

# Building solid foundations for developing literacy skills for life through a new Learning Progressions initiative



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# Overview



- Background
- The Literacy Learning Progressions
- Rationale
- Initiatives
- Discussion

# Background



- Learning for Living Project – New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission initiative
- Project aim: improve literacy outcomes for students by improving lecturers' understanding of effective literacy practices
- Our role: share learning progressions and trial tasks

## Literacy Progressions can be used to:



- Gain a basic picture of student's literacy skills
- Identify English language demands of tasks and texts
- Provide a sequence for teaching and learning programmes and design suggestions

# Literacy Progressions




- Listen with Understanding
- Speak to Communicate
- Read with Understanding
- **Write to Communicate**

# Write to Communicate Literacy Progressions



- Purpose and audience
- Spelling
- Vocabulary
- Language and text features
- Planning and composing
- Revising and editing

## Appendix B.4 Analysing writing: 'best guess' chart

	PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE	SPELLING	VOCABULARY	LANGUAGE AND TEXT FEATURES	PLANNING AND COMPOSING	REVISING AND EDITING
				XXXXXX		
						
						
						
						
						

# Rationale



- For first-year students who withdrew for academic reasons the major factor was “not knowing what was expected of them” (Waters, 2004)
- Lecturer expectations vs. student interpretations (Clerehan, 2003; Lea & Street, 1998; Leki, 2007; McCune, 2004)
- Clear writing expectations lead to better long term study outcomes



# Content Lecturer Initiatives



- Majority find the progressions too complicated
- Focus is on vocabulary development
- Academic advisors' work to embed literacy into programmes is slow

# Example of content lecturer's use of the progressions



Features of paragraph writing	Yes	No	Partial
Tone is appropriate for audience.			
Most words are spelt correctly			
Vocabulary includes some words related to government			
Punctuation is used correctly eg. Fullstops, commas and capital letters.			
Complete effective sentences are used.			
Grammar is used correctly eg. Subject-verb agreement, correct tense, correct articles, singular/plural.			
Features and structure of a paragraph is used – one idea introduced by a topic sentence, development of idea with further explanation or examples.			
Evidence of revising and editing.			

# Learning Development Lecturer Initiatives



Write to Communicate implementation in one-to-one sessions

- Students read progressions – discuss writing development
- Students and learning development lecturer discuss questions related to the progressions

## Purpose and Audience



- Who is your audience for this piece of writing?
- Does your tone (level of formality) match your audience and have you used this tone consistently?
- What is the purpose of this text?
- Is the purpose clearly stated?

# Planning and Composing



- Can you describe how this piece of writing is structured?

# Student feedback



- “I never thought about my writing in these ways”
- “It’s useful to have specific questions to answer about my writing”

## Can we build solid foundations by using the Write to Communicate Progressions?



- Progressions useful in one-to-one sessions
- A useful tool for lecturers but...
- Need sustained professional development
- Need institutional and government support

# Discussion



- To what extent is your institution embedding literacy development in its programmes?
- How is this being done?
- What level of knowledge about academic writing do content lecturers need?



# References and links



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