Practical Language Programming

Why have a program?
• Helps you organise your week/term/year
• Keeps you in sync with the rest of the school
• Gets any special language events onto the school calendar, such as special dates and excursions
• Lets you liaise with the class teacher
• Allows for the integration into other curriculum areas and school activities
• Helps you plan from year to year
• Provides a record for continuity of learning from one year to the next, and building on what was previously covered
• Allows you to start collecting resources, share with colleagues in other schools, and ask for ideas.

Where to start
• Get the school year calendar showing terms, school holidays and public holidays
• Mark in all the known dates, such as:
  - holidays, NAIDOC week, Sorry Day
  - other special days on the school and local community calendar
  - seasonal/historical dates/times for the local Indigenous community
  - whole school events such as regular assemblies, sports carnivals
  - other subject or class excursions
  - P&C meetings
  - school bulletin publishing deadlines.

Building a Scope and Sequence
• Draft out roughly what language you want each class to learn for the whole year, or for the half-year or for one term at a time.
• Brainstorm everything you want to cover:
  - vocabulary
  - language structures/grammar
  - related cultural issues/traditions
• Develop some broad headings. These could be in terms of vocabulary or grammar or culture/tradition (all three aspects will be incorporated when you fill out the unit of work), eg:
  - Who am I?
  - Parts of the Body
  - Plants and Animals
  - Traditional Story Telling
  - Making Johnny Cakes
• Put the headings into the calendar in very broad terms. These are your units of work.
• How many units of work can you do over the year? This will depend on:
  - time allocated per week
  - the nature of the language to be learned
  - extra activities involved
• Think about the things that go together in one unit of work, eg Parts of the Body:
  - vocabulary: body parts, hurt, injure, pain, sore, help
- language structures/grammar: asking what’s wrong; saying something hurts; showing (look at my …), forms for my, me
- culture/traditions: traditional healing techniques, bush medicine

When working out units of work, term by term, align the completion of a unit, or a learning activity within a unit, with a date that will give students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning, eg:
- an exhibition of work: illustrated stories or posters
- song, dance, story-telling at an assembly or special event
- demonstration of making food or tools
- publication of a school or local newsletter to which students can make written contributions.

For example, the unit of work preceding NAIDOC Week could require students to show off their learning through a performance of dance, song or story-telling. In this case, practice or rehearsal time will need to be factored in. Similarly, if the unit of work requires an excursion, that will affect the timing.

With experience, you can refine and adapt your program term by term to take into account what worked and what didn’t, other complications and unexpected events in the school calendar.

**Whole-school program**
- Show your broad Scope and Sequence to the school executive and/or cooperating teacher.
- In primary classes, ask the classroom teachers whether you can link in with what the class is doing, eg:
  - aspects of the PDHPE syllabuses – health and hygiene, traditional remedies, yourself and others, traditional local foods
  - HSIE – traditional local places, names, important local people past and present
  - Creative Arts – song, dance, traditional painting techniques
  - Literacy – text-types (narrative, recipe, dialogue), role of grammatical structures
- Adapt your program if necessary to align, follow or lead up to linked learning.

**Developing units of work**
- Make an actual folder for each unit of work you’re planning to do and one for ‘Next year’.
- Put anything relevant into the folder throughout the year, such as:
  - when you think of an idea for that unit, jot it down and put it in
  - relevant worksheets you already have
  - descriptions of activities, games
  - resources you come across when planning other units of work
  - ideas from other language programs, and from textbooks and worksheets
  - ideas from colleagues in staff meetings, video conferencing sessions
  - stories that can be linked, in language or in English that can be translated into language
  - where to find audio/video material, songs, games, resources
  - activities that worked well from previous units
  - material for revision from previous units.
Preparing a unit of work
Considering the broad heading you have given the unit of work, start to look at vocabulary, grammar and structures, and cultural and traditional aspects. You could start with these questions:

1. **Language:**
   - **What** is the language I want students to know at the end of the unit?
   - **Why** are they learning this? What do I want them to do with the language they learn? Look for **relevant, real-life situations**.
   - **What** do students know already that can feed into this unit?

2. What **cultural** knowledge can be integrated?

3. What **resources** do I have?

4. What can be taken home and **shared** with family?

5. How will I **assess** the students’ learning?

Put down everything you can think of in a **brainstorm** under the following big headings, then sort it more logically to plan lessons.

**Language**
- vocabulary and structures for active learning – what students can reasonably learn to say, read and write
- for passive learning – extra words that may come up in a story or song
- for interest – cultural and related language.

See syllabus objectives and outcomes: Using Language and Making Linguistic Connections.

**Language learning activities**
See syllabus learn to and learn about statements.

**Culture/traditions**
- links between land, language and culture
- people, places, events
- artifacts: tools, instruments
- local plants and animals
- traditional activities.

See syllabus objective and outcomes: Moving Between Cultures.

**Resources**
- Dictionaries, word lists, grammar
- Flashcards: pictures, words
- Worksheets, lists of words
- Ideas from other language programs
- Traditional and/or adapted stories – oral and written
- Activities, games
- Events.

**To share**
- Each student has a mini-dictionary of their own to update and take home to show.
  Could be kept in a folder that includes all work
- Words of a song to be learnt
- Word list to be learnt
• Story they have written
• Story they are reading, to practice
• Final map/poster/picture after assessment activity.

Assessment
• Having a conversation in pairs
• Acting out a role-play – alone, in pairs, in groups
• Writing a dialogue/story/recipe
• Labeling a map/poster/picture
• Responding to oral text.
Planning lessons within a unit of work

Using PPP – Presentation, Practice, Production

1. Set up a situation, modeling language that you want students to learn, orally at first and then gradually introducing the written form.

2. Students practice language in controlled activities, games etc.

3. Finally, to show they have acquired the new language, students use the new language in controlled situations – in the same situation or new ones (possible assessment activity).

Examples

- **Parts of the Body**
  - Begin by modeling a conversation about someone getting hurt, or having a sore arm, leg etc.
  - End by students in pairs having their own conversation or making a poster of a labeled body.

- **Making Johnny Cakes**:
  - Begin with a cooking demonstration, describing what you are doing as you make the batter and follow the steps to cooking.
  - End by students writing up the recipe.

- **Family and People**
  - Put up a family tree and describe the people it depicts.
  - End by students writing a story about family.
Using the *Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus* to develop lessons

The *learn to* and *learn about* statements are a good check-list for language learning activities. For example, for ‘Body Parts’:

- **Stage 2 – Using Language – Listening and Responding**
  Outcome 2.UL.1: A student recognises and responds to texts in Aboriginal languages in familiar contexts.

**Example 1**

*Students learn about:* the importance of listening for key words to assist understanding

*Students learn to:* listen for meaning

*Activities:* listening to (and watching) the introductory conversation about ‘Where it hurts’ to identify words for body parts in context; listening and repeating words for body parts as they are shown as pictures on flashcards or on a ‘map’ of the body; playing ‘Simon Says’

**Example 2**

*Students learn about:* ways of showing comprehension and maintaining interaction

*Students learn to:* listen actively, using verbal and nonverbal language to show comprehension and maintain interaction

*Activities:* in pairs, bandaging their partner’s sore body part etc, in response to cue (eg my hand hurts); playing the circle game by ‘bandaged’ students changing seats in response to cue (eg ‘who hurt their hand?’, ‘who has a sore hand?’)

- Other activities can be drawn in the same way from the *Using Language – Reading and Responding, Speaking, and Writing* learn about and learn to statements.

- Use the *Making Linguistic Connections* learn about and learn to statements to see if your learning activities cover those outcomes.

- Enrich the unit of work with integrated cultural information and activities, checking in with the *learn about* and *learn to* statements under *Moving Between Cultures*. 