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General Capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work in the 21st century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Languages. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the content.

Literacy

Students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students in listening to, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts, and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts.

In the Languages, learners of all languages are afforded opportunities for overall literacy development; strengthening literacy-related capabilities that are transferable across the language being learnt, their first language and English. For language learners, literacy involves skills and knowledge that need guidance, time and support to develop. These skills include:

- developing an ability to decode and encode from sound to written systems
- mastering of grammatical, orthographic and textual conventions
- developing semantic, pragmatic and critical literacy skills.

Numeracy

Students become numerate as they develop the knowledge and skills to use mathematics confidently across all learning areas at school and in their lives more broadly. Numeracy involves students recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world and having the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully.

In the Languages, learners of all languages are afforded opportunities to develop, use and understand patterns, order and relationships, to reinforce concepts, such as number, time and space, in their own and in others' cultural and linguistic systems.

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability

Students develop ICT capability as they learn to use ICT effectively and appropriately to access, create and communicate information and ideas; solve problems; and work collaboratively in all learning areas at school and in their lives beyond school. ICT capability involves students in learning to make the most of the technologies available to them; adapting to new ways of doing things as technologies evolve and limiting the risks to themselves and others in a digital environment.

Each Languages subject is enhanced through the use of information and communication

technology; accessing live language environments and texts via digital media contributes to the development of information technology capabilities as well as linguistic and cultural knowledge.

Critical and creative thinking

Students develop capability in critical and creative thinking as they learn to generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems. Critical and creative thinking are integral to activities that require students to reflect broadly and deeply using skills, behaviours and dispositions such as reason, logic, resourcefulness, imagination and innovation in all learning areas at school and in their lives beyond school.

In the Languages, as students learn to interact with people from diverse backgrounds and as they explore and reflect critically, they learn to notice, connect, compare, and analyse aspects of the language and culture. As a result, they develop critical thinking skills as well as analytical and problem-solving skills.

Personal and social capability

Students develop personal and social capability as they learn to understand themselves and others, manage their relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively. The personal and social capability involves students in a range of practices including recognising and regulating emotions; developing empathy for, and understanding of others; establishing positive relationships; making responsible decisions; working effectively in teams; and handling challenging situations constructively.

This involves understanding and empathising, which are important elements of social and intercultural competence. Being open-minded and recognising that people view and experience the world in different ways and learning to interact in a collaborative and respectful manner are key elements of personal and social competence.

In the Languages, learning to interact in a collaborative and respectful manner, being

open-minded and recognising that people view and experience the world in different ways are key elements of personal and social competence. Interacting effectively in an additional language and with people of diverse language backgrounds involves negotiating and interpreting meaning in a range of social and cultural situations; essential aspects of learning another language.

Ethical understanding

Across the Western Australian Curriculum, students develop ethical understanding as they identify and investigate ethical concepts, values, character traits and principles and understand how reasoning can assist ethical judgement. Ethical understanding involves students in building a strong personal and socially oriented ethical outlook that helps them to manage context, conflict and uncertainty, and to develop an awareness of the influence that their values and behaviour have on others.

In the Languages, students learn to acknowledge and value difference in their interactions with others and to develop respect for diverse ways of perceiving and acting in the world. Opportunities are provided to monitor and to adjust their own ethical points of view.

Intercultural understanding

Students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others. They come to understand how personal, group and national identities are shaped, and the variable and changing nature of culture. The capability involves students in learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect.

In the Languages, development of intercultural understanding is a central aim, as it is integral to communicating in the context of diversity, the development of global citizenship and lifelong learning. Students bring to their learning various preconceptions,

assumptions and orientations shaped by their existing language(s) culture(s) to their learning that can be challenged by the new language experience. Learning to move between the existing and new languages and cultures is integral to language learning and is the key to the development of students' intercultural capability. By learning a new language students are able to notice, compare and reflect on things previously taken for granted; to explore their own linguistic, social and cultural practices as well as those associated with the new language. They begin to see the complexity, variability and sometimes the contradictions involved in using language.

Learning a new language does not require forsaking the first language. It is an enriching and cumulative process, which broadens the students' communicative repertoire, providing additional resources for interpreting and making meaning. Students come to realise that interactions between different people through the use of different languages also involves interactions between the different kinds of knowledge, understanding and values that are articulated through language(s) and culture(s). They realise that successful intercultural communication is not only determined by what they do or say, but also by what members of the other language and culture understand from what they say or do.