

*The National
Literacy Strategy*

An example of National Literacy Strategy medium-term planning

Guidance



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An example of National Literacy Strategy medium-term planning

These medium-term plans have been produced to support, but not prescribe, teachers' planning. They exemplify ways in which the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) *Framework* objectives (and the Early Learning Goals) can be clustered.

The Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 medium term plans cluster the NLS text, sentence and word level objectives into units. The Foundation Stage plans cluster the Stepping Stones and Early Learning Goals (*Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage*) and NLS objectives into focuses.

The Key Stage 2 plans are a revised version of those which appeared as pilot materials on the Literacy Coordinators' CDROM and on the DfES Standards web site in 2002 (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy). Changes to text and sentence level are minimal; the allocation of word level objectives to the units is substantially different. Speaking and listening emphases have been added. The Key Stage 1 plans are unchanged from the original version on the Standards web site except for the addition of speaking and listening emphases. The Foundation Stage planning has not previously appeared elsewhere, and provides examples of ways in which practitioners can plan for communication, language and literacy in their setting.

Foundation Stage planning

There are example plans for the earlier Foundation Stage and one for each term in the later Foundation Stage. Each plan comprises a number of focuses for work around the Stepping Stones and Early Learning Goals from Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA). The later Foundation Stage also includes Reception year objectives from the NLS *Framework for teaching* (DfES).

Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA, pages 44–47) is the core reference document for the Foundation Stage. It contains clear guidance for learning and teaching in communication, language and literacy. Opportunities for children to see reading, writing, talking and listening modelled by adults and children are fundamental to the development of these abilities. Each focus includes a balance between child- and adult-initiated activities (individually and in various sizes of group) and frequent opportunities for the children to reinforce and apply their learning.

Earlier Foundation Stage

1. There are ten focuses in the example plan for the earlier Foundation Stage. It is expected that they will extend over a period of time, possibly two weeks, and that some of them will be repeated within a different context. The length of time spent on each focus, and the order in which they are planned, should be decided by practitioners to meet the needs of the children in their setting.
2. The learning objectives for the focuses are taken from the Stepping Stones for Communication, Language and Literacy.
3. Some focuses highlight experience of books, e.g. 'Reading together' and 'Rhyme time', while others focus on writing, e.g. 'Print culture' and 'All about me'. In two of the focuses, 'Talk for thinking' and 'Objects and materials to stimulate interest', there is an emphasis on talking to sequence ideas and construct sentences as a preparation for writing. A range of activities and links to other areas of learning are suggested for each focus and these can easily be adapted to other contexts, e.g. 'Talking to a visitor' could be adapted to a visit by a fire-fighter or someone's grandfather.
4. Language for communication and thinking is integrated into all of the focuses. However, the focuses do not provide full coverage of language for communication and thinking as some elements would be more appropriately integrated into other areas of learning.
5. Distinguishing the sounds (phonemes) within speech is the necessary precursor to later reading and spelling. The ability to distinguish sounds can be developed systematically through rhyming games, music and other activities. Suggestions for activities can be found in Progression in phonics, pages 12 and 13.

Step 1. Developing sound discrimination lies outside the ten suggested focuses in this plan because there is a clear progression and activities to promote these skills should take place each day. For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distinguishing between sounds in the environment which are dissimilar, e.g. bell and car engine. ▪ Distinguishing between sounds in the environment which are alike, e.g. castanet and woodblock. ▪ Distinguishing between single dissimilar speech sounds (phonemes), e.g. /a/ and /m/. ▪ Distinguishing between single similar speech sounds (phonemes), e.g. /a/ and /e/. ▪ Singing and chanting rhymes. ▪ Identifying the word which does not rhyme with the other words in a list. ▪ Chanting alliterative 'jingles'. 	<p>Step 1</p> <p><i>Progression in phonics, pages 12 and 13</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Isolating the sound (phoneme) at the beginning of a word, e.g. /c/ in 'cabbage'. ▪ Continuing a rhyming string. ▪ Beginning to relate sounds to letters. 	<p>Step 2</p> <p><i>Progression in phonics, pages 14 and 15</i></p>

6. The development of fine motor skills is necessary to handwriting. The overall movements for the shapes of letters can be learned through gross motor patterns. Both fine and gross motor skills can be developed through games and purposeful activities within the Foundation Stage curriculum. Suggestions for such activities can be found in *Developing early writing*, pages 156-164.

Later Foundation Stage

1. Plans for the later Foundation Stage align the Stepping Stones and Early Learning Goals with the Reception year NLS objectives. There is a plan for each term autumn, spring and summer and five focuses per term, with suggestions for texts and outcomes.
2. The outcomes are intended as suggestions for an 'end product' that the children are motivated to complete, e.g. a piece of writing, discussion, presentation. These are distinct from, but related to, 'learning outcomes' which are linked to the teaching objectives and curriculum targets.
3. There is progression through the year from the autumn through to the following summer.

4. The focuses in the three terms show a progression from 'awareness of print' to an understanding of how 'print carries meaning' and then into an ability to 'make meaning through print' in both reading and writing. All the NLS objectives are included and repeated. Text level objectives 1, 11 and 12 include subdivisions. These have been numbered for ease of reference. Writing objectives exemplified in *Developing early writing* are incorporated into the units in these plans.
 - Term 1: Selected objectives focus on providing a range of opportunities for children to develop their awareness of the wide variety and forms of print around them and an understanding that print remains constant. There is a predominance of single words and phrases – signs, names, labels, etc., basic reading and writing directional skills and exploratory writing.
 - Term 2: Selected objectives provide opportunities through texts to develop an understanding that print carries meaning. They focus upon retelling and reading stories, understanding the difference between oracy and print and developing early letter formation.
 - Term 3: Selected objectives develop children's reading strategies and provide them with opportunities to recognise elements of stories which they can use in their own writing.
5. Within each term, the focuses can be taught in any order and there is no recommended time allocation for the units, although it is expected that they will extend for longer than a week.
6. Phonics and handwriting: during the later part of the Foundation Stage, children build on their ability to distinguish speech sounds, by discriminating phonemes at various positions within words and learning the letters that represent them so they can spell the words. They also learn how to blend phonemes together to read words. These skills and knowledge can be developed systematically through games and other activities as suggested in *Progression in phonics*, pages 14 and 15 and *Developing early writing*, pages 156-164. As in the earlier Foundation Stage, phonics and handwriting need to be taught systematically and therefore lie outside the five suggested focuses for each term in these plans.

Key

PiP: *Progression in phonics* (DfES 0126/2001)

DEW: *Developing early writing* (DfES 0055/2001)

Key Stages 1 and 2 planning

1. An effective medium-term plan:

- assembles the text, sentence and word level objectives into coherent (mostly two-week) units;
- recognises that some sentence and word level objectives will be taught discretely and others will be integrated into the theme of the unit;
- includes all objectives from the NLS Framework, repeating some as appropriate;
- indicates texts to be studied and pupil outcomes for each unit of work;
- indicates related speaking and listening emphases;
- orders the units in the term's timetable to make explicit links to related work in other curriculum areas;
- assumes the teacher will be reading a novel (or other texts) to the class on a regular basis outside the literacy hour throughout the term.

2. These units were assembled as follows:

- The related reading and writing text level objectives were clustered into themes - generally on the basis of text-type into approximately six/seven blocked units per term, of an average length of two weeks.
- The range of texts was added and suitable outcomes decided as suggested by the objectives. These outcomes are intended as suggestions for the tangible 'end product' of the unit that the children are motivated to complete, e.g. a piece of writing, a discussion, presentation, debate, reading journal entry. These are related to, but distinct from 'learning outcomes' which are linked to the teaching objectives and also to specific curriculum targets for the class, group or individual.
- Those sentence and word level objectives that directly and specifically supported the text level objectives in each unit were added and then further sentence level objectives were allocated to provide balanced coverage. Teachers may wish to relocate some of the word and sentence level objectives once they have decided the running order of the units and chosen texts.
- The word level objectives were allocated so that, depending on the key stage, all aspects of word level (e.g. phonics, spelling, vocabulary, handwriting) were addressed in most units, and all aspects of spelling (rules/conventions, strategies, practice and proofreading) were covered in every unit.

In Key Stage 1, the 'phonological awareness, phonics and spelling' objectives have been replaced by *Progression in phonics* steps. The remaining word level objectives have been grouped as follows:

- i) word recognition, graphic knowledge and spelling;
- ii) vocabulary extension;
- iii) handwriting.

In Key Stage 2, word level objectives are grouped as follows:

- i) spelling conventions and rules;
- ii) spelling strategies;
- iii) vocabulary extension;
- iv) handwriting.

- A limited number of speaking and listening emphases, drawn from the reading and writing text level objectives, were constructed so that there was progression and coverage through the years.

3. In these medium-term plans the units are generally set out in the order in which the main text level objectives are listed in the NLS *Framework*. The units are not placed in a recommended running order, although in Key Stage 1, where there are two parts (e.g. Narrative 1 and 2), part 2 should not precede part 1. Each teacher will therefore need to decide the order on the basis of a number of considerations. These might include the following:
- Cross-curricular links: any unit may be placed to coincide with teaching in another subject to be used as a stimulus for writing. Non-fiction units may be placed so that the text-type is taught before being applied in another subject or so that the content from the other subject is the basis of the writing in the English lesson.
 - Reading a class novel could begin during a poetry or non-fiction unit, so that the novel is well underway before using it in a narrative unit; on the other hand, there may be reasons for starting to read the novel to coincide with the beginning of a narrative unit, e.g. if the objective is on 'openings'.
 - Building up learning, for instance a poetry unit in which figurative language is covered may be followed by a narrative unit where this knowledge could be used.
 - * Linking outcomes to other events: in the summer term for Years 4 and 5 suggested outcomes include entries in the *Write Here Write Now 2003* writing awards. Full details are available on the *Write Here Write Now* web site at www.writehere.org.uk or can be requested from the helpline on 0163 472 9825.

Key

PiP: Progression in phonics (DfES 0126/2001)

DEW: Developing early writing (DfES 0055/2001)

SB: Spelling bank (KS2) (DfES 0086/2001)

GfW: Grammar for writing (DfES 0107/2000)