

Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing: Interconnected but Distinct

The FSL Curriculum is divided into four interdependent strands. To develop the skills necessary to become life-long language learners, students will have multiple opportunities:

- to listen and respond to texts and others;
- to speak to and interact with others;
- to read, view, and respond to a variety of texts; and
- to write for many different purposes and audiences.

The overall expectations for the listening strand across all grades, in all three FSL programs are listening to understand, listening to interact, and intercultural understanding. The overall expectations for the speaking strand are speaking to communicate, speaking to interact, and intercultural understanding.

In the reading strand, the overall expectations are reading comprehension, purpose, form and style, and intercultural understanding. Lastly, in the writing strand, the overall expectations are purpose, audience and form, the writing process, and intercultural understanding.

In the past, reading and writing have been emphasized at the expense of oral communication and this has resulted in students who could read and write but not speak the language.

Students will be able to transfer their knowledge of the language attained in communicative contexts when listening and speaking and apply it when reading and writing.

In the communicative and action-oriented approaches, language needs to be contextualized and developed in authentic, real-world settings. Students use and reuse language for multiple reasons while developing their language skills and strategies across the four strands.

There is a variety of ways to introduce a new language to students. One of the models for this is outlined:

Purposeful Introduction of language:

- The teacher sets the communicative goal or task and introduces and models the use of language needed to communicate in that situation.

Ongoing Modelling and Practice:

- The teacher provides ongoing modelling and support as students practise their use of language.

Application and Consolidation:

Teachers encourage students to recognize and apply their knowledge of the language in new situations or contexts.

Using a variety of approaches, including the action-oriented and communicative approaches, teachers facilitate the learning of language by embedding it within authentic contexts. Students are introduced to the language that is necessary for them to communicate and interact in a certain context or situation.

As educators in the twenty-first century, we are charged with implementing an approach that makes it possible for our students to communicate meaningfully. We must not underestimate the importance of language conventions, but they are only effective when approached globally, serve a communicative purpose, and are informed by the following factors:

- they are taught in context;
- they are scaffolded, modelled and practised in authentic situations;
- they are interpreted in meaningful ways;
- they are tailored to meet student needs;
- they are structured to respond to student interests;
- they are practised and applied in multiple ways to consolidate knowledge; and
- they are presented across the curriculum.