



Secondary schools Learning progressions and PLAN2

School model
Bossley Park High School

Introduction

This model shows how Bossley Park High School used the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions and PLAN2 to monitor student literacy and numeracy progress. Bossley Park High School was part of a pilot project exploring how secondary schools might use the learning progressions and PLAN2 in support of teaching and learning using the NSW K-10 syllabuses.

This model is intended as a guide to assist secondary schools in using the learning progressions and PLAN2 to support student literacy and numeracy development within their own context.



Students

Stages, years, targeted group(s):

The following student groups were identified for the focused use of the progressions and PLAN2 in the school:

- Literacy – Stage 4 (Year 8 – whole class. This is a mixed ability class of 27 students)
- Literacy – Stage 5 English (Year 9 – selected students only)
- Numeracy – Stage 4 mathematics (Year 7 – selected students only. This is a targeted support class; a LaST team teaches in most lessons)
- Numeracy – Stage 4 mathematics (Year 8 – random selection of 5 students each from: 1 mixed ability class of 25 students and 1 high-performing class of 29 students)

These selections were made based upon the classes of participating teachers and the identified needs of specific students within those classes that teachers wished to monitor, or in Year 8 mathematics, a random sample was chosen.

Learning areas

The following learning areas engaged in using the progressions with PLAN2:

- English
- mathematics



Staff involved

The team involved in the use of the progressions with PLAN2 included:

- Literacy Coordinator/English Teacher
- Head Teacher English
- Head Teacher Learning Support
- Head Teacher Mathematics
- 2 x mathematics Teachers

Professional learning accessed and delivered:

The school team accessed the following professional learning:

- Introduction to the progressions online course
- Using the progressions with PLAN2
- Familiarisation with PLAN2 (session led by school literacy coordinator)
- Using PLAN2 (session led by literacy coordinator, recording information/observations into PLAN2)

[Find literacy and numeracy professional learning](#)

Support:

- [School services support](#)
- Team meetings with Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Advisor (LaNSA)
- Regular team meetings



PLAN2

How PLAN2 was used:

The main features of PLAN2 used were:

- Class observations view – this was the easiest view to use in PLAN2 as it allowed us to see all the students, enter all observations and visually see how students were progressing.
- Class observations were also downloaded as excel spreadsheets as a more flexible means to access, sort and reflect on data. We also printed them out to hand write additional observations so that we could record the information later.

Devices used for PLAN2:

- iPads were mainly used to take photos of student work or record student working out (mathematics).
- Laptops were used to record of student observations in PLAN2. This was usually done after the lesson, as it required time to enter observations and take notes.



Process

Steps undertaken in using the progressions with PLAN2:

1. Meeting held with the Learning Progressions Project Team and Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Advisor to go through progressions and PLAN2. Note: teachers in this project were already familiar with the progressions.
2. Team shown how to access PLAN2 and how to create a class group.
3. Teachers were given time to access and use PLAN2 – questions are discussed and answered by Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Advisor.
4. Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Advisor provided examples about how to use PLAN2 and progressions and offers support throughout the project.
5. Teaching, learning and monitoring activities undertaken as described through one teaching-learning cycle.
6. Team continually communicate with one another in regards to progressions and PLAN2 – developed a ‘buddy system’.
7. Regular team meetings used to input information and observations into PLAN2, discuss and plan for lessons to target specific literacy/numeracy skills.



Literacy focus

Progression sub-element(s):

- Reading and Viewing: Understanding texts (UnT) (Year 8 and 9)

These sub-elements were selected:

- based upon NAPLAN results indicating school improvement in student writing, but not reading.
- to support a specific focus on inference identified through student assessment using past NAPLAN reading questions.



Numeracy focus

Progression sub-element(s):

- Number sense and algebra: Additive strategies (AdS) (Year 7)
- Number sense and algebra: Number patterns and algebraic thinking (NPA) (Year 8)

These sub-elements were selected:

- to align with mathematics syllabus content to be delivered in Term 1 for Years 7 and 8. In Year 7, the Working with Positive Integers unit focuses upon the skills of mathematical operations, so we decided to use the Additive strategies (AdS) sub-element to support teaching. Year 8 students were working on algebraic techniques, so we identified the sub-element of Number patterns and algebraic thinking as most supportive.
- using NESA's mapping of mathematics syllabus outcomes to progression sub-elements and levels. This supported us to look at AdS7 and AdS8 as entry points in supporting Year 7.



Assessment

Opportunities to record observations:

Year 8 Literacy

The following key activities provided opportunities to use the progressions and PLAN2 to record observations and monitor students' progress:

Prior learning: Unpacking the progression with students

A lesson was dedicated to looking at the literacy progression and its meaning and purpose, focusing specifically on the sub-element of Understanding Texts. Each student was handed a copy of the progression indicators for Understanding Texts from UnT6 – UnT9. With teacher guidance, they went through the indicators and determined what the teacher might be looking for in understanding whether a student was demonstrating that indicator.

Students highlighted the indicators relevant to their learning that would be observed and rewrote them in their own words so that they could understand exactly what the teacher would be looking for.

Using the progression to inform and monitor learning.

After familiarising students with the progressions, students were informed each lesson which indicator(s) the teacher would be focusing on in teaching and monitoring the learning.

Activities included:

- Students reading aloud
- Extended reading and questioning (novel, *The Recruit*)
- Reading comprehension task (Short story, *Lamb to the Slaughter*)
- Asking students directly about the text – targeted questioning
- 2018 NAPLAN reading paper (reading magazine plus questions)
- Designing specific tasks to demonstrate specific skills – timeline activity, inference activity, language devices activity
- Listening to student group discussions

Year 9 English

Initial student analysis:

- Students were placed in strategic reading groups based on prior reading assessments. Students collaboratively read a section of the novel *'The Outsiders'* aloud. Groups then responded to specific discussion questions to determine their understanding of what they had just read, one student recording the group's answers. The teacher visited each group and further developed the discussion to monitor their understanding.
- Students read a section of the novel to the teacher individually. At certain points, the teacher asked them to pause and posed comprehension and inferential questions. Students had to verbalise their answer to demonstrate their understanding. The teacher recorded their responses, noting areas of strength and areas of need.
- Students were then asked to select three terms from the text that they understood and were given another five terms of varying difficulty by the teacher. Students wrote one sentence explaining how that term was significant in the context of text and how it impacted their understanding of that section of the novel. This activity was used to support observations of selected indicators.
- Students answered specific language and inferential questions to see if they could understand the subtle meanings within the text,

as well as comprehend what had occurred within the plot of the novel as a whole. Students were given sentence starters as a support.

Year 7 mathematics

Activities included:

- Pre-test given to students on the topic of Computing with Integers, with particular attention on the addition and subtraction strategies used
- Lesson starter "quick reviews" to refresh and monitor prior learning
- Modelled, guided and independent practice of the key lesson concept using a range of differentiated resources
- Small group work to provide modelling, support and extension as well as opportunities for observations of learning
- Student 'think-alouds' where a student comes to the board and writes up their working and answers to a question, while sharing their thinking with classmates and the teacher. Peers can then support the working, identify errors or show an alternate method.
- Student work samples from class activities used for observations of indicators
- Anecdotal notes in observing student learning captured in PLAN2 comments

Year 8 mathematics

Activities included:

- A pre test was given on the topic of algebraic techniques. The pre test was created linking numeracy progression indicators with the questions. Observations of the randomly selected students' work were entered in PLAN2. This enabled classroom teachers to identify the starting point of each individual student in the NPA sub-element of the numeracy progression.
- Class discussion about concepts being taught
- Informal questioning
- Homework tasks
- Individual and group work
- Post-tasks: after explicit teaching of algebraic techniques and equations, a further observations were entered into PLAN2.

These activities assisted the teachers to adjust their teaching strategies to ensure that their instruction met the identified needs of the individual students.



Impact on teaching practice

- The progressions supported the teaching and learning of the syllabus outcomes, as well as the school scope and sequence. It encourages teachers to see learning as a continuous process and that student skills need to be developed throughout each stage.
- The language of the progression indicators allowed teachers to develop a common language in discussing student literacy and numeracy learning and supported teachers in developing explicit teaching strategies to further enhance the teaching and learning practice of each lesson.
- PLAN2 provided an accessible tool for teachers to easily identify students that have areas in need of development through the colour coding system (pink, orange, green). Using the different functions on PLAN2 also enabled teachers to download excel spreadsheets to assist in planning and developing lessons to meet student needs and develop specific skills.



Impact on student literacy/numeracy learning

- Students have demonstrated growth in their numeracy and literacy skills as shown in PLAN2.
- Students are developing their skills and engaging in teaching and learning that targets specific literacy and numeracy needs across all KLAs.
- Teachers are actively observing students and adjusting teaching and learning accordingly to meet the needs of their students.
- The Learning Progressions and PLAN2 has been a tool that allows teachers to document and track their teaching and the learning of their students. It allows for more conscious planning as the progressions assist teachers in recognising where students need to move and develop further.



Next steps: plans for future actions

- Review assessments used for years 7-10
The progressions and PLAN2 are tools that

could be used at the start and end of a teaching program to determine student literacy or numeracy progress. This will allow teachers to target specific student needs as they progress onto the next unit of work.

- If there is to be a whole school involvement and use of the progressions and PLAN2, there would need to be whole school training on the progressions and how to use PLAN2. Teachers would need to understand the value in using this and be able to confidently understand the indicators and be able to plot the students.



Recommendations

Other high schools who are starting to use the literacy and numeracy progressions and PLAN2 could consider this advice:

- The numeracy and literacy progression documents are detailed but use very specific language – if we are to encourage whole school participation/use of the progressions, we would need to consider support for all teachers (beyond mathematics or English) to understand exactly what the indicators mean.
- Organise professional learning before engaging in progressions and PLAN2.
- Consider a whole-school approach with a cross-KLA literacy-numeracy team.
- Ensure adequate time for staff to engage in the professional learning and to begin to use the progressions and PLAN2.
- Ensure executive sponsorship so that the use of the progressions and PLAN2 is integrated into the strategic directions of the school.



For further information

Email: literacy.numeracy@det.nsw.edu.au

[Visit the Literacy and Numeracy website.](#)

[Find more information about the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions.](#)

[Find more information on PLAN2.](#)