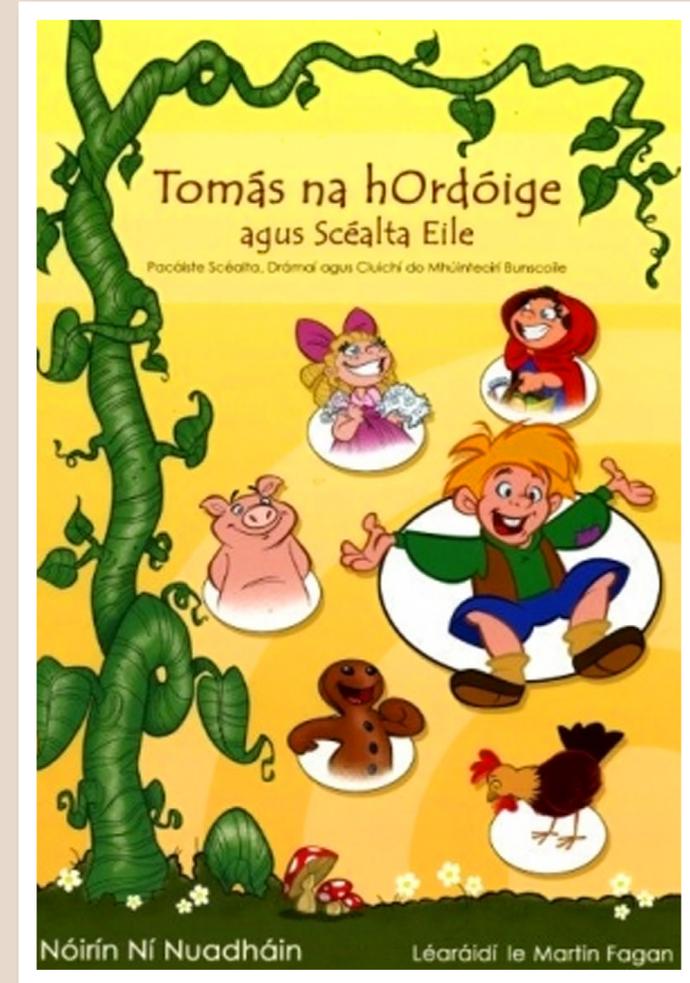
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- Use popular stories and **fairy tales** for literacy activities in both languages, e.g., *Little Red Riding Hood/ Cochaillín Dearg*. Engage the children in **similar activities** across languages, e.g., prediction, sequencing of events, character descriptions, drama activities, questioning. Make comparisons between the English and Irish versions of the story.

- Choosing a variety of **topics/themes** and planning a variety of activities in both languages to develop the topic/theme, e.g., *my favourite toy*. Activities may include making a very short oral presentation, developing vocabulary and word lists and engaging in written activities in both languages.

- Explicit teaching of the same **written genres** in English and Irish. As each genre has an associated **structure** and **language features,** these remain the same across languages and the **framework** associated with the genre can be taught and developed in both languages. Aspects of each genre will be developed initially in the first language of the school. Work in the second language of the school will not commence until a level of competence has been achieved. Work

in L2 may initially focus more on modelled and shared writing sessions, where teachers can continue to expose children to a variety of written genres in both English and Irish. Children become familiar with these frameworks through modelled, shared and guided writing sessions. As children develop their second language learning, teachers can encourage them to engage with a wider variety of genres. Finished pieces of children's writing in L2 may be very short.

- Engage children in the **Language Experience Approach,** which involves the children composing various sentences to form a story, with the teacher acting as scribe. This can be carried out in both English and Irish and can be used for future reading material and oral language activities.

- Engage children in the **writing process** in both languages as they are engaging with the various genres. This will involve children choosing topics, drafting, redrafting and presenting to an audience.

- **Free writing** sessions in both English and Irish enable children to experiment with a variety of genres and give them independence in **making choices** of topics to

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write about. It also gives children the opportunity to practise the skills of writing that have been explicitly taught to them during modelled, shared and guided writing sessions.

- Engage children in **language awareness activities** where children compare and contrast elements of English and Irish, e.g., counting, days of the week and colours.

- Explicitly teaching a range of **comprehension strategies** in English and Irish using the gradual release of responsibility model, e.g., making predictions, creating images. As children gradually begin to interact with and make meaning of text in English, these skills can be further developed in Irish.

- Engage children in the **creation of dual language texts** with the guidance of the teacher (see description of suggested steps involved). Writing dual language texts requires children to compare expressions and structures in each language, thereby prompting transfer of knowledge and skills across languages. These texts can be used as a basis for future reading material and oral language discussions. The completion of a single

dual language text may be completed over a lengthy period of time. The L2 text may be a shorter and simplified version of the L1 text.

Creation of dual language texts

1. Pupils decide on a topic of their choice to write about and pick a title for their book. This can be done individually, in groups or with the aid of the teacher.

2. They plan for their writing in English, using brainstorming and mind mapping to create an outline of their story.

3. As they start to create the first draft of their story, pupils are encouraged to think in both languages. At this stage, children are guided by the teacher.

4. As the children create each page of the book, they write text in both English and Irish to convey similar meaning. Doing this may involve simplifying the language in the L2 text. Initially, this process can be modelled by the teacher. Children can be guided through the process of choosing words and using phrases of similar meaning in L2.

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5. An important teaching point at this stage is avoiding direct translation between languages. Teachers can model how to phrase sentences of similar meaning in English and Irish, e.g., *My favourite hobby of all is soccer/Is maith liom sacar.*

6. The children then proof-read the texts and are aided in the proof-reading by teachers. They edit their work as necessary.

7. Each page is then re-drafted and revised again, editing text where necessary.

8. A final draft of the text is written.

9. Illustrations are added to each page.

10. A front cover and a back cover for the book are created.

11. Children plan a presentation for others. This involves reading the book in both languages, showing the illustrations and explaining the steps involved in creating the book.

It is important to note that the level of teacher assistance required will vary depending on pupil needs and class level.

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Developed in collaboration with Lorraine Connaughton-Crean
Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, Coláiste Phádraig/St Patrick's College, DCU

Coláiste Phádraig St Patrick's College DROIM CONRACH | DRUMCONDRA   NCCA   An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna Department of Education and Skills

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Guided Reading

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- Oral Language: Outcomes 5 & 6: Acquisition and use of vocabulary
- Reading Outcome 6: Reading vocabulary
- Writing: Outcome 5: Vocabulary

Guided reading is an instructional approach to the teaching of reading that allows for differentiated teaching to occur in small-groups. Children are introduced to guided reading when they have developed some early literacy skills, have a bank of sight vocabulary, have mastered some letter-sound relationships and understand that the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension of the text. Children are grouped according to their assessed needs and strengths and matched to a text at their instructional level. Guided reading allows the

teacher to explicitly teach vocabulary, fluency, word identification and comprehension strategies, to observe children's application of strategies as they are engaged in the act of reading and to scaffold their efforts on the spot. Children have opportunities to read a text at an appropriate level of difficulty and in so doing to experience success. They are supported to learn and develop proficiency in applying strategies to texts that gradually increase in difficulty. They read the text and think, talk and write about their responses.

While guided reading utilises a dynamic grouping model and is supported by many years of research, traditional ability grouping has been found to have some negative side-effects, particularly in relation to children's confidence and self-esteem. Children placed in the lower-ability group often find themselves confined to that group and receive qualitatively different

instruction to their more highly-achieving peers. They are more likely to have a slower pace to instruction, to be asked to read aloud, to be interrupted while reading aloud, to be asked to complete workbook pages on skills in isolation and to have less opportunity to engage in higher-order thinking in relation to the text. Guided reading, on the other hand adopts a flexible and fluid approach to grouping based on careful formative assessment of children's reading using assessment

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tools such as running records, observations of reading and conferences with children about their reading habits and goals. The guided reading lesson follow a well-structured framework, the format of which changes according to the level of complexity of the text the group is reading. The texts are selected from a set of books that have been carefully levelled according to a range of criteria. There are many systems available for the levelling of books (see reading list) and when a school is compiling a levelled library of books, it is important to understand how books have been levelled as some levelling systems are more finely graded than others.

Texts for guided reading

Levelled texts are designed to support readers along a continuum of reading development from early emergent to upper emergent to early fluent to fluent. The texts gradually increase in complexity and are designed to support the reading behaviours that are typical at each stage of reading development. The teacher chooses a text that provides just the right level of challenge to allow children to develop their skills. The choice of text will be guided by assessment information and knowledge of the children in the group.

These texts increase slightly in difficulty from one level to the next. They are especially useful in the early stages of reading and help children to develop application of the three cueing systems. There are usually a large number (up to ten) of books available at each of 30 levels, providing the teacher with a lot of choice for matching children to text. In addition, children can gain confidence by reading three or four texts at a given level before progressing up to the next level. It is **not** envisaged that children would read **all** books in a level before progressing to the next level.

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Advantages of Guided Reading

- Children can develop as readers while participating in a socially supported activity.

- Teachers can observe individuals as they read new texts.

- Children develop strategies so that they can read increasingly more difficult texts.

- Children are reading books at their instructional level: books that are just right, not too easy and not too hard.

- It develops the abilities needed for independent reading, as strategies are explicitly taught and made visible to the child. Therefore, the child is more likely to use them independently.

- It gives children enjoyable successful experiences in reading for meaning.

- Reading time is spent teaching reading. This makes good use of the teacher's instructional time for reading.

- Children read a whole text through and so get through a greater volume of reading than they would in traditional reading groups where round robin practices limit the amount of text read on a daily basis.

- Other children learn to work independently while the teacher is working with the guided reading group.

Structure of a Guided Reading Lesson Using Levelled Texts
Getting ready for the group

Teacher has many books available on this level and chooses one which will facilitate the development of children's problem solving strategies. While they will be able to read most of the words, the story should provide some challenge, for example, the sentence structure may be tricky or there may be some new concepts or vocabulary. Each guided reading group should take about 15-20 minutes

The teacher gathers the small group together either on a rug or at a small table beside the teacher. The teacher introduces the book (or chapter if it's a longer book) by focussing on the title, author, pictures and uses some of the language that might cause difficulty for the children. She tries to put in their ear the language and tricky sentence structures they will encounter in the text. She may ask children to locate a particular word sometimes a high frequency word that occurs on several pages or a new tier 2 word. Children may make comments on pictures and respond personally by making connections to the text and predicting the storyline. This element should take no more than 3-5 minutes. The emphasis is on setting the children up to read the text successfully on their own.

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The children sit and read the whole book quietly to themselves at their own pace. They may read silently or in a whispering voice. The emphasis is on understanding the text and reading it in its entirety. The teacher observes how children are doing. She notices what children do when they come to a difficult word. Some children may be successful at figuring out the word. This is evidence of self-monitoring, searching for information and the ability to self-correct. She notes the word or other aspect of text giving trouble and addresses it after the reading.

Teacher may hear some children read aloud: when she taps them on the shoulder they read aloud for her. The teacher takes notes on what she sees and hears and praises all efforts. She may interject at intervals and scaffold instruction as children demonstrate a need. She emphasises using many strategies to identify an unknown word: *focus on context, phonic element, picture cue, structural element, reading ahead, re-reading from start of sentence*

This part of the lesson should take about 5-7 minutes. Early finishers re-read for fluency or consider which aspect of the story they will share a personal reaction to: a funny part, an exciting part, a sad part.

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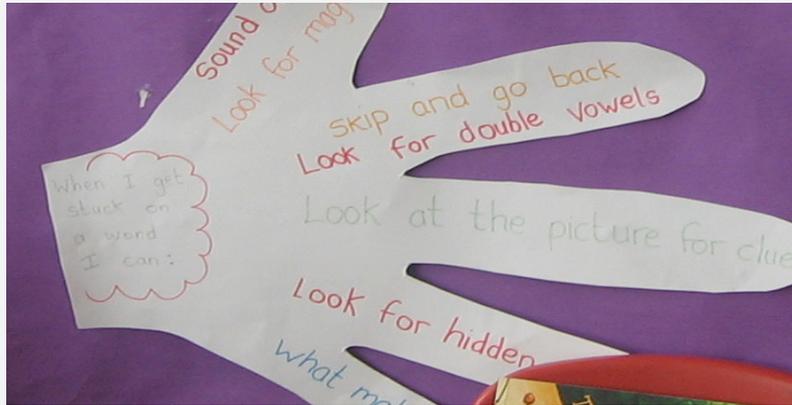
Children discuss their reactions to the story and the teacher may invite them to share an interesting piece of the story. The teacher may then decide to focus on a particular skill or strategy such as word-identification strategies, fluency, comprehension, sight vocabulary or tier 2 or 3 vocabulary development.

For example, if the teacher decides to focus on a word which proved tricky for some of the children she could use the white board to demonstrate a variety of strategies for figuring out the word or have children examine their *strategy glove* to prompt them on how to figure out the word independently using the strategies they have been taught. This part of the lesson should take about 5-7 minutes.

The teacher could also teach children to use analogy: use a known word to figure out a word that they do not know.

Turn to page ten….there was a tricky word on this page. ***The teacher had a chat with Tom.*** (What would make sense?)

We know lots of words with at: at, fat, sat,

How could I make the word bat? That's right take away the s, put in b

We know lots of ch words: chair, chip, chop,

How could I make the word chap: That's right take away the o and put in a

Now I can figure out chat…ch + at makes chat

Let's read the sentence…the teacher had a chat with Tom

In this way, the word is examined in context by turning to the page containing the word, is taught out of context on the whiteboard as the teacher demonstrates how to use analogy, but returned to context by re-reading the sentence. The book is then placed in the browsing box for re-reading or it may go home for sharing with family. The teacher may decide to take a running record for one child
in the group as the other children complete a response to

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Guided Reading Using Short Chapter Books

Children are grouped based on running records and on teacher knowledge of their reading interests and preferences. Groups should be kept to a reasonable size so that all children have an opportunity to contribute to the discussion (no more than 5-7 in a group). The teacher may choose to begin the guided reading lesson by demonstrating a new strategy that would be useful for all children in the class to learn. The children can then be encouraged to apply the strategy to the text that they are reading in their particular guided reading group. The gradual release of responsibility model (e.g. Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) is a useful model to use for this purpose. There are five steps in the model.

The teacher may gather the whole class together in the meeting area (e.g. a carpet square). In Step 1 the teacher clearly states the purpose of the lesson and demonstration. The teacher *names* the strategy and explains *why* they are learning the new strategy or technique and *how* it can help to better understand the text. This builds children's metacognition to a declarative level meaning that they are aware of the strategy and can say why it is important to learn.

Having chosen a book that will support the teaching of the strategy in question, the teacher reads aloud and models using the strategy using a think-aloud prepared ahead of time. It is useful to record ideas on a post-it note and to insert the note in the text on the relevant page. This allows children to see how a skilled reader thinks while reading and provides a window into the usually invisible thought processes that a reader employs when reading. Having demonstrated, the teacher asks the children to name and describe what they witnessed. This contributes to their metacognition by giving them procedural knowledge: how to go about using the strategy with a real text and the academic language associated with it.

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Having demonstrated the strategy in action, the teacher then provides opportunities for the children to practice the strategy in pairs. She may read aloud a section of the chosen text and ask the children to have a go at using the strategy while she reads. The children then do a think, pair, share by turning knee-to-knee and eye-to-eye with a partner and share their thinking. The teacher can use this as an opportunity to assess children's procedural knowledge of the strategy by listening in on the paired discussions and taking notes: Who is able to apply the strategy confidently? Who needs more scaffolding? A few children will be invited to share what they discussed with their partner.

Children then join their peers in their reading groups. All groups read the section of text that the teacher has assigned for reading. They may read in a whispering or low voice practicing reading with fluency either on their own or with a partner. They are encouraged to use the strategy as they read. As the children read, the teacher conferences with them. This provides valuable assessment information on children's level of comprehension of the text and their ability to apply the strategy in question. Children may record a written response in their reading journal while the teacher is conferencing with particular children. It is important to keep a conference record and that all children have the opportunity to have a conference with the teacher over the course of a week.

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In the final part of the lesson, the teacher may gather the whole class together again in the meeting area. Children share their written responses with the group and discuss how they applied the strategy in question. They may reflect on how the strategy helped them understand the text and what was easy, difficult or confusing. The teacher may remind the children again about the purpose of the strategy and ask them to set goals for the next session. This kind of plenary session helps children to develop metacognition to the conditional level: they learn to name the strategy, give an example of how to use it and to explain why they have learned it and when it is useful to use the strategy while reading. demonstrated, the teacher asks the children to name and describe what they witnessed. This contributes to their metacognition by giving them procedural knowledge: how to go about using the strategy with a real text and the academic language associated with it.

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Guided Reading beyond levelled texts

As children progress to reading more complex texts such as novels and a wide range of non-fiction/informational reading material, guided reading develops further to encompass opportunities for a deep exploration and excavation of themes, elements of story and high quality discussion of the texts through literature circles, inquiry-based models and reciprocal teaching routines (see Kennedy et al., 2012 for a synthesis). This builds a culture of reading within the classroom and prioritises reading for meaning giving children the opportunity to respond aesthetically and to build their conceptual knowledge.

Children are explicitly taught how to have a conversation, how to listen, to respond, to question, to wonder, to give their interpretation of text, to agree and disagree and to have the confidence to do so. It puts conversational structures in place which break away from the typical discourse patterns in classrooms and lays the foundations for the higher-order thinking skills to develop.

Teachers continue to scaffold children's development and explicitly teach vocabulary, word-identification and comprehension strategies using a gradual release of responsibility model. Strategies are taught to the conditional level of metacognition and children are facilitated to reflect on their learning and to set goals.

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Grouping Children for Guided Reading
Observation Survey

Children are grouped for guided reading on the basis of a number of assessments. The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2002) is an assessment tool for the observation and measurement of early literacy skills. It is widely used as: a screening instrument, a diagnostic instrument to inform teaching, and monitoring instrument. It provides a comprehensive picture of a child's early literacy skill development and helps to pinpoint a child's particular strengths and weaknesses in relation to:

Concepts of print	**Knowledge of language and terminology of reading: such as directionality, first, last, one to one correspondence, sequencing**
Letter identification	**Knowledge of upper and lower case letter knowledge: name, sound or word beginning with the target sound is accepted**
Knowledge of vocabulary and spelling	**Number of words a child writes correctly in ten minutes**
Knowledge of phoneme-grapheme correspondence	**similar to a dictation; each sentence contain 37 phonemes**
Sight vocabulary	**Knowledge of high-frequency sight words**

Running records

In addition to the sub-tests, a running record is conducted to determine reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension, reading strategies and behaviours as a piece of continuous text (100 to150 words) is read. The text should be about 150 words in length. Initially, it is useful to have a copy of the text the child is reading and to mark the miscues on the text. Teachers experienced at taking running records can just observe the child reading the text and record the errors on a sheet of paper (but must be able to see the text). As the child reads aloud, miscues are recorded using standard recording symbols. It is important to become familiar with the standard symbols and to always use them so that recordings are reliable from one day to the next and can be read and interpreted by others familiar with running records.

Comprehension Check

After the text has been read a check should be made on the child's understanding of what has been read. The child should be asked to retell what has been read and with the aid of a rubric, a judgement made on the quality of the retelling. If further evidence is needed, a number of prepared literal, inferential and critical thinking questions can also be asked.

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Symbols used in running records

Notation	Behaviour	Example	Error	Self-correction
√	Correct	√ √ √ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**		
Write response over word	Substitution	√ went √ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**	I	
Place over word	Omission	√ √ _ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**	I	
Write the extra word	Insertion	√ √ in √ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**		
Write T above the word	No response told:	√ T √ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**	I	
Write all attempts	Attempts at word	√ went with √ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**	I	
Record error and write SC	Self-correction	√ went (SC) √ √ √ **Tom walked to the shop.**		I
R+	Repetition	√ √ √ R √ **Tom walked to the shop.**		

To calculate the accuracy rate, divide the number of words read by the total number of scorable errors to give a ratio

Miscues which interfere with meaning are counted as error. They include: substitutions (words changed), omissions (words skipped over), insertions (extra words inserted), non-response or words told to the child after he/she has appealed for help. Miscues that do not interfere with meaning and which are not scored as errors are repetitions (words or phrases repeated) and self-corrections (child recognises an error has been made and immediately corrects him/herself).

Fluency Check

The running record can provide diagnostic information on three aspects of fluency: **Prosody** (quality of expression when reading), **rate** (the number of words read per minute) and **accuracy** (the percentage of words read correctly)

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Prosody

A judgement can be made regarding the quality of prosody using a rubric (e.g. Fountas & Pinnell, 1996) a judgement can be made in relation to phrasing, pitch, stress and intonation.

Rate
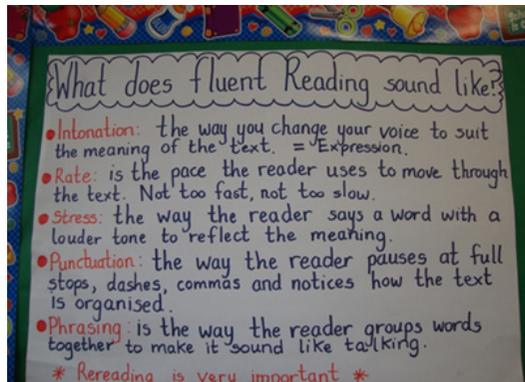
The oral reading can be timed and the number of words read per minute can give a picture of the speed of the reading. Irish norms for class level appropriate oral reading rates can be found in the Drumcondra English Profiles. Oral reading rates will be affected by the level of challenge the text presents for the child.

Class	Senior Infants	1st	2nd	3rd
Words read orally per minute Ireland	50	60	70	90
Words read orally per minute US	n/a	53	89	107
Words read silently per minute US	n/a	80	115	138

Accuracy

To calculate the accuracy rate, divide the number of words read by the total number of **scorable** errors to give a ratio and check the table below for the corresponding percentage accuracy.

For example: 140 words read with 8 scorable errors:

Divide 140 by 8= 17.5.

Round to the next highest number (18)

Choose the % accuracy closest to it: in this case: 94% (as 18 is closer to 17 than 20)

Error rate	1:100	1:50	1:35	1:25	1:20	1:17	1:14	1:12.5	1:11.75	1:10
% accuracy	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91	90

To calculate the self-correction rate, total the errors and the self-corrections and divide by the number of self-correction to get a ratio level. A large number of self-corrections relative to errors indicate that the reader is actively monitoring and using strategies.

	Independent	Instructional	
Accuracy	95-99%	90-94%	<90%
Comprehension	90%	50-90%	<50%

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Guided Reading

Analysing the Running Record

Analysis of running records provides a window into the word-identification strategies that children are **or** are not utilising in their attempts to decode and comprehend texts. This information can help teachers plan instruction that is responsive to children's needs and to provide support to them to utilise all three cueing strategies and not to over-rely on one or other of them.

Good readers use a combination of the three cueing strategies when they encounter an unfamiliar word and they cross-check: for example, they think about what makes sense, what sounds right, and letter sound relationships.

Semantics: Meaning cues (M)

This is represented in children's language, memories, prior knowledge and experiences. If children have heard stories read aloud they expect the text to make sense and they expect to be interested and intrigued by aspects of the text. When they come to an unfamiliar word they think about what would make sense in the sentence.

Syntax: Structure cues (S)

This is drawing on oral language and knowledge of how sentences are constructed orally and in written form. It is drawing on the rules of the language that have been internalized.

Visual Information: Grapho-phonics (V)

This is drawing on the relationship between oral language and letter and letter combinations that match the sound. It also draws on knowledge of words, letters, spacing, punctuation. In analysing the specific miscues, teacher can determine if they are due to difficulty with particular elements of phonics and/or sight vocabulary and can plan instruction accordingly.

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Teachers can determine the strategies by closely examining the sentence from the text and the child's attempts at problem-solving.

In the example below: the child read went for walked:

- The child has used **M**eaning: went makes sense
- The child has used **S**tructure: went is a verb and is syntactically correct
- The child has used some **V**isual information: initial sound only…the child can be praised for using initial sounds, encouraged to look more closely at the two words, and to consider what other word beginning with /w/ would make sense.

Running Record	ERROR analysis		
	M	S	V
√ went √ √ √	M	S	Initial sound
Tom walked to the shop			

All assessment information is compiled on a class record sheet and carefully analysed to determine the composition of reading groups.

The teacher can also analyse the kinds of words the child is misreading: are there issues with particular:

- Sight words?
- Letter patterns?
- Sounds?
- Or perhaps the children is only using initial sounds and needs to learn to look at all parts of the word (this will depend on the level of text)

Guided Reading

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This resource was developed through collaboration with Write to Read/St. Patrick's College. Write to Read is a project of St. Patrick's College in partnership with 12 Dublin Schools and Communities.

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Parents

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Engagement, listening and attention
- Social conventions and awareness of others
- Sentence structure and grammar
- Sentence structure and grammar
- Comprehension
- Requests and questions, categorisation, retelling and elaborating
- Playful and creative use of language
- Information giving, explanation and justification
- Description, prediction and reflection
- Motivation and choice
- Conventions of print
- Phonological and phonemic awareness
- Phonics and word recognition
- Vocabulary for reading and writing
- Purpose, genre and voice
- Sequencing and summarising
- Comprehension, fluency and self-correction

Phonological Awareness

There is an emphasis in the early years at school on phonological awareness. Phonological awareness involves l**anguage development, awareness of rhyme, syllables** and **sounds in words**. These skills are prerequisites to reading and writing. The development of language and literacy skills are vital for learning. Speak to your child frequently to support his/her learning. Read and practice poems in Irish, in English and/or in your own choice of language. You could practice the rhymes he/she is learning in school and read books that are written in rhyme. Rhyme as a concept is important, and can be experienced in Irish, in English or in any language. Emphasise rhythm or syllables while reading with your child and play games with your child. It is not always necessary to conduct a formal lesson. You can support your child at the shops, out walking or while doing other things.

Ensure that these activities are enjoyable. Try these examples and others;

- Which one does not rhyme? **méar/béar/cat** or **cat/hat/dog**

- What word rhymes with…?

- Count the syllables in words - **úll** (x1), **plu-ma** (x2), **ba-na-na** (x3), **grape** (x1), **app-le** (x2), **ba-na-a** (x3)

- Initial sounds - **Itheann Dónall Damhán Alla… duilleoga, dathanna agus rudaí donna** or **Sammy Snake eats… sandwiches, sausages and snails.**

There is evidence to say that children are more successful in education if they are supported at home.

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Parents

Talking and Listening

Language and literacy development is extremely important for children in the world of learning. Language is used to communicate, to discuss feelings, to gain information and to understand and develop ideas. Children begin school with some prior knowledge of language from home, both spoken and written. These skills are the starting point for school.

Have conversations regularly with your child to extend his/her vocabulary and language experience. This can be done in Irish or in the home language. All language experiences will assist with literacy development. If a child has a wide vocabulary in speech he/she will have a wide vocabulary for reading and writing. Do not be concerned if your child does not speak Irish initially if Irish is not the home language. There are stages in language development in an immersion setting. Initially the child speaks the home language and the teacher speaks the target language. Then, the child begins to use the target language in rhymes and songs and in familiar phrases and then, gradually, begins to use the target language on a wider basis. This is a long process and depends on the individual child and the support and language experience in school and at home.

Irish

Often Irish is the only language spoken to the children in a Gaelscoil or in a Scoil Ghaeltachta no matter what language is spoken at home. This means the child is immersed in the target language of the school, Irish. Parents are encouraged to attend Irish classes or to follow a learning programme to support children at home if they are not confident with their own Irish competencies. There is evidence to support the view that children who are supported at home have better success in education. Speak to the class teacher about ways to support your child's learning at home. Search for books, television programmes, computer programmes, clubs, etc. in Irish to extend your child's experience of Irish outside the classroom.

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Irish and English

Children do not need to have Irish at home to develop in this language acquisition process. The emphasis is on the concept and on literacy skills. Parents can support literacy development in Irish or the home language and this will be of general benefit in language development. Children in Irish-medium schools and in Gaeltacht schools develop the same literacy skills in Irish and in English in the primary school. Skills are often transferable and if a skill is developed in one language it often transpires in both languages.

> Read with your child as often as you can in your choice of language. There are skills in reading that transpire in all language experience.

Reading with your Child

Children often have books from school to read at home and parents can support the development of reading skills. The school will offer direction regarding effective methods of support and teachers will have specific suggestions. These books will contain sight words that your child will see often. You should encourage that these words be read fluently. Then there are a variety of strategies to read new words, picture clues, textual clues, familiar phrases, meaning of the text, an initial or end sound, syllables or sounds in a word. Help your child to try these different strategies. Have regular stops in the reading to discuss meaning. Play word games with your child, the teacher will have suggestions. Read other texts as often as you can in your choice of language. There are skills in reading that transcend all languages.

Practise the strategies suggested by the school for consolidation. Read stories, information books, poems, directions, time-tables, magazines, etc. Show your child that you enjoy reading.

Writing with your Child

Encourage your child to write as often as possible, cards, notes, shopping lists, etc. Do not be concerned if this is not legible or correct, the attempt is more important. When you write yourself pronounce each word and sound it out while you child is listening. Let your child see that you enjoy writing.

Parents

Supporting your Child

Children are best being taught skills and strategies that will render them independent in learning. We all have different ways of learning. Help your child discover his/her own method of learning and remembering information. It is important that children learn through investigation. Encourage your child when he/she makes attempts. Help your child to make connections in the things that he/she is learning. Enjoy supporting your child.

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Supporting Literacy Development at Home

The most important thing that you as a parent can do is to build your child's confidence in speaking, reading and writing, and to promote positive attitudes and habits for life.

You are the person best placed to be a positive role model. Let your child see you reading and writing every day. Your child should realise the enjoyment that reading and writing give you, and how they are useful and necessary tools to be used on a daily basis.

It is a good idea to establish a strong predictable routine. Find a quiet comfortable spot to enjoy a book together. This can be a special time to build relationships and literacy skills simultaneously. It is a great way to spend some quality time with your child.

Key to this is selecting the right book for your child.

'It is widely recognised that if pupils are to maximise their potential from schooling they will need the full support of their parents.'

(Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003 p. 7)

Literacy is the key to the rest of the curriculum.

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Supporting Literacy Development at Home

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The right book to read with your child will have

- high-quality illustrations
- a strong plot with interesting characters
- rich vocabulary.

Books should match your child's interests.

It is important to introduce children to a wide variety of reading material so that they may discover a personal preference.

Talk to your child about what they are interested in.

Is your child attracted more to fiction or fact books?

For fiction, think about funny books, scary books, historical fiction, fantasy, science-fiction, adventure, mystery, graphic novels and picture books

For non-fiction books, think about biographies, autobiographies, books about places, animals, the environment, how-to books (draw, paint, cook…)

What matters is that they are enjoying what they are reading.

Sourcing books for reading with your child

This should be a book that is more challenging than your child can read alone. This is a great opportunity to introduce children to more complex language, characters, and storylines which will build their vocabulary and ideas for their own writing.

Join the local library and ask the librarian for suggestions.

Look out for award-winning books, which usually have a sticker on the front.

Some Irish awards include:

- Literacy Association of Ireland Biennial Award
- Bisto Awards/Bord Gáis Energy Irish book award

International awards given for outstanding illustrations and writing include:

- Kate Greenaway Medal
- Charlotte Huck
- Caldecott Medal
- Hans Christian Anderson
- Young Reader's Choice

Supporting Literacy Development at Home

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Helping children choose a 'just right' book to read independently

The 5 Finger Rule

A ' just-right' book is one in which your child can read almost all words in the text easily and one which is also interesting to them.

Use the five finger rule:

If there are more than five words on a given page that your child struggles within the book, it may be too difficult at this point in time.

It would be best to choose an easier one. It is about finding the right book for the right child.

5 Finger Rule:
Open a book to any page and start reading.

Hold up a finger for each unknown word:

0-1 = too easy
2-3 = just right
4 = OK to try
5 = too hard

Sharing a book with your child.

Talking to your child about the book as you read is as important as the act of reading itself.

On the **first** reading of a book, follow these handy steps:

Before Reading

The aim is get the child thinking about what they will read.

Discuss the cover: Front, and blurb on the back. Share your own ideas and thoughts and make predictions using clues from the cover: the title, illustrations, etc.

Make connections between the text and real life, other books read, e.g., I'm thinking this book will I be about…I think-----will happen because…This reminds me of…

During Reading

Read the text aloud with your child.

Take time to pause and discuss the pictures, the characters, the unfolding story line; make predictions… ask questions, wonder aloud.

BUT, don't slow the story down too much.

Read with expression: use different voices for the various characters…loudly, softly children are experiencing fluent reading).

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After Reading

This is the ideal time to have a chat about the story.

Ask your child if they enjoyed the story, if it reminded them of any other books or events in their lives.

Think about the characters…their feelings, why they might have acted the way they did…and any changes they would make to the story.

See if your child can retell the main events or important parts of the story in sequence.

Conversation starters
• I remember when…
• This reminds me of…
• I wonder if…
• My favourite part was when…
• I wish that …

Vocabulary

On a **second** or subsequent reading, notice the rich vocabulary and the way the author uses words to evoke emotion.

This is also a great time to reinforce common words that your child may be learning to read, write and spell in school, e.g., the, said, he, she, friend, because (dolch/fry words).

The best way to develop automaticity in sight vocabulary is through games that build familiarity, e.g., word snap, word/letter sound bingo, x's and o's.

Sight words should not be sounded out as they usually follow irregular phonetic patterns, e.g., *said* cannot be sounded out letter by letter.

Did you know that when your child can read the first 100 sight words, they can read half of any text put in front of them! It's important your child can read, write and spell these words effortlessly.

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A writing box could include:

• Paper that is different colours, shapes and sizes
• Lined and un-lined paper
• Pens, pencils and markers
• Eraser, sharpener and ruler
• A folder to store their writing
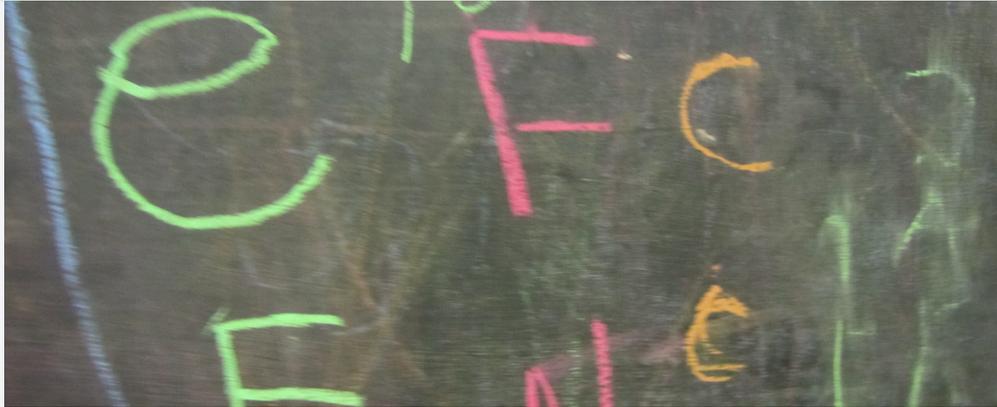
Writing

At home, writing should be meaningful, i.e., have a specific purpose such as writing birthday cards, shopping lists, phone messages.

Helping children notice words and word patterns supports their writing.

Approximate spelling is acceptable, e.g., 'bcoz' for 'because', and shows that your child is using letters and sounds they have learned.

Playing games like *I spy* helps children to link words and spelling.

All attempts should be praised.

Provide opportunities for your child to experiment with writing, such as a writing box.

Drawing is often the first entry point into writing. Encourage your child to draw and tell you about the drawing.

Encourage your child to tell you about their writing and to read it to you.

At home, writing should not be an extension of school work, but should be fun and informal.

Finally

Supporting literacy development at home is about building good attitudes and habits for life. It's an opportunity to discover ideas, opinions and preferences together.

It's a chance to spend quality time with your child, have fun, and develop their literacy skills.

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Supporting Literacy Development at Home

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- Oral Language: Outcomes 5 & 6: Acquisition and use of vocabulary
- Reading Outcome 6: Reading vocabulary
- Writing: Outcome 5: Vocabulary

The Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge is one of the skills critical to literacy development (the others are phonological awareness, phonics, fluency comprehension, and writing). It is best nurtured within a developmentally appropriate research-based **balanced literacy framework.** Interaction within meaningful contexts, such as pretend play, read aloud, guided reading, shared writing and writing workshop, supports children in acquiring a rich vocabulary. The breadth and depth of a young child's vocabulary is a strong predictor of their reading comprehension at both primary and secondary level. Variation in children's vocabulary knowledge is common, and vocabulary gaps can be bridged by intensive and focused intervention from a very early stage (i.e., age 3 or 4 onwards). Such an early focus can not only improve oral vocabulary, but can also impact positively on later reading comprehension. This link is an important one, as children can more easily and swiftly segment, read and understand words that are already in their oral vocabularies.

No one instructional method is sufficient for optimal vocabulary learning. Opportunities for both incidental word learning and explicit intentional teaching are necessary. The activities described here can be completed orally only (rendering them suitable for all age levels), or in combination with reading, writing, drama or art activities.

Parents are critical collaborators in the vocabulary learning process and are central to efforts to promote, enhance and maximise vocabulary learning at home through interaction in play, in sharing books, in informal conversations (e.g., at mealtimes) and through engaging in some of the activities outlined below.

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

Selecting Vocabulary for Instruction

Given the sheer volume of words in the English language, it is important that the **words targeted for explicit teaching are carefully selected.** It is useful to use a framework for this purpose. One such framework categorises words into three tiers. Priority should be given to the instruction of Tier 2 words, given their high utility and their importance for understanding increasingly challenging texts that children encounter as they progress through school.

Categorisation of Vocabulary

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Description	Basic words that most children know before entering school	Words that appear frequently in texts and for which students already have conceptual understanding	Uncommon words that are typically associated with a specific discipline or domain of knowledge
Examples	Rock, come, play	emerge, prosperous	igneous, herbivore

It is important that the words targeted for explicit teaching are carefully selected. It is useful to use a framework for this purpose.

The ideas and concepts in this practice guide are drawn from the research cited at the end of this guide.

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

Criteria for Selecting Words for Instruction

Is the word critical to comprehension of the chosen text?	**Yes?** Add to list.
Could children use context or structural analysis to unlock its meaning?	**No?** Add to list.
Does it represent a specific concept children need to know?	**Yes?** Add to list.
Will it be useful outside of the current text? Can it help with understanding other words? Can it be used in multiple contexts?	**Yes?** Add to list.

Teachers should select the words from a text they are using for read-aloud or texts that children will read as part of their literacy instruction. These texts will contain many more Tier 2 words than there is time to teach.

Teachers should select the words from a text they are using for read-aloud or texts that children will read as part of their literacy instruction.

Complexity of Word Knowledge

A child's knowledge of a word can range from basic to advanced. Advancing from basic (phase 1) to advanced (phase 5) requires multiple exposures (at least 12) and engagement in a range of rich activities in order to encourage deep processing and reflection on the multifaceted nature of the target words.

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

Levels of vocabulary knowledge

Level 1: No knowledge of the word, totally new

Level 2: General sense of the word. Has heard the word before but has a vague knowledge of its meaning

Level 3: Narrow, context-bound knowledge of the word. Can use it in one context

Level 4: Good knowledge of the word and able to use it appropriately

Level 5: A rich de-contextualised understanding of the word and ability to use it in multiple contexts orally and in written form

Suggested Number of Words for Intensive Instruction

Stage 1	Stage 2
4 per week	6 per week

Differentiation

Instruction can be differentiated by increasing or reducing the number of words and the intensity of instruction with reference to children's needs. In addition to rich explanations and explicit teaching, the use of non-verbal cues – such as facial expressions, gestures, illustrations and other visuals – can contextualise word meanings and enhance word learning. Whole class teaching can be supported by small-group instruction, whereby books are re-read by the resource/learning support team and activities are further reinforced.

> Teachers can differentiate instruction by increasing or reducing the number of words, and the intensity of instruction.

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

Guidelines for Comprehensive Vocabulary Instruction

A systematic approach is needed in order to develop children's oral, reading and writing vocabulary. Activities can range from explicit teaching of individual words to building word consciousness in oral language, reading and writing.

1. Using literature to develop understanding of word meanings

Using the guidelines above, an appropriate number of words should be selected for systematic explicit instructional purposes. Short daily interactions with the words through a variety of oral, dramatic, artistic and written activities within pairs or small groups will provide multiple and varied exposures to the words, increasing the likelihood of the words being internalised to an advanced level.

The words selected should come from a teacher read-aloud text or the big books and short chapter books that children are engaged in reading within groups during reading instruction. Children enjoy noticing new words and can also be involved in choosing the words for the class to study.
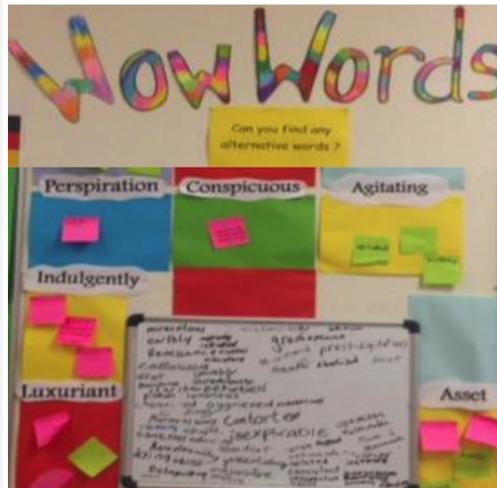
One way to do this is to have children record new or interesting words while reading either on post-it notes or within their reading journals and to add these to the class notice board. The teacher and children can decide together which words will be the focus for intense instruction.

A Five-Day Instructional Sequence for Teaching Individual Word Meanings

Getting Started

- Select an appropriate number of high-utility tier 2 words

- Prepare child-friendly definitions of the selected words using a sentence from the text in which they were found. Provide further examples of the words in a range of contexts. These can be put on flashcards with the target word on one side and the definition on the other

> Prepare child-friendly definitions of the selected words using a sentence from the text in which they were found. Provide further examples of the words in a range of contexts. These can be put on flashcards with the target word on one side and the definition on the other

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

Example: Startling

- Use the context in which the target word appears: *'Stellaluna landed headfirst into a soft downy nest, startling the three baby birds that lived there'.*

- Give a child-friendly definition: If someone is *startled* they feel surprised or get a sudden shock. It can also mean that something unusual has happened.

- Create a visual display to focus attention on the words.

Day One

- Focus on enjoying the story and explain the words briefly as they occur in the text

- After reading, the flashcards can be used to review the words.

- Promote **active** participation by encouraging children to discuss and share their thinking and experiences in relation to the words.

Day Two to Day Four: Explore and Consolidate
(about 10 Mins daily)

- Re-read the whole text or parts of the text (optional).

- Review the target words using the flashcards.

- Provide opportunities for children to play with the words by selecting one or two of the sample activities for children to complete in small groups or pairs. Activities should prompt children to deal with various facets of the words' meanings and investigate relationships between the target words and conceptually related words.

Sample Activities

Target Word: **Startle**

1. Game: That's _____

If I say something that might be startling, say: *'that's startling!'*

> Short daily interaction with the words is more effective than longer sessions once or twice a week.

- Seeing a snake in the grass
- Winning the lotto
- Ignoring the person beside you
- Your Aunty from America arrives unexpectedly
- A sudden bang when you're alone at home

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

2. Frayer Model

In pairs or small groups, have children collect synonyms and antonyms for the target words. They can continue to add to their chart throughout the week.


Definition (Child-Friendly)

If someone is *startled* they feel surprised or get a sudden shock or fright

Startling can mean also that something unusual has happened.

Example of the Word in Context

(Sentence from text; additional example 'Stellaluna landed headfirst into soft downy nest, *startling* the three baby birds that lived there'

I was *startled* when a mouse ran across the kitchen floor.

STARTLE

SYNONYMS

Scare   Surprise
Amaze   Alarm
Astound   Disturb   Disquiet
Shock   Frighten
Disconcert

ANTONYMS

Reassure   Calm
Pacify   Mollify
Comfort
Compose   Relieve

3. Questioning

• Pose questions using the target words and have children justify their answers: e.g. would you be *startled* if you found out someone had broken into your home?

Form small groups and ask each group to respond to the questions. (Develop a question for each word).
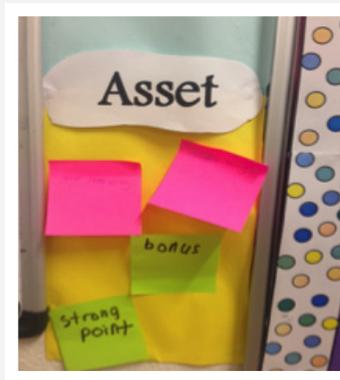
4. Role play/write/Illustrate

Have children describe/role play/illustrate some startling situations

Video 3
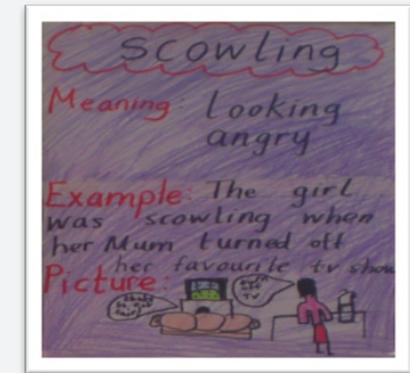
Engage children in activities in which they need to deal with various facets of the words and investigate relationships between the target words and conceptually related words.

5. Sentence stems

• Provide sentence stems for students to complete: John was startled when…

• Create a comment which requires children to match with the target word and say why: I saw Justin Bieber walking down main street last Saturday (that's startling).

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

6. Word Wizard Chart

Challenge children to think about how the words could be used outside of the classroom e.g. describe a startling situation in a TV programme or book they have read. They can also be encouraged to document the use of the word at home or school throughout the week.

7. Word Cline

Have children examine the synonyms they created for their words when completing the Frayer Model exercise. Challenge them to arrange the words on a word cline. A word cline is a language scale illustrating gradations in meaning from weak to strong or positive to negative:

glacial

scalding

glacial, frosty, cold, chilly, cool, warm, hot, sizzling, roasting, burning, scalding.
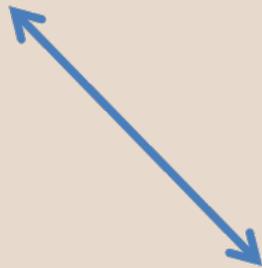
Day Five: Follow-up Assessment (About 10 Mins)

Informal and ongoing assessment is fundamental to vocabulary instruction. Teacher designed-tests can also be used to assess the child's vocabulary development:

- **Multiple choice**: Startled means: a) calm b) bored c) surprised d) tired

- **True-false**: If something is startling you will be bored

- **Complete the sentence**: The robber was *startled* when…

- **Write** a sentence and **illustrate** the word…

- **Use** all the words in the paragraph or as a **story starter**

Provide opportunities to enable children to apply the word to a range of contexts.

Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

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Maintenance Work

• Display selected vocabulary in the classroom and hallways. Ask members of the school community (principal, other teachers, secretary, caretaker) to elicit responses from children in relation to words displayed in corridors.

Display selected vocabulary in the classroom and hallways. Ask members of the school community (principal, other teachers, secretary, caretaker) to elicit responses from children in relation to words displayed in corridors.

• Store the words and continually revise. Try:

a) Pulling out three words at random; children connect them orally or in writing

b) Pulling out a word and challenging children to provide a definition or use it in a sentence

c) Passing out three words and asking children or to consider how an author could use the words.

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

2. Link Vocabulary Study to the Writing Workshop

Children should be taught reading and writing as interconnected processes. Word consciousness can develop when a child reads a text, adopting first the stance of a reader, and then the stance of a writer.

Linking craft mini-lessons in the Writing Workshop to vocabulary development is an important and valuable approach to expanding children's reading and writing vocabulary. It is a natural link and helps children to make reading and writing connections.

Craft mini-lessons can develop vocabulary in a number of ways. Beginning with word-level descriptive elements of language (e.g. precise nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs) and guiding children to notice how an author uses these elements to craft a setting, a character or an important event, can help them see that such descriptive elements enable the reader to visualise and connect with a text. Moving beyond the word level to more advanced elements such as similes, metaphors and alliteration can help children appreciate the power of apt language to stir reader emotions and convey the writer's intentions more vividly. Exploring a wide range of quality literature with a writer's eyes provides opportunities for children to think like a writer and to begin to consider the precision of their own word choices.

As children are introduced to a range of genre over the course of a year, craft mini-lessons can be used to help children develop the appropriate language register and structure of a particular genre. Through think-alouds, teachers can draw attention to tier three vocabulary, to how authors begin sentences in diverse ways and how they signal the structure of a text with precise language. This introduces children to a range of more interesting and sophisticated transitional phrases and connectives and can lead them to assess their own sentences and revise accordingly.

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

3. Incidental word learning

Good vocabulary instruction excites children about words. Teachers can develop curiosity and interest in words and promote word play by:

- providing opportunities for children to **self-select and discuss interesting vocabulary** words used by authors and record these in **vocabulary logs**

- **modelling** the use of more complex vocabulary when communicating with children throughout the day and within reading and writing workshops

- encouraging children to use newly acquired vocabulary in **conversation**

- incorporating **discussion and active participation** into developing Tier 3 vocabulary in all **curricular areas**

- setting up a system whereby **children are commended** for bringing in evidence of hearing, seeing or using target words in the classroom and beyond.

- involving **parents** in reinforcing understanding of word meanings and encouraging them to exploit opportunities to introduce new vocabulary to children

- facilitating **wide reading** through an on-going, structured and long-term silent reading programme such as DEAR time (Drop Everything and Read). Children should have the opportunity to self-select books for independent reading (i.e., with 95-100% accuracy).

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Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

3. Teaching word-learning strategies

Teaching children to use specific word-learning strategies is also important because it helps them to independently learn the meaning of words they come across in texts. This can be achieved through:

• teaching how to use grapho-phonic (letter-sound) cues to decode unknown words and morphemic analysis (word parts, including prefixes and suffixes) to unlock the meanings of unfamiliar words.

• teaching about the structure of a dictionary and thesaurus, how to use it to discover a word's multiple forms and meanings and how to match a meaning to a specific context.

• explicitly teaching how to use context cues embedded in the text to infer the meanings of unknown words. This needs to be modelled using the gradual release of responsibility model. The teacher models with one or two examples by thinking aloud how the meaning of a new word can be inferred from the context, from the picture, by re-reading or by reading ahead. The teacher can also model how to check if the inference was right or wrong by checking the dictionary or online. Creating visual displays in the classroom can remind children about the strategies that they can use to clarify an unknown word.

Developing Vocabulary Within a Balanced Literacy Framework

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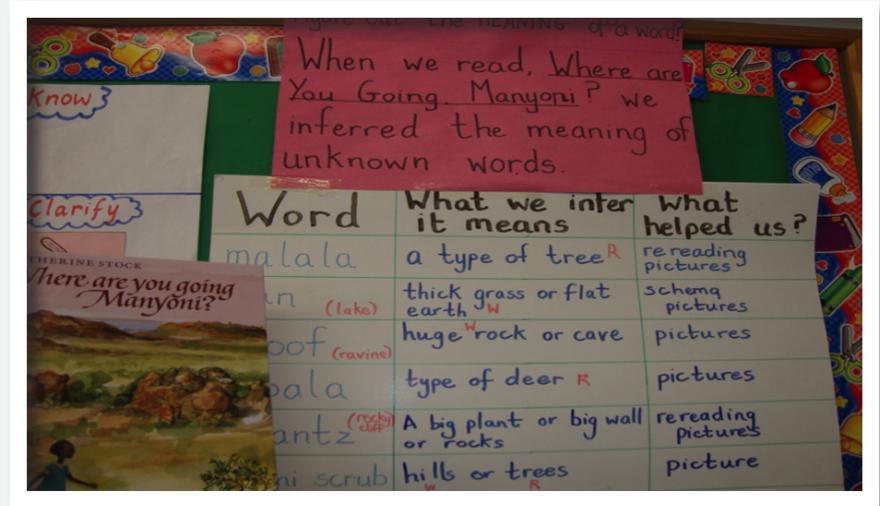
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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Children develop concepts, dispositions and skills in relation to:

- Engagement, listening and attention (Oral Language, Reading and Writing)
- Sequencing and summarising (Reading)
- Engagement (Writing)

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) has been defined as a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p. 1). Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is the teaching of non-language content through the medium of a second or subsequent language—for example, teaching Maths through Irish or Physical Education through French. CLIL gives students greater exposure to the target language without overloading the curriculum. Research shows that "language learning is more effective when

it is combined with content learning in another subject other than the language being learned."19 CLIL has been widely used throughout Europe and beyond to supplement the formal teaching of languages and to provide students with effective opportunities to practice their new language skills outside the language classroom. (The Languages Connect Strategy p 23 (2017 Department of Education and Skills))

CLIL refers to situations where subjects or parts of subjects are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content and the *simultaneous* learning of a foreign language. (Marsh, 2002, p. 15).

CLIL involves teaching another curriculum subject, or aspects of another subject through a second language which is not that of the learner's mother tongue. This practice guide highlights important considerations in adopting CLIL where a subject is taught through Irish in a school in which English is the medium of instruction.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

This guide focuses on teaching aspects of a curriculum subject through Irish in schools where English is usually the medium of instruction. CLIL is recognised as a successful approach to language teaching and learning in Europe and internationally. Irish primary schools are a particularly favourable context for using CLIL as all primary teachers teach Irish.

Research evidence shows that language learning is more effective when it is combined with content learning in another subject other than the language being learned. CLIL has been shown to improve

students' language proficiency, without negatively impacting on the development of either the students' first language, or their performance in the subject area being taught. CLIL enables learners to encounter language in context and to use it for authentic communication.

CLIL views language as the vehicle for learning.

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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Important considerations for adopting CLIL as an approach

For children

Successful acquisition of any language requires communication in the language. For this reason, it is essential that children learning through CLIL have regular opportunity to communicate through Irish. While children will use their mother tongue initially, children will eventually move toward using the target language over time, as they build up confidence and ability in the language. It is important (as with learning any language), that children are not continually corrected, so that they do not develop a negative attitude to the language. Inter-language (where children use English and Irish in the same sentence) is completely acceptable and rather than being detrimental to learning the target language, it actually helps children understand and use language structures and vocabulary. It would be accepted that children make a genuine effort to use the target language structures and vocabulary.

For teachers

For teachers, it may be the first time they have experienced teaching another subject through Irish. This presents its own challenges. In this context, teachers may experience frustration when unable to express themselves as they would in their mother tongue. However, teachers can accept that they themselves are learning too and it is acceptable that teachers may have to use some English in the initial stages and that they may not be able to teach through Irish for the complete lesson. Teachers may adopt a phased use of Irish and English until they themselves reach a thresh-hold, where they are comfortable teaching through Irish for the majority of the lesson.

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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Choosing a subject suitable for CLIL

When choosing a subject suitable for CLIL, the following points may be considered helpful.

- Teachers need to consider the subjects which they themselves would feel most comfortable teaching through Irish.

- Teachers can think about the subjects which lend themselves to communication opportunities. This may involve children naturally conversing with each other, solving a problem together, conveying meaning or making a point to a peer, without the teacher having to manufacture the language learning setting.

- Teachers may need to consider how the children will communicate through the language and not just in the language. While the children will learn subject-specific terminology in Irish, they will also learn to communicate and operate through Irish in that subject.

- A whole-school approach to CLIL will involve deciding on a subject suitable to be taught through Irish. It also involves teachers discussing their willingness to get involved in the approach. Other considerations for a whole staff include language and concept building in the chosen subject across all class levels.

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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Introducing CLIL: important points to note

Language learning in CLIL needs to be considered according to two language types, as outlined below. Good planning for both language types is essential to successful consolidation of language learning.

1. Content obligatory language: This is the language that is specific to the topic in the lessons, e.g., teaching about the lifecycle of the frog would involve teaching subject specific vocabulary such as egg, tadpole, frog, etc.

2. Content compatible language: This is the more general language that learners need to use when learning about a topic. This language may be relevant in the learning of other topics or may already be known to learners, e.g., teaching about the lifecycle of the frog might involve using language such as then, after some time, finally.

A number of principles with regard to teaching the lessons are worth noting.

(i) In the beginning teachers could accept questions from pupils in English but answer them in simple Irish.

(ii) In the longer term, teachers might rephrase in Irish the questions posed in English by pupils.

(iii) Discussions in English between pupils should also be permitted initially, but pupils should gradually be encouraged to use Irish.

(iv) Group and pair work are vitally important to stimulate and allow for communication through the language.

(v) The new vocabulary and language structures needed for the content class should be taught and reinforced in the language class. Children should not be meeting the target language for the first time in the content class. Successful planning will ensure that language learning is built upon in each lesson.

(vi) Information to be taught may need to be simplified in the target language and presented in a manner that facilitates understanding. Charts, diagrams, drawings, hands-on experiments, and the drawing of key concepts and terminology are all common CLIL strategies (Mehisto et al., 2008: 11).

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(vii) Scaffolding learning is very important in CLIL, and the children's varying learning needs should be considered in differentiation.

Visual Organisers

Visual organisers can help to present information to second language learners in a manner that supplements their language comprehension skills. They can be used in content lessons for many purposes, as can be seen in the examples attached. They can help to show the order of events in a story, classify information, show similarities and differences, etc. They can be used at different points in a lesson to aid recall, to create links and to summarise information. Visual organisers can act as a scaffold for learners as they develop their second language skills. A wide variety of visual organisers is available through an internet search.

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Visual Organisers for use in CLIL Lessons

1. A timeline can be used to show events in a story in chronological order.

2. A bar chart can be used to show quantity or frequency

Conas ar tháinig tú ar scoil?
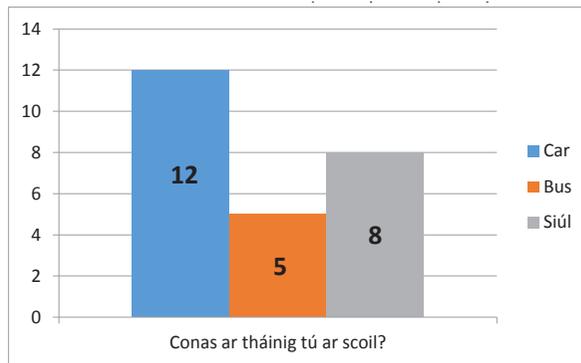
3. A table is useful for classifying information.

Ainm	Aois	Rang
Séan	11	Rang a Cúig
Máire	8	Rang a Dó

4. A story board can be used to plan different events in a story. Speech bubbles can be used where there is dialogue or thought bubbles to capture ideas.
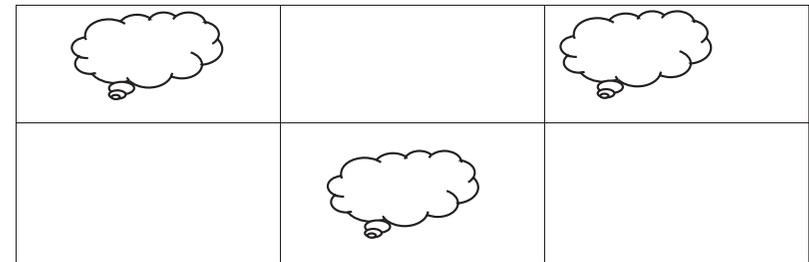
5. A cycle can illustrate in diagrammatic form events that happen repeatedly, e.g., animal lifecycle. This diagram could be enhanced using labelled images.

frog → síol froganna → torbán → torbán le cosa → frog

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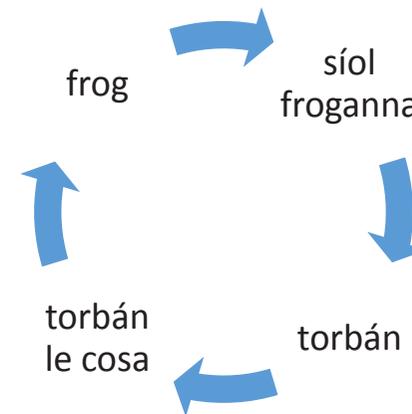
Visual Organisers for use in CLIL Lessons

6. A quadrant shows the relationship between different variables.

te

fliuch

tirim

fuar
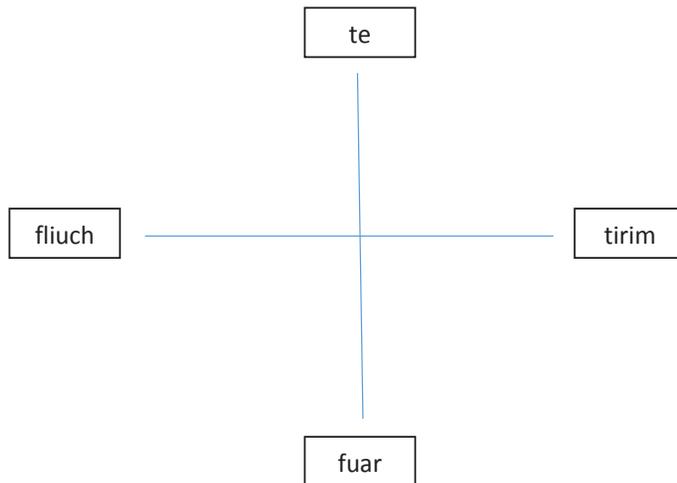
8. A star shape with Who? Why? What? When? Where? Questions can help children in recalling the events of a story or in composing their own story.

Cé?

Cén fáth?

Scéal

Cad?

Cá háit?

Cathain?
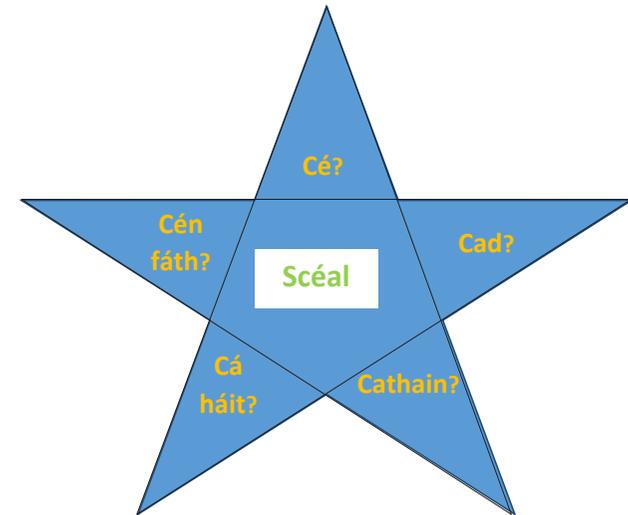
7. T-charts can show two contrasting variables such as advantages and disadvantages, arguments for and against in a debate.

Is maith liom	Ní maith liom

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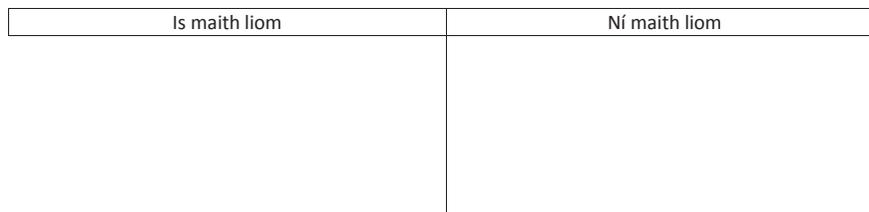
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www.curriculumonline.ie
www.ncca.ie/primary

Developed in collaboration with Íde Ruaidh, Lorraine Connaughton-Crean, Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, Coláiste Phádraig/St Patrick's College, DCU

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Department of Education and Skills

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Exploring linguistic diversity

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This guide supports the teaching of all languages and is relevant to all learning outcomes across the three strands.

• **Oral Language/Teanga ó Bhéal**
• **Reading/Léitheoireacht**
• **Writing /Scríbhneoireacht**

Linguistic diversity as a resource

Children can be familiar with languages other than English or Irish for a variety of reasons. Some children have parents and extended family who communicate in these languages, some have experienced them to various degrees because they spent time in other countries and some have friends and neighbours who speak them.

Learning experiences that promote awareness of linguistic diversity benefit all children. Teachers can help children to observe the multilingual reality that already surrounds them and encourage them to see it as a valuable resource.

Linguistic diversity is a part of Irish society and is therefore reflected in schools in Ireland.

Learning experiences can be adapted according to the ages of the children, their language skills and the diversity represented in the school and in the local community.

A range of linguistic experiences

Children's language experiences are wide ranging and they are shaped by many circumstances, migration being only one of them. It is important to provide a learning environment that fosters linguistic diversity and values all languages and all abilities. Teachers can encourage children to reflect on the experience of speaking or being exposed to languages that are different to the school languages, English and Irish.

Language is not only a tool that allows children to communicate and learn, but it is a core component of a child's identity.

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Exploring linguistic diversity

These include Irish Sign Language and Cant, as well as the many other languages that make up children's linguistic repertoires. For this reason, a whole school approach is necessary in order to ensure that children, families and the whole school community value all languages equally and that they see multilingualism as an enrichment rather than a deficit or a barrier to integration and achievement.
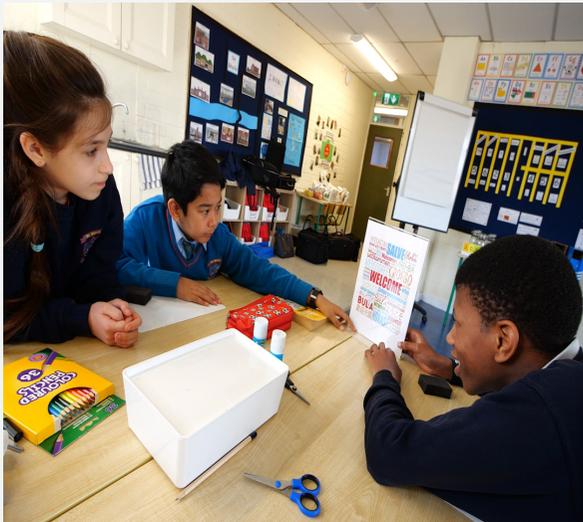
Linguistic diversity is a resource that all schools can use to;

1. foster awareness of the diversity of linguistic experiences of children

2. increase children's understanding of the way we learn and experience languages

3. offer children the opportunity to reflect on their own language competence in English and Irish

4. help children who are not regularly exposed to other languages to become comfortable with new and unfamiliar words and sounds

5. support children who can't speak languages other than English or Irish in developing a better understanding of the diversity of languages in the community

6. allow children who can speak other languages to use these languages in the school and make use of this often underused resource

7. instill in all children a sense of accomplishment in their language skills, no matter how much of a language they know, and ultimately nurture a more positive disposition towards language learning in all children.

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Exploring linguistic diversity

Whole school approach to promoting awareness of linguistic diversity

To support a whole school approach in using children's linguistic experiences as a resource, schools can do the following:

- Create multilingual displays and labels in the school (in English, Irish and the other languages children know or want to know more about)
- Display books in different languages
- Involve children in the production of displays that include the languages they know or want to know more about
- Encourage children to use the languages they know and to share their language experiences with their peers
- Allow children to use their

languages in school and for homework
- Communicate with parents about the whole school approach to embracing linguistic diversity.

Planning for learning experiences that build on linguistic diversity

In preparing for learning experiences that investigate the language experiences of children, it is important to find out

- what languages other than English and Irish are part of children's linguistic repertoires
- whether children who can speak languages other than English or Irish have also developed literacy skills in these languages
- how many children have experience of learning a foreign language

- what are the most widely spoken languages in the local community.

Teachers can gain information at the start of the school year by using a parental questionnaire and a pupil questionnaire. The latter questionnaire could also be produced by the children themselves and it could be used as a research tool to investigate linguistic diversity in their school.

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Exploring linguistic diversity

Bilingual children in the classroom

Teachers need to be aware of the fact that children who know more than one language are not usually equally competent in each, and they can develop different skills and a different range of vocabulary in each language. It is therefore reasonable to expect that a bilingual child who uses English in school and another language within the family may not be able to use the same range of vocabulary in both languages. It is worth noting that many children who are fluent speakers of a heritage language may not be literate in that language. There are also bilingual children in Irish-medium schools whereby they speak, read and write Irish within school and mainly speak, read and write English at home.

Practical classroom activities to promote awareness of linguistic diversity

The following are examples of ways in which teachers can use linguistic diversity as a resource in their classrooms:

- Engage children in language awareness activities where they compare and contrast English, Irish and other languages when naming objects, using instructional language, counting, etc.

- Play guessing games, by asking one child to say a word in any language and asking the rest of the class to guess its meaning. Use this opportunity to ask all children if they know how to say the same word in other languages.

- Choose a range of phrases that are commonly used in the class and translate them in all the languages

of the classroom. Each month, a teacher can focus on one of the languages and encourage children to use those phrases. An example would be instructional language such as *let's tidy up* or questions such as *what time is it?* or *raise your hand if you know the answer*. Seek help from children and parents to write down the sentences and to learn the pronunciation of the sentences. Teachers can audio-record a child or a parent saying the sentence and play the audio in class to help all children learn the pronunciation.

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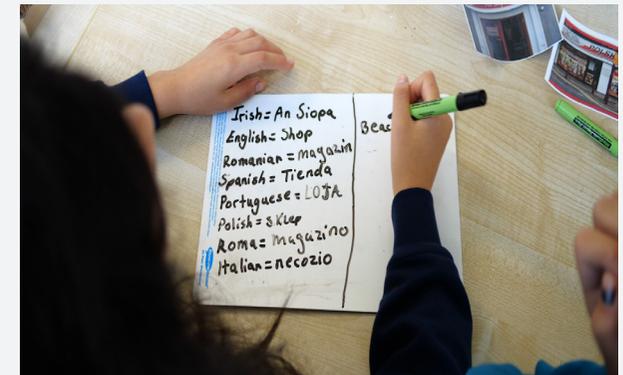
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Exploring linguistic diversity

- Ask children to bring objects from home that display more than one language or a language other than English. These could be books, food labels, packaging, instruction booklets, pictures, postcards or anything the child can find at home. Children can be asked to describe what they found, what languages are displayed, and the meaning of the print or text. Older children can search for familiar words, look up words in dictionaries, or search for words that look similar to English. A focus could be placed on homographs, homophones and cognate words.

- Developing listening skills is essential for language learning. In addition, it is important for children to become accustomed to unfamiliar sounds to develop their awareness of linguistic diversity. Listening to the radio or to recordings in various languages is an experience that transports children to unfamiliar territories. Ask children to guess what languages they hear, and discuss the reasons for their answers. Teachers can expose children to languages that are familiar to children and languages that are unfamiliar to the children. In this way, languages are used to increase awareness of linguistic diversity in the classroom, the community and the wider world.

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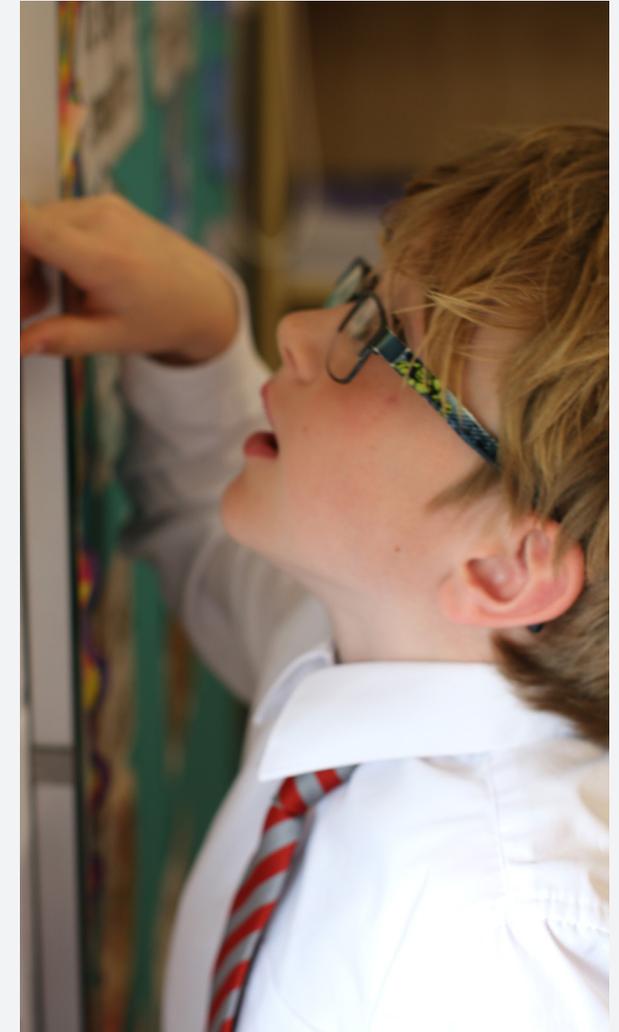
Exploring linguistic diversity

Working with vocabulary

1. Make a list of words and find images that represent the words. These can be subject-specific words or high frequency words the children are familiar with.

2. Write these words in all the languages spoken by the children in the class. If there aren't children who speak foreign languages, the teacher can focus on one or two languages that are commonly spoken in the school or in the local community.

3. Show children pictures or objects that represent the words and ask them to name them in as many languages as possible.

4. Stick the images on a large sheet of paper and let the children write down the words. Where necessary, the teacher can act as scribe.

5. Audio-record the pronunciation of the words. Children's voices can be used as a model for the class to practise the pronunciation of words in different languages.

6. Encourage children to point out similarities and differences between languages. Highlight similarities and differences in spelling and correspondence between grapheme and phoneme.

This approach can be applied or used across curriculum areas.

Have fun with multilingual dialogues

Dialogues can be used to encourage the use of multiple languages and to help children to learn about each other's languages in a fun way. Writing bilingual dialogues increases children's awareness of oral and written language conventions across languages. Discussing how different languages sound and how they convey meaning improves children's language skills and language awareness. Multilingual role-play can also foster intercultural understanding. Role-play allows children to test new sounds and to relate to the experience of speaking a different language. This experience can allow children to learn something new about each other and it allows all children to try a new language or to showcase a language they use at home.

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Exploring linguistic diversity

1. Show children an example of a dialogue and demonstrate the role-play before getting started.

2. Give children a common theme or a context. For example, they could be asked to imagine a dialogue in the playground or a dialogue between a shopkeeper and a customer or between two characters from a book they are reading.

3. Encourage children to create a dialogue in small groups of two to four. Every child should have a role in the dialogue.

4. Ask children to work in pairs on a short dialogue in any language they know. Children can also use gesture instead of spoken language if they want to. Encourage children to be creative in their use of language, e.g., mixing languages, inventing new words.

5. Children can practise the dialogue in their groups and then present to the class.

6. If the dialogues are in a language that most children in the class don't understand, encourage the 'actors' to use gesture and facial expression.

7. Encourage the children who don't know the languages used in the dialogue to infer or guess the meaning.

8. This activity lends itself to a reflection of how it feels to act in a different language and to use it in school and also how it feels not to understand a language.

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Supporting the development of language awareness

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This guide supports the teaching of all languages and is relevant to all learning outcomes across the three strands.

- **Oral Language/Teanga ó Bhéal**
- **Reading/Léitheoireacht**
- **Writing /Scríbhneoireacht**

Using the languages of the classroom to promote language awareness

Language is the chief means by which we think. Regardless of the language used, all language activities are exercises in thinking. From a very early stage in their development, most children begin to use language to express themselves. Their implicit understanding of what they say helps them to express their needs with a view to having those needs met. Developing an awareness of language, what it is and how it works, enables learners' *implicit* knowledge and understanding of language to be raised to an *explicit* level e.g., a child may recognise a sound that occurs in his/her home language and in Irish and know that it does not occur in English. It is one of the most important outcomes of an integrated approach to language learning.

Being language aware contributes to the learning of language(s) and curriculum content and the development of literacy. It helps to develop children's confidence and helps them to become independent learners. Classrooms where children are exposed to, and use, more than one language in a meaningful way, provide an excellent environment for language awareness to develop.

All languages, be they English, Irish and/or home languages, provide a resource for developing language awareness among all learners including those who only have experience of one language at home (Kirwan 2014; Little and Kirwan, 2019)

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Valuing all the languages present in the classroom is the first step towards using them to develop the language awareness of all learners. By encouraging children to draw on their existing linguistic knowledge, their own individual linguistic repertoire, teachers activate their interest in exploring the similarities and differences that exist among the languages in the environment of both the school and the home. Teachers support language awareness by encouraging children to use their home language at school. Everyone, including the teacher, benefits from this. Teachers do not need to know,

> Until their capacity for finding similarities and differences between languages is activated, children may not be conscious of their existing knowledge (Cummins 2000).

and cannot know, all the languages present in their classrooms. What is important is that children are encouraged to make linguistic comparisons between their home language (which may/may not be the language of schooling) and the additional languages present in the classroom. When this kind of environment is cultivated, children make their own inferences from the sounds of words, how they are written, and how they are used to convey meaning. In this way, language awareness becomes a tool to support learning but also one of learning's most valuable outcomes.

It is important that all children, regardless of the presence, or not, of additional languages in the school, get the opportunity to develop their awareness of language. This can be done by examining foreign language

labels of everyday objects, clothing and foodstuffs; watching TV programmes that use languages other than Irish or English, e.g., *Dora the Explorer*; collecting information, labels, flyers while on holidays in non-English speaking countries.

> In an integrated approach to language learning, the development of literacy in English or Irish as the principal language of schooling feeds into but also depends on the development of children's literacy in English, Irish and home language.

> Because many of the languages will have vocabulary that is similar to that used in Irish, it will help to enhance the perception of Irish as a living language that can readily be used for communication purposes.

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Benefits of developing children's language awareness: Key points for consideration

When children are encouraged to use all the languages at their disposal, the following benefits can occur:

- Development of the target language(s), i.e., English, Irish, home language is/are facilitated
- Home languages are supported
- Learner autonomy is developed
- Learning how to learn is supported
- The language competences of EAL learners become an asset for the whole class and for the teacher
- Monolingual learners are exposed to the reality of communication in languages other than the majority language
- Teachers' own learning is enhanced.

Schools' openness to integrating all the languages present in the school enhances children's:

- self-confidence
- self-motivation leading to autonomous learning
- engagement in learning
- language awareness skills
- observational, analytical skills
- reflective skills
- facility to allow implicit knowledge become explicit
- curiosity about languages
- understanding of and empathy for others.

When all languages present in the classroom are used, monolingual learners are exposed to the reality of communication in languages other than the majority language.

Support Material

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Supporting the development of language awareness

Strategies to promote and support language awareness

Children know how to use their language skills autonomously. Encourage pupils as individual learners and collaboratively with peers, to use all the languages in their repertoire to identify similarities and differences between the languages used in the classroom.

A whole school approach supports the development of multilingual environments on a daily basis through teaching and learning. In addition, schools may consider the following activities appropriate for enhancing the recognition of languages across the school community:

- Displaying a school 'welcome sign' in all the languages of the children.
- Using all school events as a vehicle for validating and raising awareness of languages, e.g., signs/notices at art exhibitions; open days; concerts; etc.
- Translating school mottos, mission statements, anthems and/or prayers into the languages of the classroom and displaying for children to examine.
- Learning the same song/chorus in different languages, e.g., *Twinkle, Twinkle little star/ It's a small world after all.* Children or their parents may provide the translation.
- Organising events such as European Day of Languages to celebrate all the languages of the children. See https://edl.ecml.at/ and https://www.leargas.ie for more details.
- Displaying school signs in different languages, e.g., push/pull on door handles; thank you/please; single file; etc. This may be done on a rotational basis depending on the number of languages in the school.
- Encouraging children to create dual, (trilingual, plurilingual) texts of their choice helps to hone skills of analysis and evaluation necessary for language awareness.
- Displaying a welcome flower where the petals are filled in with greetings in different languages is an effective way to draw attention to languages
- Learning the days of the week in all the languages of the classroom. This can be done orally in Infant classes (with written posters where appropriate).
- Using and comparing greetings in the languages of the classroom.
- Answering roll call can be undertaken in the languages of the classroom.
- Exploring the clues available in words to access their meaning, e.g., how many legs has an **octo**pus? How many sides has a **dec**agon? What age is a **sept**uagenarian/ **nona**genarian?

All suggestions can be developed and made increasingly complex as children progress through school.

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Supporting the development of language awareness

Effective conditions for developing language awareness

- In English-medium schools, use of Irish by the teacher when teaching Irish and in informal, daily interactions is vitally important for giving children access to the language, in this case as L2.
- Using the context of additional languages present in the classroom heightens children's awareness that Irish is a language that can be used for communication purposes just like any other language.
- It is important that children are guided to reflect on Irish as a means of communication and also as a rule-governed system, e.g., unlike English, the noun is followed by the adjective in Irish, *mála dearg*; the verb is at the beginning of the sentence in Irish.

- For native speakers of English, comparisons such as this can place the Irish language in the position of being at odds with the 'norm', English. This is where the addition of other languages can create balance and insight, e.g., what happens with the noun and adjective in other languages in the classroom - sac rouge (French); *borsa rossa* (Italian); *rote Tasche* (German). Like Irish, Arabic also places the verb at the beginning of the sentence. Children's discussion of such comparisons can help expand their linguistic concepts.
- Inviting children to make explicit from their understanding of language the connections and similarities that exist between two or more languages provides opportunities for all learners to develop the skills needed for

language awareness. It can also stimulate interest and motivation in pupils to learn other languages.
- Any activity undertaken in primary school presents opportunities for developing awareness of language, e.g., comparison of greetings, days of the week, food, clothes, animals, etc.
- It is not necessary for the teacher to know the additional languages of the classroom Inviting children who are native-speakers of additional languages to use their home language in the classroom, facilitates the use of those languages as a resource for all pupils. This allows for greater input, involvement and engagement by children in their own learning. This also encourages the development of learner autonomy.

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

This guide supports the teaching of all languages and is relevant to all learning outcomes across the three strands.

- **Oral Language/Teanga ó Bhéal**
- **Reading/Léitheoireacht**
- **Writing /Scríbhneoireacht**

Integrating language learning to develop a multilingual environment

In an English-medium school, Irish is a language that most of the children, whatever their home language, will not have previously heard or used. In many cases, preschool or primary school is the first place that children hear instructions being given, questions being asked, and lessons being taught through the medium of Irish. Irish is, therefore, the language that most children will learn as a new language.
In this way, it creates an equality between all pupils, whatever language they speak at home.

In a multilingual environment, all languages become equal in terms of when and how they are used. In this way, a plurality of languages can actually support a minority language like Irish, unlike a situation where there are only two languages, one of which is clearly in a dominant position.

In a learning environment where Irish is used in a meaningful way by teachers and pupils, i.e., where it used to address issues that are important and of interest, it can serve as a link between English and learners' home languages.

When learners experience Irish being used regularly and meaningfully in both formal and informal situations in school, it can begin to occupy a pivotal position in children's learning. It can act like a bonding agent for all the languages of the classroom including English (Little and Kirwan, 2019).

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Positive outcomes for Irish in a multilingual learning environment

- Increased use of Irish in the school and experiencing Irish being used in meaningful situations, contributes to children's increased use of Irish. There are two considerations that are important for increased use of Irish by children, particularly indigenous Irish children. The first is crucial. It is the experience of hearing teachers using Irish meaningfully among themselves and also with children in the class, corridors, yard, etc. The second involves experiencing the confident way EAL children express themselves in their own language(s) and the manner in which they are affirmed and valued for this. Both these practices encourage spontaneous use of Irish by indigenous Irish children who want to use it to express themselves in another language, often referring to Irish as 'my language'. It also allows them to perceive that Irish is a language that can be used for communication purposes just like all the other languages in the school.

- Irish can also serve as a link between English and other home languages. In an English-medium school Irish is the 'new' language common to all children, and can therefore be used as the mutual language for all.

- Access to two or more languages provides increased opportunity for developing language awareness across all topics of the Primary School Curriculum, e.g., *a dó, deux, dos; caballo, cavallo, capall,* etc. For this to happen, the capacity to express oneself in more than one language must be actively valued in the school.

- The status of Irish is raised when it is seen to be valued, is used meaningfully, and when it gives indigenous Irish children access to demonstrating their developing second language skills in an environment where such skills are valued as normal practice. Indigenous Irish children want to be able to do what their plurilingual peers can do, i.e., express themselves in their second language.

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Whole school approach to promote use of Irish in a multilingual environment

To support a whole school approach to promoting the use of Irish in a multilingual environment, schools can do the following:

- Teachers can use Irish informally with colleagues for purposes of communication.
- Teachers and older children can model the use of Irish in formal and informal situations for the benefit of younger children.
- Affirm attempts by children to use Irish, e.g., greetings in class, corridor, yard, etc.
- Use all school events as a vehicle to promote language use, e.g., school concert/ official opening, introductions made alternately in English or Irish and another home language.

- Encourage singing in Irish, English and home languages in class and school group situations.

Whole school approaches to promote the transfer of skills

To support a whole school approach to promoting the transfer of skills across languages, schools can do the following:

- Use multilingual displays and labels in the school (in English, Irish and home languages of each particular class).
- Display dual language work in English and Irish, or English/Irish and home language, e.g., children's writing, video and audio recordings.
- Involve children in the production of a plurilingual video about the school where children speak in English and Irish and home languages.

- Use common approaches, where suitable, to language teaching in both languages and include contributions from children in their home languages.
- Ensure that teachers engage in joint planning for adopting and developing cross-language initiatives and activities.
- Ensure that common terminology is adopted throughout the school in relation to concepts, terms and skills so that children are repeatedly exposed to the same terminology.
- Ensure that teachers are familiar with the gradual release of responsibility model where children are exposed to the modelled, shared, guided and independent phases of instruction.

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Effective conditions for the transfer of skills

- In predictable learning situations such as discussing daily weather/ roll call/ allocation of classroom tasks, undertake question and response in one language, e.g., Irish followed by similar question and response in English, followed by contributions from children in their home languages. This can become a daily practice to reinforce learning and can develop into a plurilingual exchange when children begin to play with the idea of asking a question in one language and answering it in another; substituting a word, phrase from another language, i.e., using all the languages in their repertoires.

- Children's implicit knowledge of language **must be activated** in order to make it explicit. This gives children the observational and analytical skills to increasingly refine and build their linguistic knowledge.

- Eliciting from children where they observe connections and similarities between Irish, English and their home languages. This approach encourages autonomous learning.

- Encouraging children to make explicit, where possible, the connections and similarities between languages.

- Providing children with adequate exposure to the second language, be that Irish or English.

- Exposing children to daily, meaningful using of Irish (second language) not only in teaching and learning situations but also among staff and older pupils. Informal use of Irish throughout the day.

- Teaching Irish through Irish in schools in which English is the medium of instruction.

- Understanding of concepts and skills in L1.

- Opportunities for practice in L1 before L2.

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Using Irish in a multilingual environment

The following activity is an example of how a lesson on the topic of 'greetings' can be conducted to include all the languages of the classroom. It is likely that one of the children's first encounters with the Irish language will have been the teacher's use of the greeting *Dia duit*. Linking this to children's daily experience of what their mother/ father/ carer says when they meet the child after school helps to incorporate and root the new greeting *Dia duit* in the child's experience. Asking for examples of greetings from the children will result in many additional ways being offered, e.g., *hello* (English); *hallo* (German); *helló* (Hungarian); *ciao* (Italian); *cześć* (Polish); *bonjour* (French); *bom dia* (Portuguese); *dobrý den* (Czech); 你好 (Chinese); etc.

By drawing attention to greetings that sound alike, the teacher takes the first step in activating children's awareness of the phonological similarities and differences between languages. The teacher cannot know, nor does s/he need to know, all these languages. The children know them and will be happy to share them when they find themselves in a secure, nurturing environment.

In this way, all the languages of the classroom and all the languages that are known to individual children, become the stepping stone to allow access to and understanding of the new way to express a greeting, i.e., *Dia duit*. Exercising these comparative skills leads to an important conceptual understanding for learners when they realise that a greeting conveys the same message regardless of the language being used. By incorporating

this awareness into an area that is meaningful for the children it is more likely to be readily understood. This process also leads to the development of curiosity about languages, questioning, reflective skills, and higher-order thinking.

The following activities are examples of **suggested activities** which can be adapted, according to children's ability, **across languages** to enable children to transfer their skills and knowledge from their first language to a second and additional languages.

- Teachers can explicitly highlight the **conventions of print** across languages, by drawing children's attention to left to right orientation, top to bottom orientation, front to back orientation and identification of the title, illustrations and author of texts. This can be done using large format books and picture

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books in both English and Irish. While reading large format books, attention can also be drawn to the similarities in punctuation – full-stop, capital letters, comma, question mark.

- **Phonological awareness** is the ability to recognise and use language aurally and orally. Early phonological awareness skills include being able to recognise, hear and distinguish words within sentences, syllables within words, rhyming words and words beginning with the same initial sound. Even very young learners can identify sounds used or not used in different languages. Playing with words and rhymes develops phonological awareness. Phonological awareness activities can be carried out interchangeably between English and Irish to highlight the transfer of phonological

awareness skills from English to Irish. *These include the following:*

1. **Identification of words within sentences:** Teacher says some words/short sentences. The child repeats each word, placing a counter into a box as each individual word is repeated, e.g., *Tá mé ag rith* (four counters are placed in the box).

2. **Syllable segmentation:** Recite simple poems and rhymes, asking children to tap their knees or clap on each syllable while they do so, e.g., *Lámh, lámh eile, a haon, a dó*

3. **Rhyming words:** Prompt children to identify rhyming words in both English and Irish by using pictures or concrete objects. *I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with 'bat'/Tá mé ag smaoineamh ar fhocal a bhfuil rím aige le 'lán'.*

4. **Initial sounds identification:** Using pictures or concrete objects, children identify words beginning with a variety of initial sounds. This activity can be carried out in English and Irish. *Tá mé ag smaoineamh ar fhocal a thosaíonn le 'b'. Cad é?*

5. **Identify letter patterns in words where possible:** Create word families of words with the same endings e.g., _án, _ann/_eann.

- Use popular stories and **fairy tales** for literacy activities in both languages, e.g., *Little Red Riding Hood/Cochaillín Dearg*. Engage the children in **similar activities** across languages, e.g., prediction, sequencing of events, character descriptions, drama activities, questioning. Make comparisons between the English and Irish versions of the story. Many children will know these stories in

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their home languages. Highlighting this and bringing it into the activities is a language awareness raising benefit for all pupils, e.g., comparing words used for colour, grandmother, walking in the woods, etc.

- Choosing a variety of **topics/themes** and planning a variety of activities in both languages to develop the topic/theme, e.g., *my favourite toy*. Activities may include making a very short oral presentation, developing vocabulary and word lists and engaging in written activities in both languages. This can also include reference to home languages. There are benefits in the area of language awareness for all pupils.

- Engage children in the **Language Experience Approach,** which involves the children composing various sentences to form a story,

with the teacher acting as scribe. This can be carried out in both English and Irish and can be used for future reading material and oral language activities. Children can contribute orally in their home language and will be much more engaged in the story building activity if given this opportunity. This is another opportunity for language awareness for all children where comparisons are made between all languages.

- Engage children in the **writing process** in both languages as they are engaging with the various genres. It is important to reference the home languages even if children have not yet learned to read or write in them. In other words, the full linguistic repertoires of all children are continually activated, feeding into whatever activity is taking place. This

will involve children choosing topics, drafting, redrafting and presenting to an audience.

- **Free writing** sessions in English, Irish and home languages enable children to experiment with a variety of genres and gives them independence in **making choices** about topics to write about. These sessions also give children the opportunity to practise the skills of writing that have been explicitly taught to them during modelled, shared and guided writing sessions.

- Engage children in **language awareness activities** where children compare and contrast elements of English, Irish, and home languages, e.g., counting, days of the weeks, colours and counting.

- Explicitly teaching a range of **comprehension strategies** in English and Irish, e.g., making

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predictions, creating images. As children gradually begin to interact with and make meaning of text in English, these skills can be further developed in Irish and in home languages.

- Engage children in the **creation of dual language texts** with the guidance of the teacher (see below for description of suggested steps involved). Writing dual language texts requires children to compare expressions and structures in each language, thereby prompting transfer of knowledge and skills across languages. These texts can be used as a basis for future reading material and oral language discussions. The completion of a single dual language text may be completed over a period of time.

Creation of dual language texts using English, Irish and home languages

Teachers cannot take responsibility for teaching home languages. However, the outcomes for children can be very beneficial when parents and teachers cooperate in the task of developing children's literacy skills. Using the texts that have been created in school, children can be helped by their parents to produce dual language texts at home. Familiarity with the text roots the activity in what the child knows. Only the language, not the content, has to change.

Learning to read and write in the home language, using texts with which they are already familiar, provides the opportunity for the languages involved to support each other. Children whose home languages are neither English nor Irish can be encouraged to produce

their text in their home language too. Some will need help from parents to do this while others will already have begun learning to read and write in their home language either from parents or in weekend/ evening home language classes/ schools.

> When children's home language is valued in school, using the home language can be a significant motivator for children.

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Being encouraged to read their dual language texts for their classmates provides great affirmation for learners and helps to build their confidence. Observing their peers reading and writing in two languages can be a powerfully motivating force for children who are currently monolingual. It also provides an excellent opportunity for developing language awareness when the teacher encourages children to try to attach meaning to sounds or recognise words/phrases from the context of the writing.

Children decide on a topic of their choice to write about and pick a title for their book. This can be done individually, in groups or with the aid of the teacher:

1. They plan for their writing in English, using brainstorming and mind mapping to create an outline of their story.

2. As they start to create the first draft of their story, children are encouraged to work in both languages. At this stage, children are guided by the teacher.

3. As the children create each page of the book, they write text in both English and Irish to convey similar meaning. In doing so, this may involve simplifying the language in the second language (L2). Initially, this process can be modelled by the teacher. Children can be guided through the process of choosing words and using phrases of similar meaning in L2.

4. An important teaching point at this stage is avoiding literal translation between languages. Teachers can model how to phrase sentences of similar meaning in English and Irish, e.g., ***My favourite hobby of all is soccer/ Is maith liom sacar.***

5. The children then proof read the texts and are aided in the proof reading by teachers. They edit their work as necessary.

6. Each page is then re-drafted and revised again, editing text where necessary.

7. A final draft of the text is written.

8. Illustrations are added to each page.

9. A front cover and a back cover for the book are created.

10. Children plan a presentation for others. This involves reading the book in both languages, showing the illustrations and explaining the steps involved in creating the book.

* It is important to note that the level of teacher assistance required will vary depending on pupil needs and class level.

The Place of Irish in a Multilingual Environment

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Developed in collaboration with Dr Déirdre Kirwan

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Additional Support Pathways

Additional Support Pathways and the Primary Language Curriculum

The Primary Language Curriculum contains Learning Outcomes and associated Progression Continua. The Learning Outcomes in the Primary Language Curriculum describe the expected learning and development for children at the end of a period of time. To help teachers in using the Learning Outcomes to plan for, and provide activities and experiences that support children's language learning over this period of time, the Progression Continua describe aspects of the Learning Outcomes in more detail.

The curriculum supports every child to progress and work towards these learning outcomes at a rate and pace appropriate to their abilities and to have this learning recognised.

The Additional Support Pathways have been developed to provide access, opportunity and challenge for children with learning disabilities in the low moderate to severe and profound range of ability. The Pathways are designed for use at primary and post-primary level for this cohort of learners. The Pathways support continuity and progression for the learner as they transition between classes, and on to post-primary programmes.

The Additional Support Pathways align with the Progression Pathways designed for students with a general learning disability (GLD) in the low moderate to severe/profound range of ability participating in Level 1 Programmes (L1LPs) for Junior Cycle. The Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile supports teachers in using the evidence they gather from conversations and interactions with children and from language activities to help make informed decisions about the next steps in children's language learning. With this in mind, teachers may decide to use the Additional Support Pathways for children outside the low moderate to severe/ profound ability range as well as for children within the range. This decision should be made in consultation with other professionals in the school community, reflect the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and be kept under review.

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Additional Support Pathways

Who is the Additional Support Pathways for?

Children who may need to avail of the Additional Support Pathways will have their own Individual Education Plan (IEP) as part of their support file where specific and realistic goals are agreed upon by the teacher, parent and child. Each child is an individual with a unique set of strengths which need to be celebrated and nurtured. Children with a learning disability in the low moderate to severe and profound range of abilities are supported to use their own unique skills and talents in making discoveries of their own world. These children will benefit from having more time to process information and transfer knowledge learned in different situations. The first step for their teachers is to find their strengths and priority learning areas/goals/targets in order to plan their learning journey.

Using the Additional Support Pathways:

Teachers can use the Additional Support Pathways to help children work towards Learning Outcomes. Children may be on a different pathway for different Learning Outcomes.

The Additional Support Pathways describe, through seven descriptive indicators, a learning journey of children within this cohort. The way in which the child learns may not follow the conventional linear path of development for their typically developing peers. Therefore, the Additional Support Pathways should be approached in a flexible manner to challenge the child to reach their potential. Given the diversity of the needs, strengths and interests of the children in this cohort, a universal approach is key.

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Additional Support Pathways

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PATHWAYS	The child...
EXPERIENCING	is present during a learning activity. **S**/he is exposed to and/or aware of the learning environment. **S**/he is beginning to acclimatise to the learning environment such as objects, people, sounds and other sensory experiences.
ATTENDING	becomes attentive to and/or engaged with the learning activities presented by changing gesture, posture, vocalisation, eye gaze, movement etc. **S**/he is acclimatised to the learning environment.
RESPONDING	demonstrates capacity to actively or purposefully take an interest in the learning environment. **S**/he begins to indicate likes, dislikes or preferences. **S**/he actively responds to a learning activity with or without support.
INITIATING	shows curiosity about the learning environment. **S**/he actively and independently seeks opportunities to engage with and/or influence that environment.
ACQUIRING	demonstrates that knowledge, a concept or a skill is being learned. **S**/he explores and participates in the learning
BECOMING FLUENT	moves towards fluency and accuracy in familiar learning contexts. **S**/he independently and consistently demonstrates recall mastery of the skill/concept/knowledge learned.
GENERALISING	transfers and applies learned skills, knowledge or concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Internet research and inquiry cycle

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This guide supports the teaching of all languages and is relevant to all learning outcomes across the three strands.

- Oral Language/Teanga ó Bhéal
- Reading/Léitheoireacht
- Writing/Scríbhneoireacht

Internet research and inquiry cycle

The Internet and other digital technologies offer a range of multimodal supports to scaffold children's learning. We need to develop instructional contexts in classrooms that integrate digital technologies and the Internet in meaningful ways to support children to develop the key skills, strategies, dispositions and social practices necessary to live and learn in the 21st century.

Research suggests that many children are struggling to utilise the Internet and other digital technologies in complex online environments for academic purposes (Bennett, Matton, & Kervin, 2008; Ito et al., 2009). Finding information on the Internet involves a complex orchestration of a repertoire of skills, strategies, dispositions and social practices in both online reading comprehension and information-seeking skills. Overt modelling by the teacher and explicit instruction in both of these areas is necessary to ensure that all children have the competencies required to utilise the Internet and other digital technologies for academic purposes.

Digital Literacy can be described as a complex orchestration of a range of skills, strategies, dispositions and social practices to leverage technology to access, acquire, comprehend, analyse, evaluate, synthesise, create and communicate knowledge in multiple modes and in multiple representations to and with a variety of audiences and in a variety of contexts for a range of purposes. [Drawing on definition of digital literacy in NCCA, 2019, p. 50]. Key stages in the recursive, iterative, interlinked, and opportunistic Internet inquiry and research cycle (shown in Figure 2) include forming goals and asking questions, generating search terms, investigating search results, locating and critically evaluating information, and summarising, synthesising and communicating information.

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Internet research and inquiry cycle

Comprehension skills and strategies	include activating prior knowledge, making connections, asking questions, making inferences, monitoring understanding, determining important ideas, evaluating, summarising, synthesising, and communicating.
Key dispositions and habits of mind	involve self-regulation, curiosity, resilience, self-efficacy, persistence, intrinsic motivation and an ability to set learner-centred goals.
Inquiry based learning during Internet research	places children's curiosity at the centre of the learning experience. It involves children in structured cross-disciplinary inquiries often based on diverse, compelling, authentic real world issues. Children pose questions, investigate, wonder, design solutions in collaboration with others, build and act on new understanding and knowledge and reflect on new conceptual knowledge within a community of learners involving both teachers and children.
Social practices	include the ability to collaborate with others, support each other's thinking, problem solve, participate, create and apply solutions in creative and reflective ways. Children should work collaboratively to stop, think and talk to discuss and share ideas and 'aha' moments, and reflect on the processes and product of their Internet inquiry and research.

Table 1. Internet research and inquiry: Key skills, strategies, dispositions and social practices (3SD)

Research (Dwyer, 2010) suggests that peer-to-peer collaboration in an online environment does not always occur spontaneously and so structures need to be put in place to encourage children to share and exchange ideas, insights and strategies. Reciprocal Teaching (Palinscar & Brown, 1984) is a well-researched and validated instructional model. Following teacher-led dialogue and explicit strategy instruction, using the gradual release of responsibility model, the children take turns in leading the dialogue centred on one of the reciprocal roles of questioning, predicting, clarifying, and summarising. In an online environment, reciprocal roles could include children taking on the roles of Questioner, Navigator and Summariser (Dwyer, 2010).

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Internet research and inquiry cycle

The Questioner as a team leader	**The Navigator**	**The Summariser**
plans the strategy, guides the group to create deeper level questions to focus online inquiry; leads the group to reflect on the effectiveness of the search strategy when the task is finished.	ensures the group pilots their way across multiple websites effectively and efficiently; concurrently monitors suggested cues on the search result screen and investigates the clues provided in the abstract blurb and URL and matches both to the focus of inquiry.	ensures that the group critically evaluates the trustworthiness of the information generated by the inquiry by cross-checking at least two other sources of information; encourages the group to monitor and clarify difficult vocabulary; guides the group in encapsulating and summarising the information generated by the Internet inquiry (Dwyer & Harrison, 2018).

These roles are temporary and interchangeable scaffolds to support children as they develop these strategies and internalise these skills.

Table 2. Online Reciprocal Roles: Questioner, Navigator, Summariser

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Internet research and inquiry cycle

Questioner (?)	Navigator (✎)	Summariser (↻)
What are we trying to find out today?	What are we trying to find out today? Which link will we follow? Will we search either/ and by text, image, or video?	What's the most important information here?
What questions do we have?	Will we read the blurb under each search result?	How reliable is this information? How do we know it's trustworthy?
What key words will we choose for our search terms?	What does the search result tell us about the source of the information?	Will we cross-check the information on other websites
Can we discuss the relevance of the information to our task today?	Will we scroll down the page?	What would we tell a friend about what we have learned?

Figure 1. Children's Prompt Cards for Online Reciprocal Roles (Dwyer, 2010)

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Internet research and inquiry cycle

Figure 2.
Internet Inquiry Cycle:
Key Skills and Strategies

GOAL FORMATION/ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking questions

Planning a strategy

Anticipating challenges

Activating prior knowleges sources

GENERATING SEARCH TERMS

Generating vocabulary (eg. synonyms)

Monitoring, judging, evalutaing and repairing

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION WITH OTHERS

Summarising information

Synthesising information

Creating a report

Remixing information

Producing an artifact

Communicating information with others

INTERNET INQUIRY CYCLE

KEY SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

INVESTIGATING SEARCH RESULTS

Skimming and scanning results page

Navigating and interrogating search results

Monitoring and evalutaing

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF ONLINE INFORMATION

Interpreting information

Monitoring and judging relevancy of information

Evaluating, corroborating, and verifying information

Making connections to self, to other texts, and to the world

Critiquing information

LOCATING INFORMATION

Determining important ideas

Classifying and comparing information

Activating online prior knowlegde sources

Each stage of the Internet inquiry and research cycle is considered in turn in the sections which follow.

Internet research and inquiry cycle

Forming goals and asking questions

GOAL FORMATION/ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking questions

Planning a strategy

Anticipating challenges

Activating prior knowleges sources

Few of us engage in online inquiry in a planful manner. This lack of planning often results in that feeling of disorientation and frustration experienced during online inquiry and research when we struggle to find information related to our questions.

For purposeful reading and inquiry on the Internet it is important that

children formulate engaging questions to provide a purpose for their inquiry, set a context for problem solving, and establish a goal for learning (Castek & Dwyer, 2018). Creating an authentic inquiry-based learning opportunity, or setting a purpose or task, based for example, on the lived experiences of children in their communities, on a real world global issue, on a field trip, or expert visit builds situational interest which can spark children's engagement, motivation, curiosity, and civic engagement.

Usually it is the teacher who asks questions in the classroom so asking children to generate their own questions can, initially, be challenging. Encouraging children to dig deeper with their questions, asking why, what if, how or I wonder questions, can be modelled by the teacher.

Additionally, children could collaborate in pairs to formulate and post questions

on an online share board using a digital tool like Padlet (https://padlet.com/). Again having an audience of their peers will encourage the children to pose more challenging questions.

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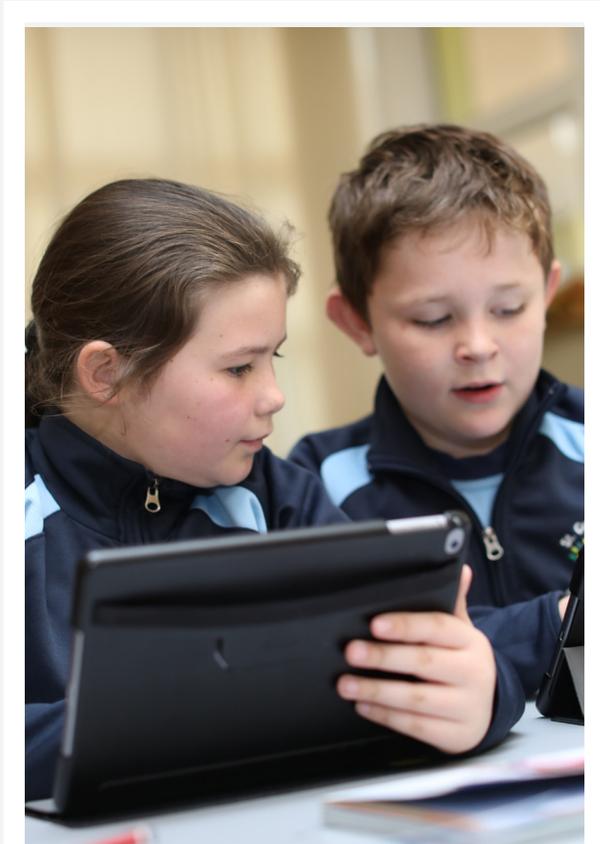
Internet research and inquiry cycle

Generating search terms

GENERATING SEARCH TERMS

Generating vocabulary (eg. synonyms)

Monitoring, judging, evalutaing and repairing
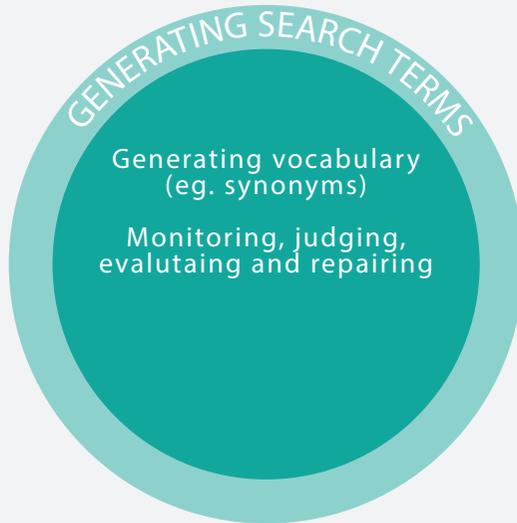
Children need to be able to monitor, judge, evaluate, and revise search terms. Insufficient vocabulary knowledge related to the topic and the inability to generate synonyms for key word searches can hamper an online inquiry. Generating search terms for Internet inquiry by typing text or voice search involves the Goldilocks Principle; are

the search terms too narrow, too broad or just right? Key words related to the search task can be sourced by skimming and scanning the search result screen for suggestions in the blurb or in other keywords suggested by the search engine on the result screen.

Investigating search results

INVESTIGATING SEARCH RESULTS

Skimming and scanning results page

Navigating and interrogating search results

Monitoring and evalutaing

Children need to be able to navigate, interrogate and evaluate search results speedily, effectively and with a critical eye. Research suggests that children rarely go beyond the first or second result returned. Children need to adopt an inquiring, questioning stance when investigating search results, critiquing the information provided by the URL and blurb as to the reliability and source of the information and the relevance to the task at hand.

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Internet research and inquiry cycle

Locating information

LOCATING INFORMATION

Determining
important ideas

Classifying and
comparing information

Activating online prior
knowlegde sources
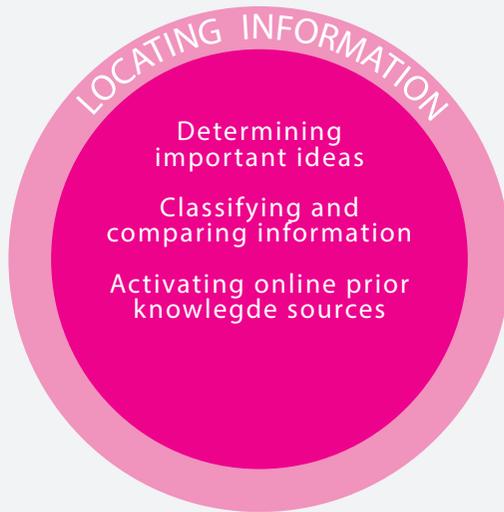
When students have poorly developed skills on the processes of generating search terms and investigating search results they have little cognitive energy to locate information or develop conceptual knowledge related to the topic at hand. Locating information involves navigating speedily and efficiently across a myriad of websites, skimming and scanning for relevant and important information and building and updating knowledge on-the-hoof in the malleable moments of an online search. Dispositions and mind-sets, such as curiosity, resilience, self-efficacy (self-belief, motivation, and engagement), doggedness, persistence, and flexibility are needed to avoid the cognitive overload often experienced by online readers.

Critical evaluation of online information

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF ONLINE INFORMATION

Interpreting
information

Monitoring and judging
relevancy of information

Evaluating, corroborating,and
verifying information

Making connections to self,
to other texts, and
to the world

Critiquing
information

The Internet is a largely unvetted open source media where literally anyone can post any information. Research suggests that children have difficulties in realising that incorrect or false information can be posted on the web and are often mislead by the appearance of a website. Critical thinking skills, critical reading

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skills, critical multimodal information literacy skills, and critical literacy skills are needed to frame, evaluate, corroborate, and interrogate the reliability and veracity of the information presented online. The online reader must "read with and against the text" (Janks, 2019, p. 561) to raise their antennae about how the text is built and how the text defines the world. In addition, the online reader should interrogate the perspectives presented in the text; the author stance (what the author has presented and omitted to present), and analyse the discourse presented in the text with regard to gender, power and social issues.

Critical evaluation of online information may be developmental by nature. Children are drawing on limited prior experience and world knowledge (often referred to as common sense knowledge) to assess and evaluate online information. Children need to develop a questioning stance and a healthy scepticism towards online information.

Communicating information with others

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION WITH OTHERS

Summarising information

Synthesising information

Creating a report

Remixing information

Producing an artifact

Communicating information with others
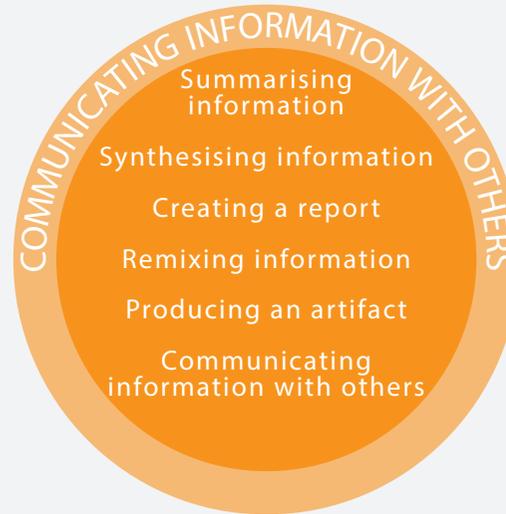
Summarisation and synthesising information are compounded in an online environment as children need to be able to deal with an information overload as they navigate across a multitude of websites and in multiple modes (audio, video, text, image) to sift, determine importance, condense, and transform information. Children can represent their learning and conceptual knowledge through multiple means of representation using a range of digital tools to apply their knowledge in new and creative ways. It is important that children reflect on both the processes of online inquiry and the product of that inquiry. In addition, it is important for children to reflect on the collaborative processes and the decisions made during online research within the community of learners in classrooms.

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Internet research and inquiry cycle

Assessment of current skills

In order to support children during Internet inquiry and research, teachers need to assess their current capabilities in relation to key Internet inquiry stages and skills listed in Figure 2 (Dwyer, 2016). Teachers can record children online activity using an online screen capture tool like Screencast-o-matic (www.screencast-o-matic.com). Based on analysis of the children's online activity and indeed real time physical observation of that activity, teachers can determine the current strengths and needs of the children with regard to the Internet research and inquiry cycle and plan explicit instruction accordingly to support children's online inquiries.

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Internet research and inquiry cycle exemplar

Starting Out	Stepping Up	Moving On
Teacher and children decide on inquiry /topic based on an **authentic real world challenge:** Teacher chooses cross curricular and literacies foci (Digital, Disciplinary, Critical, Visual literacies)	Children build knowledge on inquiry or topic online, using video audio and image resources, and through print based materials Children expand knowledge of digital tools	Children represent new knowledge through multiple modes and means of representation to class peers or audience. Children work on design challenge
Teacher considers Learning Outcomes; pedagogical approaches, classroom organisation, children activities, use of a technology, AoL, AfL	Children work collaboratively to share ideas and 'aha' moments. Children adopt interchangeable online Reciprocal Roles of Questioner, Navigator, Summariser	Children reflect on learning Children reflect on collaborative process Children reflect on the use of digital tools
Teacher activates background knowledge, builds situational interest and develops vocabulary related to topic or inquiry through multiple modes (video, audio, and images) using digital technologies and print based materials.	Children develop skills and strategies to inquire, navigate, locate, connect, evaluate, summarise, synthesise with digital and literacy focus (e.g. disciplinary/critical/visual)	Children develop skills and strategies to justify, use, design, engineer, create, communicate, respond with digital and literacy focus (e.g. disciplinary/critical/visual)
Teacher scaffolds the development of literacies through demonstration, think alouds and modelling using the gradual release of responsibility model Direct instruction T- Chdn *	Guided Structured Practice Children are active, agentic, engaged T- Chdn; Chdn -T; Chdn - Chdn	Independent Practice Chdn - T; Chdn - Chdn
Dispositions and mind-sets: metacognition, wonderment, self-regulation, curiosity, resilience, self-efficacy, persistence, intrinsic motivation and engagement		
* T denotes 'Teacher', Chdn denotes 'Children'		

Internet research and inquiry cycle

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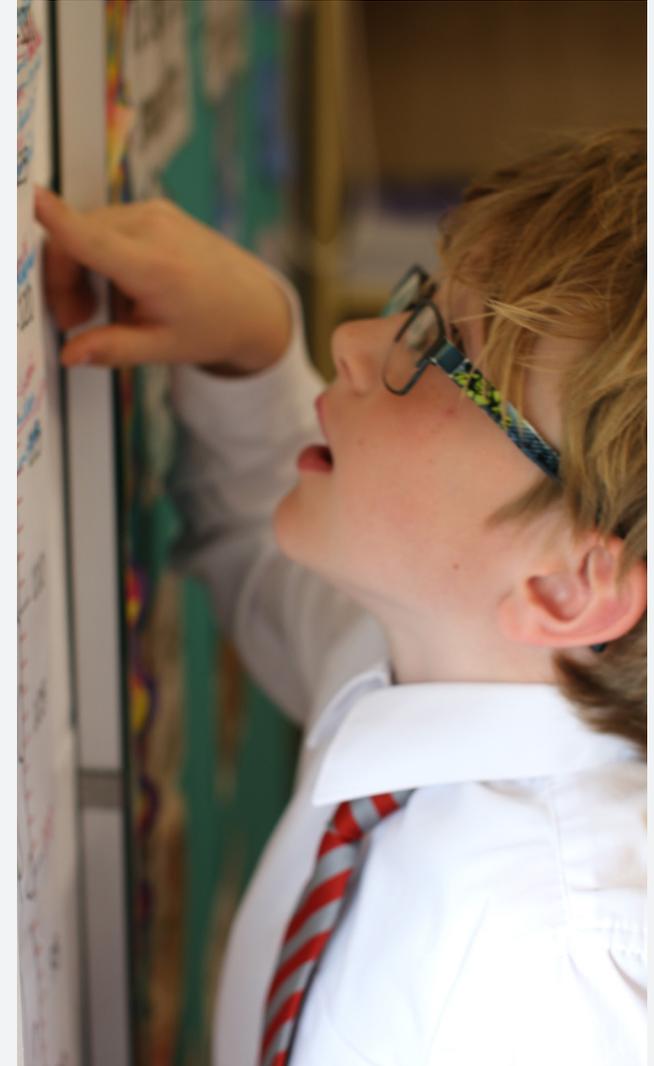
Corrective Feedback in the Immersion Context

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This guide supports the teaching of all languages and is relevant to all learning outcomes across the three strands.

- Oral Language/Teanga ó Bhéal
- Reading/Léitheoireacht
- Writing/Scríbhneoireacht

What is Form-Focused Instruction?

When we talk about 'form' we are referring to language structure, i.e., tense of verbs, the gender of nouns, the syntax of sentences, grammar points, such as, is there a séimhiú or urú? Children will naturally focus on the content or the meaning of the language. The challenge for the teacher is to draw children's attention to form. So, for example, when an immersion teacher is teaching a history lesson, it is not enough for the children to just understand what content they are listening to or reading, they need to pay attention to how it is been said or written.

Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) provides children with opportunities to attend to target language forms during content-orientated tasks (Ranta & Lyster, 2018). Basically, any planned or incidental instructional activity which directs children to pay attention to linguistic form, regardless of the content being taught or discussed, is considered FFI (Ellis, 2001). When we speak of FFI, we consider a broad range of pedagogical strategies immersion teachers may utilise to draw children's attention to form during content-orientated tasks. In this sense, FFI may be considered an umbrella term for many teaching and learning strategies available to teachers. Oral Corrective Feedback (CF) is one such strategy, which may aid teachers in establishing a 'counterbalance' (Lyster, 2007) between the teaching of content and form in the immersion classroom, in order to develop a more accurate L2 among immersion children.

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Corrective Feedback in the Immersion Context

What is Corrective Feedback?

Oral Corrective Feedback (CF) may be explained as any reaction of a teacher (or a peer) to a child's inaccurate oral language production, during meaningful interaction that allows the child to attend to their inaccuracy and correct it immediately during communication. L2 inaccuracies are welcomed, in such an approach, as opportunities to 'focus' on language form. The use of CF, however, is not specific to an Irish language lesson. In fact CF was reported to be an effective language teaching strategy in promoting L2 among students (Harris & Ó Duibhir, 2011). With this in mind, teachers are recommended to capitalise on opportunities to utilise CF, in a friendly and supportive manner, throughout the school day, during content lessons, during language lessons and even during break-time. It is further advised that children become active participants in establishing a collaborative corrective culture in the classroom. Such correction, however, must be sensitive, meaningful and systematic, creating a positive correction culture in the L2 setting. Guidelines provided in this support material may facilitate the creation of such a classroom culture.

What Corrective Feedback Strategies Can I Use in My Classroom?

Teachers may avail of numerous CF strategies, which fall within two categories of either Recasts or Prompts. Firstly, Recast CF strategies (*Table 1.1.*) correct the child's oral linguistic inaccuracy and provide them with the correct form. For that very reason, Recast CF strategies offer explicit or direct support to a child's error-correction process and overall L2 accuracy, provided the child recognises and acknowledges the corrected form. Recasts are most commonly availed of by teachers to correct children's linguistic inaccuracies because they correct the linguistic form without interrupting the class flow, by swiftly 'recasting' the full utterance in its correct form to the children.

Table 1.1. provides an overview of the various Recast CF strategies and examples of how they can be applied in the classroom.

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Corrective Feedback in the Immersion Context

Recasts		
Provide the Correct Linguistic Form to the Child		
Recast Strategy	**Definition**	**Example**
Explicit Correction	The accurate form is provided to the child.	C (child): An bhfuil cead agam faigh deoch? T (teacher): An bhfuil cead agat deoch a fháil? C: An bhfuil cead agam deoch a fháil, a mhúinteoir?
Explicit Correction with Metalinguistic Feedback	The accurate form is provided to the child along with an explanation of the linguistic form.	C: Dhún mé an fuinneog sa halla. T: Dhún tú an fhuinneog sa halla. Is focal baininscneach í fuinneog, cosúil le cuileog agus bábóg. C: Is cuimhin liom sin – Chuir mé an bhábóg sa bhosca inné agus dhún mé an fhuinneog sa halla.
Conversational/ Didactic Recast	The teacher reformulates all or part of the child's utterance. Conversational Recasts aims to resolve a breakdown in understanding while Didactic Recasts aim to resolve inaccurate linguistic forms.	C: D'fhág Sorcha a mhála anseo. T: Is cailín í Sorcha. Nach gciallaíonn sé sin gur fhág sí a mála anseo? C: Tá an ceart agat – D'fhág Sorcha a mála anseo.

Table 1.1. *Recast CF Strategies*
(Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster Saito & Sato, 2013; Sheen & Ellis, 2011)

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Corrective Feedback in the Immersion Context

Prompts (*Table 1.2.*), on the other hand, withhold the correct form and elicit the accurate form from the child. It is often found, in immersion classes, that children focus on communicating their message without giving enough thought to how they are saying it. Prompts encourage children to pause and think about what they are about to say. However, Prompts require the child to attain a certain level of underlying grammatical knowledge in relation to the linguistic form, in order to correct their inaccuracy, which differs from Recast strategies. It could be argued that Prompts provide a child with less direct or explicit support than Recasts in correcting their linguistic inaccuracies.

Prompts may be considered more implicit or less direct in nature. It is noteworthy though that Prompts are suggested to be beneficial to a child's L2 acquisition process. Prompts, however, may disrupt the content of a class lesson as they may interrupt conversational flow to elicit the correct form from the child which may reduce popularity of application among teachers.

Table 1.2. provides an overview of the various Prompt CF strategies and examples of how they can be applied in the classroom.

Prompts		
Withhold the Correct Linguistic Form From the Child		
Prompt Strategy	**Definition**	**Example**
Elicitation	Any technique used to directly elicit the correct form from the child. This may occur in three ways: 1. The teacher may leave a gap in the repeated sentence, eliciting the child to 'fill in the gap'; 2. The teacher may use questioning techniques (using a form of wh-questions) to elicit the accurate form; 3. Or the teacher may simply request the corrected form.	C: Tá na bordanna ar fud an tseomra. T: Tá na céard ar fud an tseomra? C: Tá na boird ar fud an tseomra.
Clarification Request	A simple phrase ('Pardon? Excuse me? I don't understand') which indicates to the child that an inaccuracy has occurred in some form.	C: Rith mé timpeall an scoil inné le teachtaireacht an phríomhoide. T: Gabh mo leithscéal? C: Rith mé timpeall na scoile inné le teachtaireacht an phríomhoide.
Metalinguistic Feedback	The teacher provides a very brief statement or question in relation to the linguistic form but does not provide the accurate form to the child.	C: An rinne tú an cáca le do Mhamó? T: Céard a tharlaíonn leis an bhfoirm dhiúltach den bhriathar déan san aimsir chaite? Ní..? C: Athraíonn sé! An ndearna tú an cáca le do Mhamó?
Repetition Feedback	The teacher repeats, in isolation, the child's incorrect utterance. Teachers may adjust their intonation to focus the child's attention more directly on grammatical inaccuracy.	C: Tá mé múinteoir! C: Tá tú múinteoir?? (an glór ag ardú) S: Is múinteoir mé!

Table 1.2. *Prompt CF Strategies* (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster Saito & Sato, 2013; Sheen & Ellis, 2011)

primary
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foráis sa bhunscolaíocht

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In the example provided in *Table 1.1., An bhfuil cead agam faigh deoch?,* it is fair to say that nearly all children from 2nd Class onwards, in an immersion school, could correct this utterance, if prompted to do so. The children have the underlying grammatical knowledge of what is the correct form. They may not always, however, produce the correct form, to the frustration of teachers, because they have internalised the incorrect form. A CF Prompt requires children to pause and think. Indeed, when children know that their teacher will prompt them when they use incorrect grammar, they may pay more attention to form before they speak and thus, make less errors.

In another example in *Table 1.1., Dhún mé an fuinneog sa halla*, many immersion children in 2nd class will not have learned that fuinneog is a feminine noun and takes a séimhiú after the definite article – an fhuinneog. A CF Prompt

from the teacher will not suffice in this case, more explicit instruction is warranted. This means that the child may require more direct support to correct their grammatical inaccuracy i.e., support from a Recast CF strategy.

In brief, given the range of linguistic strengths and needs, which exist in any given immersion classroom, we acknowledge that a "one size does not fit all" (Ammar & Spada, 2006, p. 566). Therefore, in embracing a counterbalance approach through the use of systematic CF, it is advised that a range of CF strategies, from Recasts to Prompts, are adopted to address the linguistic needs of all children in the immersion classroom.

The current support material encourages immersion teachers to utilise a continuum of CF strategies to support a continuum of linguistic strengths and needs. In other words, it is advised that teachers move from the

use of Recast CF strategies (explicit) to Prompt CF strategies (implicit) depending on the linguistic abilities of the children.

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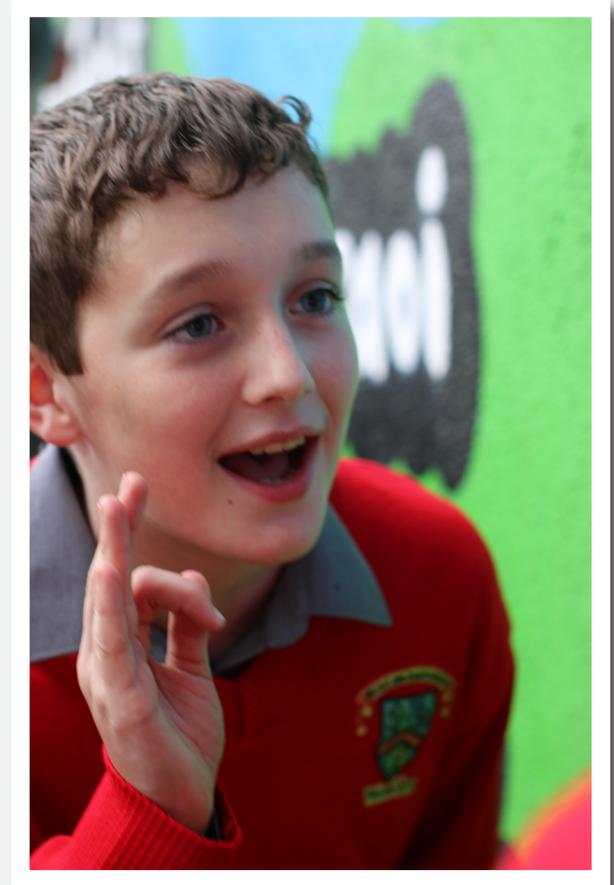
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A Continuum of CF Support for a Continuum of Linguistic Strengths and Needs

In order to establish a continuum of CF support, it is essential that the class teacher recognises and acknowledges children's linguistic strengths and their needs. It is advised that the teacher focuses on a target linguistic form (e.g. aidiacht shealbhach; inscne na n-ainmfhocal; bunuimhreacha, uimhreach pearsanta etc.) as the focus of CF for a fortnight/month (depending on the children's linguistic abilities and the teacher's planning practices). Correcting all linguistic inaccuracies may be too onerous on the teacher and on the children. The target form should be one the children regularly struggle with i.e., a priority linguistic learning need (e.g. briathra neamhrialta, an chopail, inscne na n-ainmfhocal, tuiseal ginideach). As the children become familiar with the target linguistic form, it is advised that

the teacher reduces the CF support provided to the child from Recasts (explicit correction) to Prompts (implicit correction). Such a fading process will vary from child to child depending on their linguistic strengths and needs. So, for example, some children may require Recasts for a longer period of time than others in order to accurately acquire the target language form required, depending on the linguistic abilities of the children.

As the children's L2 develops and the CF scaffold readily fades from Recasts to Prompts, children begin to engage in self-correction of their own linguistic inaccuracies and do so more frequently. With this, a gradual transfer of responsibility (Ní Aogáin, 2019; van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010) occurs from the teacher to the child, leading to an increased level of autonomy and responsibility among children as well as a greater overall

language awareness. Such a scaffolded approach further ensures that the child is consistently operating within his/her zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978), which is crucial to a child's language development.

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Additionally, a child's language development is not linear and may progress or regress depending on a number different of factors (e.g., class activity/subject; communicative setting; audience; linguistic form etc.). Therefore, teachers need to use the full continuum of CF outlined in this support material, depending on varying factors which influence strengths and needs of children's linguistic development. Such a developmental process has implications for assessment of learning and assessment for learning. Teachers may find running records of the child's language useful to document progress and consequently, the CF strategies that are required to correct their linguistic inaccuracies.

Implementing a Continuum of CF in the Immersion Classroom

The following continuum of CF support (*Figure 1.1.*), along with the implementation guidelines (*Figure 1.2.*), may be useful to support teachers in implementing a continuum of CF support for a continuum of linguistic strengths and needs in order to facilitate a more accurate L2 among children in immersion classrooms. The continuum of CF support (*Figure 1.1.*) contains five levels, ranging from Level One, whereby the child relies heavily on the class teacher to notice and to correct their oral linguistic inaccuracy, to Level Five, a stage where the child is enabled to attend to their linguistic inaccuracies themselves and thus, engage in self-correction. Each level illustrates a different stage of language development in which individual children's ability can be located. As language ability is enhanced, children progress through

the continuum from Level One to Level Five. In the following continuum, each level contains language development descriptors, which are intended to aid teachers in assessing children's linguistic ability based on their oral linguistic inaccuracies. Additionally, the continuum provides teachers with the appropriate level of CF support which they may find beneficial to provide to children at each level. These recommended CF strategies are further supported with samples of children's language at each specific level, which may further scaffold the teacher in providing the most appropriate CF.

Intervention

1. Provide the child with an implicit hint that an inaccuracy has occurred: *"Gabh mo leithscéal?"*
2. Arising from the child's response, these guidelines may be utilised to assess the appropriate CF strategy to initiate with the child in order to scaffold their learning.

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Level	Language Development Descriptors (Adapted from: Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994)	CF Strategy (Adapted from: Lyster et al., 2013)
Level 1	The child is unable to notice or correct the error, even with the intervention from the teacher (e.g. Gabh mo leithscéal? Céard?). At this level, the child does not have a sufficient understanding to interpret the teachers' CF strategy. It is possible that the child has no understanding of any problem in their utterance. The teacher must assume full responsibility in correcting the error and provide explicit correction. **If the child cannot create their own linguistic samples of similar linguistic forms post metalinguistic explanation, it would be advised that the linguistic form is re-taught during the language lesson as a whole class activity or as a mini-lesson.**	**Recasts: Explicit Correction with Metalinguistic Explanation** C (Child): Dhún mé an fuinneog sa halla. T (Teacher): Dhún tú an fhuinneog sa halla. Is focal baininscneach í fuinneog, cosúil le cuileog agus bábóg. C: Is cuimhin liom sin – Chuir mé an bhábóg sa bhosca inné agus dhún mé an fhuinneog sa halla. T: Maith thú – An fhuinneog!
Level 2	The child notices the inaccuracy but cannot correct it, even with the intervention. Some development has been made from Level One as there is room for the teacher and child to begin to discuss the form. However, the child still relies heavily on the teacher to correct their inaccuracies. **If the child cannot provide similar examples of the form, it would be advised to return to Level One and provide a metalinguistic explanation for the explicit correction.**	**Recasts: Explicit Correction** C: An bhfuil cead agam faigh deoch? T: An bhfuil cead agat deoch a fháil? C: An bhfuil cead agam deoch a fháil a mhúinteoir? T: Maith thú! Tá cead agat cinnte!
Level 3	The child is aware of an inaccuracy in their speach. They may struggle to locate to exact location of the error without guidance from the teacher or another peer. If so, it is advised that the teacher repeats the incorrect utterance, emphasising the incorrect form, in isolation, if required. Once this is provided, the child is immediately enabled to engage in self-correction. **If this is unachievable by the child, it would be advised to return to Level Two and provide an explicit recast strategy.**	**Prompts: Repetition** C: Tá mé múinteoir! T: Tá tú múinteoir?? (an glór ag ardú) S: Is múinteoir mé! T: Maith thú! Lean ort mar mhúinteoir.
Level 4	At this stage, the child notices and corrects their own inaccuracy with very little help or CF from the teacher – after the intervention. The child is enabled to engage in error-correction. The child begins to take full responsibility for their own error correction. **If this is unachievable by the child it would be advised to return to Level Three and provide repetition of the inaccurate form. The child may require the teacher to confirm the adequacy of the correction from time to time at this stage.**	**Prompts: Clarification Request** C: Rith mé timpeall an scoil inné le teachtaireacht ón bpríomhoide. T: Gabh mo leithscéal? C: Rith mé timpeall na scoile inné le teachtaireacht ón bpríomhoide. T: Maith thú! An-mhaith!
Level 5	Noticing/correcting of inaccuracies does not require an intervention from someone else. The child becomes more consistent in availing of correct target language forms in all contexts. This shows that the language has become automatized and the child may be able to self-correct and peer-correct.	• Self-correction • Peer-correction No intervention needed at this stage.

Figure 1.1. *A Continuum of CF Support for a Continuum of Linguistic Strengths and Needs* (Adapted from: Ní Aogáin, 2019)

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Figure 1.2. now provides a description of how to practically implement the CF continuum illustrated in *Figure 1.1.* in an immersion classroom.

In order to support and guide the children's language learning development in the most effective and beneficial manner, it would be useful to ensure that the CF guidelines, presented above, are adopted in a systematic manner in the immersion classroom. If children's grammatical inaccuracies are corrected in an ad hoc manner, children may struggle to differentiate between accurate and inaccurate linguistic forms, which in turn, may cause difficulty for them in their L2 learning journey. In this sense, it would be beneficial if the class teacher modelled and engaged in consistent and appropriate CF in the classroom throughout the immersion school day.

1. Upon hearing an inaccuracy, the teacher provides the child with a Prompt (e.g. Pardon?), referred to in Figure 1.1. as an 'intervention'.
2. The teacher then engages in 'on-the spot' assessment of the child's response to the Prompt.
3. If the child repeats the inaccuracy again and shows little to no sign of understanding his/her inaccuracy, a Recast should be provided to the child (Level Two).
3b. If the child cannot explain the linguistic inaccuracy or provide other examples of the linguistic form at this point, it would be beneficial to provide metalinguistic feedback to the child (Level One), i.e. explicitly explain/quickly re-teach the linguistic form. To further enhance the language acquisition process at this point, the linguistic form at hand could be explicitly revised as a whole class activity or as a mini-lesson later, during a language lesson.
4. If a child illustrates signs of understanding/attending to his/her linguistic inaccuracy once the Prompt (intervention) has been provided, another Prompt may suffice to encourage the child to self-correct (Level Three/Four).
4b. If an additional Prompt (Level Three/Four) does not suffice, it is recommended to return to Level Two and provide the child with a Recast in the form of an explicit correction.

Figure 1.2. *Practical Guidelines for Implementing a Continuum of CF Support for a Continuum of Linguistic Strengths and Needs*

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Figure 1.3. includes further practical advice for teachers:

In following these guidelines systematically, CF should evolve as part of the classroom 'norm'. This will encourage the establishment of a counterbalance approach as children will become more aware of linguistic forms during content lessons and generally during meaningful interaction throughout the immersion school day. The evolution of such a normative culture of error-correction has key implications for a whole school approach.

Corrective Feedback as a Whole School Approach

The most effective approach to ensuring accuracy of L2 in the immersion context is to take a whole-school approach to CF. Enabling staff members to co-construct a collaborative and systemic plan towards CF may ensure cohesive practice across all classes in the school. In this light, error-correction may permeate all aspects of school life (i.e. tionól, am sosa, am lóin, etc.), thus enriching the L2 acquisition process at a whole school level. Mar a deir an seanfhocal, "Ní neart go cur le chéile".

- Ensure all members of the immersion classroom community (class teacher, SNA, children) embrace the error-correction approach to encourage the creation of a collaborative corrective environment in the classroom.
- Encourage error-correction to become part of the classroom 'norm' in a friendly manner. This will increase children's overall language awareness and in turn entice more peer-correction among children.
- Praise and encourage self-correction and peer-correction among children. This will further enhance children's acquisition experience as they begin learning with and from one another.
- Provide children with rich environmental print. Display posters in the classroom, illustrating complex grammatical forms, using enhanced typology. This will serve as an additional aid to the children in their acquisition process and further enhance self-correction/ peer-correction among children.
- Ensure that the CF focus for the fortnight/month coincides with the focus of formal Irish language lessons. This should strengthen the L2 acquisition process and accelerate the development of self-correction and peer-correction among immersed children.

Figure 1.3. *Practical Ideas to Enhance CF in the Immersion Classroom*

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