

# Planning, programming and assessing in the Early Years

AFMLTA Conference 2021

Melissa Wickins

[mwickins@friends.tas.edu.au](mailto:mwickins@friends.tas.edu.au)

1

## Planning, programming and assessing in the Early Years

*This presentation aims to explore the joys and challenges of teaching language in the early years of school.*

- Aims to provide insight (through practical examples) into planning, programming and assessment of language learning
- It will consider how to frame learning around conceptual understanding, make thinking visible and support the transfer of understanding from one context to another.

**Note: The examples that are shared are Japanese specific but the pedagogy and practice that is explored is relevant to all languages.**

2

## Context

- *The Friends' School - Hobart, Tasmania*
- *K to 12 program – Japanese Kindergarten to Year 6 (German, French, Japanese, Chinese)*
- *International Baccalaureate Program PYP and DP*
- *Primary Years Program (PYP)*
- *Kindergarten to Year 6 program – new student entry (Year 5)*
- *Inquiry is the main pedagogical approach.*
- *One language lesson (hour) a week.*

3

## Context - classroom (Prep example)

**Unit of Inquiry – How we express ourselves**

**Central idea** - *We all respond to and make art in different ways and for different purposes*

■ **Lines of inquiry**

- *How people express themselves through the arts*
- *Ways of responding to the arts*
- *How the arts can evoke different feelings*

**Key concepts:** form, perspective, reflection

**Related concepts:** communication, inspiration, culture, audience, observation, opinion.

Previous inquiry

**Unit of Inquiry – How the world works**

**Central idea** - *We can experiment with materials to explore how they change*

4



5

## Backward design

What to teach and how to teach dominates our thinking

The challenge is to focus first on the desired learnings from which appropriate teaching will logically follow.

"The shift involves thinking a great deal, first, about the specific learnings sought, and the evidence of such learnings, before thinking about what we, as the teacher, will do or provide in teaching and learning activities".

"hands-on without being minds-on"

Understanding by Design by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe

6



So what is our desired learning and what is the evidence of it?

What will **understanding** of learning look like?

7



## Understanding

- ▀ knowledge
- ▀ skills
- ▀ dispositions.

8

## Curriculum frameworks

- IB – Primary Years Program
- Early Years Learning Framework EYLF
- Australian Curriculum (under review)

9

## IB PYP

**Learner Profile** - as IB learners we strive to be

- **Communicators**

We express ourselves *confidently* and *creatively* in more than one language and in many ways.

- **Risk-takers**

We approach uncertainty with *forethought* and *determination*; we work *independently* and *cooperatively* to *explore* new ideas and innovative strategies.

We are *resourceful* and *resilient* in the face of challenges and change.

- **Risk taking communicators**

- **Inquirers** - We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

10

## Early Years Learning Framework

### ► Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating

Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another

Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

### ► Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

**Risk taking communicator**

11

### • Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials



12



- **Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners**

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity

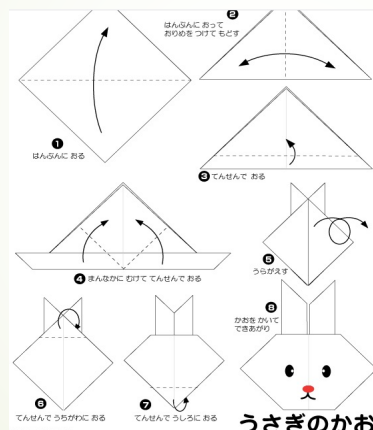


13

- **Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators**

Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work



14

## EYLF

**OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS****Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media**

This is evident, for example, when children:

- use language and engage in play to imagine and create roles, scripts and ideas
- share the stories and symbols of their own culture and re-enact well-known stories
- use the creative arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and storytelling to express ideas and make meaning
- experiment with ways of expressing ideas and meaning using a range of media
- begin to use images and approximations of letters and words to convey meaning

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- build on children's family and community experiences with creative and expressive arts
- provide a range of resources that enable children to express meaning using visual arts, dance, drama and music
- ask and answer questions during the reading or discussion of books and other texts
- provide resources that encourage children to experiment with images and print
- teach children skills and techniques that will enhance their capacity for self-expression and communication
- join in children's play and co-construct materials such as signs that extend the play and enhance literacy learning

15

## Australian Curriculum (under review)

➤ **Achievement Standards** – Languages (bands – F to 2)

It can be difficult to determine what fits with each year level

➤ AC review work proposes a new band specifically for Foundation (Prep)

- *By the end of the Foundation year, students use play and imagination to respond to and create Japanese texts. They identify that Japanese and English have different systems of language. They mimic Japanese pronunciation, intonation and rhythm. Students recognise that there are languages and cultures as well as their own, and that aspects of language and culture contribute to their own and others' cultural identity.*

16



## Australian Curriculum Socialising

*Exchange greetings and introduce and share information about self with the teacher and peers using simple language and gestures (ACLJAC 109)*

- introducing self, using formal spoken language and appropriate non-verbal language such as bowing, for example, はじめまして、Hana です。どうぞよろしく。
- using formulaic Japanese phrases for everyday interactions such as giving and receiving, thanking, apologising and offering wishes or congratulations, for example, どうぞ、(どうも) ありがとう、がんばって
- indicating likes using modelled statements such as あか が すき です。
- using formulaic expressions to convey emotions, for example, すごい、やったー！

17

## Informing

*Locate items of information in simple texts such as charts, songs, rhymes, video clips and anime to complete guided tasks (ACLJAC112)*

- listening for key words in stories, rhymes or songs, using visual cues such as gestures and facial expressions to assist understanding
- recognising simple *kanji*, *hiragana* or words in familiar contexts such as labels and titles
- demonstrating early Japanese literacy skills by selecting the correct *hiragana* or *kanji* through labelling, matching, clicking and dragging, drawing, mime and actions
- listening to and/or viewing texts to obtain information such as colour (あか、あお、しろ、くろ、きいろ), size (おおきい、ちいさい) and shape (まる、さんかく、しかく), and using this information in guided activities such as drawing, building or collecting

18

## Creating

- *Participate in shared listening to, viewing and reading of imaginative texts, and respond through singing, chanting, miming, play-acting, drawing, action and movement (ACLJAC114)*

19

- **Provocation:**  
origami display – examples of origami around the room, viewing – origami exhibitions around the world
- **Program provides opportunities to develop the focus language, origami skills and support the development of the attributes of a risk taking communicator through play and exploration.**
  - Examination of origami paper – patterns, meanings
  - Story e.g. Daruma Otoshi loses his stomach (colour, words of encouragement)
  - Origami skills – following plans
  - Shapes – shape hunt, counting of sides
  - Song and chants – I like, rainbow song – clues for colour, colour cheers
  - Locating items – colour hunt, story comprehension
  - Self- introductions – through song, using puppets and toys
  - Copying script – who is in your heart?

20

## Knowledge Skills

### Knowledge

culture - develop an awareness of Japanese art forms (origami, anime, uki yo e)

### Skills

#### Expressive (productive) language:

- Shapes                      Colour    adjectives 'sugoi'.
- expression of likes    achievement (did it) 'yatta'
- words of encouragement and praise 'ganbatte', 'omedetou'
- Self introduction – watashi wa ..... desu. Hajimemashite
- Written language – copy own name onto tag for display.
- Copying script for colour or likes.

#### Receptive:

- instructional language – suwatte kudasai, mite kudasai, otte kudasai

**Don't forget to look for opportunities to recycle language**

21

## Recycled language - GianFranco Conti

- consider opportunities to recycle language so that students can keep using language they are familiar with and apply it to a new context.
- Undoukai – cheer song for the sports day used instead to cheer for favourite colour
- Self-introduction

22

## Assessment (my context)

### Reporting twice a year

- 6 - 8 criteria per semester per year group
  - 1 - 2 criteria conceptual knowledge and understanding
  - 4 - 6 criteria approaches to learning
- descriptive statement (defining inquiry in Japanese program)
- A to E (Years 1 - 6)
- effort rating
- Optional: comment
- E portfolio for all twice a year demonstrating the learning

23

## Criteria examples

- 6 - 8 criteria per semester per year group
- **Culture and language (examples)**
  - Culture**  
Develops an understanding of how Japanese people express themselves through (some) art forms  
  
Engages with an exploration of Japanese art forms such as origami, anime and uki yo e (prints)
  - Language**  
Notifies and discusses similarities and differences between Japan and Japanese and own language(s) and culture(s).

24

#### 4 – 6 criteria approaches to learning (examples)

Participates in classroom routines to repeat formulaic expressions and to mimic gestures

Conveys meaning through pictures, movement and gestures in simple tasks, games and songs

Engages with spoken and visual Japanese texts and starts to identify focus language

Explores art forms and creatively expresses new ideas

#### Dispositions

high level – confident, creative, independent, cooperative, applies, willingness, expresses, resourceful, resilient.

25

## Visible thinking

- use of shared language to ground, connect and acknowledge children's thinking - a conversational dialogue
  - A quick chat – what do we now know about .....?
  - 'I used to think, now I know' ...
  - 'I've made a connection'
- language of feedback '*risk taking communicators*'
  - Acknowledge growth e.g. perseverance, cooperation.
- develop systems for capturing understandings
  - What makes you think/ say that?
  - try mini summative assessments along the way
  - visible thinking routines can be your formative assessment  
try one thinking routine – e.g. I see, I think, I wonder.

26

## Resources to support understanding

### ■ ELLA

App 1 – In the playroom (likes)

App 2 at the beach (colour words)

After an initial introduction to the ELLA apps I then revisit these apps according to the inquiry.

27

## Taking action

**Take the children on the learning journey with you.**

**How will we share our learning?**

- Hold our own origami exhibition to demonstrate and share our learning. Invite Year 6 to attend.
- Include our origami in a classroom exhibition on 'How we express ourselves'
- Small scale - how can the children demonstrate and share their learning
  - Share with a family member on a rainy day
  - Make origami to hand out at our exhibition
  - Give a piece of origami to someone e.g. bracelet

28



Year 6 students responding to our art exhibition using Japanese words of praise.



29

## Learning community

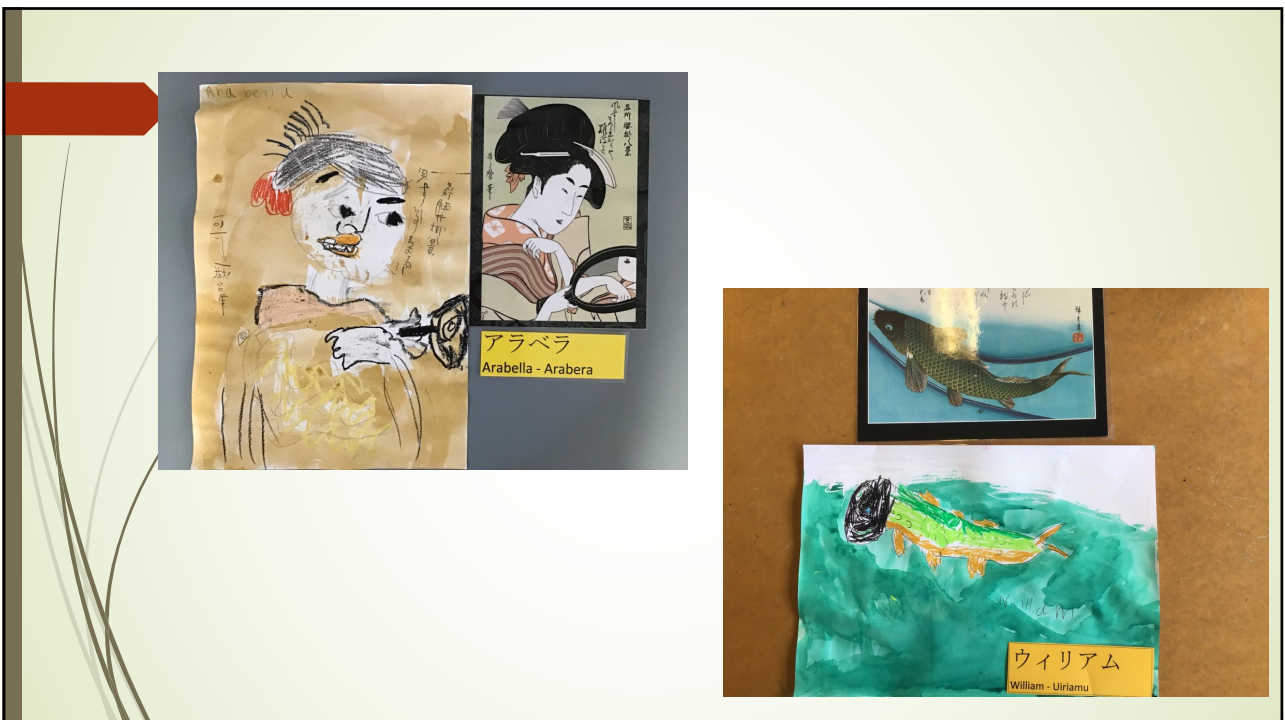
### ■ Consider partners in our learning?

- Parents – parent visits, demonstration
- Classroom Teachers – resources to support the program
- Native speakers – demonstration and use of language
- Students – Year 6 use of language to praise and encourage
- Others

30



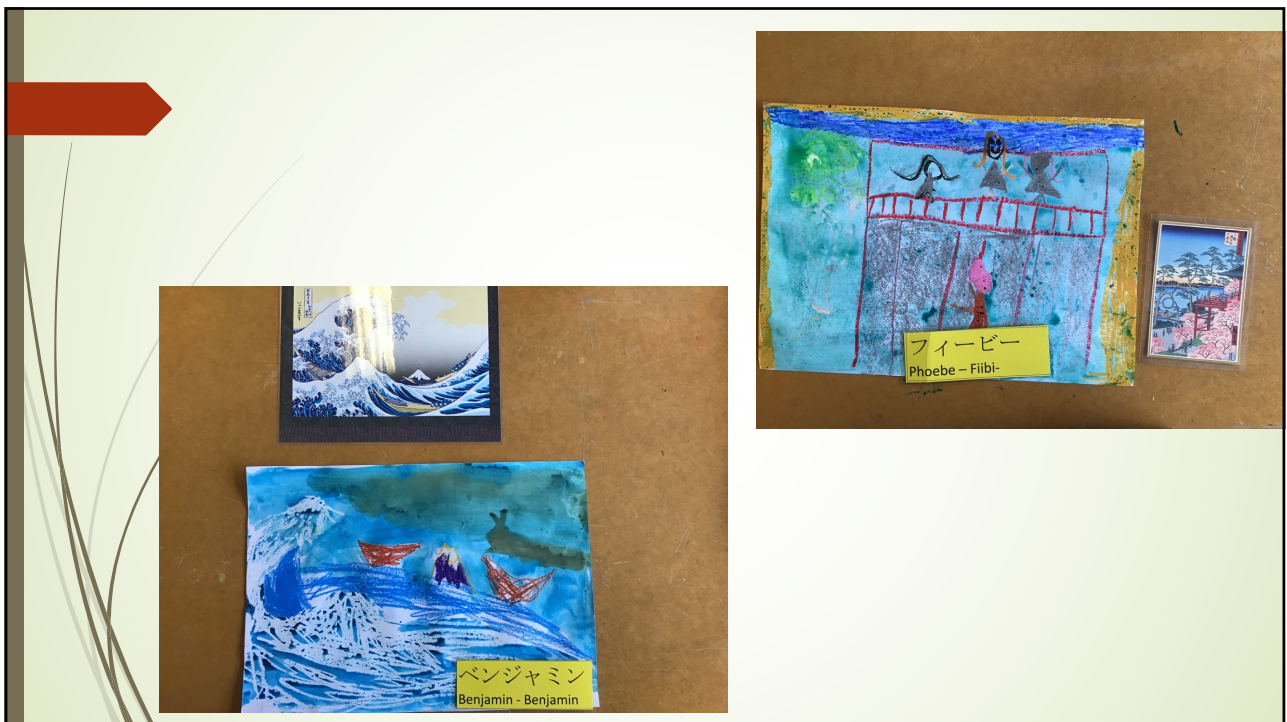
31



32



33



34

