

# Year 6 Literacy

Example short assessment items

---

# Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Speaking and Listening</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Open-ended task .....	4
<b>Reading and Viewing</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Concept map .....	7
Short response .....	10
Concept map and short response — plot profile.....	13
<b>Writing and Designing</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Open-ended task .....	16
Short response .....	19

# Preface

The Essential Learnings are the starting point for planning in the early and middle years of schooling. The Literacy and Numeracy Indicators, Literacy and Numeracy Monitoring Maps and Example short assessment items are resources to support teaching, learning, monitoring and assessment.

Student literacy capabilities can be monitored by:

- considering progress in relation to the targeted indicators
- ensuring key concepts within literacy are explicitly taught across all key learning areas and are part of everyday teaching and learning
- employing a repertoire of assessment techniques and instruments.

The Example short assessment items in this book offer a selection of techniques for assessment of targeted literacy indicators. Further examples can be found in the Assessment Bank packages on the QSA website ([www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)). Selected packages provide additional opportunities for assessing the literacy indicators.

The Example short assessments in this booklet are resources that will help teachers to:

- monitor learning for improvement and gather evidence towards the achievement of the targeted literacy indicators
- complement their current teaching practices and add to the repertoire of effective monitoring of student achievement
- use various techniques for gathering evidence
- use a variety of quality assessment techniques
- provide multiple opportunities for gathering evidence about learning
- use literacy assessments across different key learning areas
- provide opportunities to engage in conversation with students about their learning and provide meaningful feedback.

# Speaking and Listening

## Open-ended task

### *Targeted indicators*

#### **SL 6 iii.**

Compose and contribute in different settings by choosing and responding to speaking techniques and non-verbal expressions, including:

- intonation, stress patterns, e.g. pitch, volume and pace; vocabulary selection and figurative language, e.g. idiom and personification
- register, e.g. formal, neutral, informal, casual; tone; volume; pause and pace
- body language and gestures.

#### **SL 6 viii.**

Select visual aids and digital resources to enhance meaning and to engage and persuade audiences to a particular view.

### *Context*

This assessment provides examples of behaviours that the teacher may observe when monitoring students' speaking skills and techniques when composing and delivering a monologue developed from a character in a familiar story.

### *Teacher information*

Students need to develop the ability to use a selection of speaking techniques when composing different spoken genres. In this assessment, students are required to deliver a monologue based on the known characteristics and personality of a storybook character. This involves students acting in character, speaking their thoughts aloud and directly addressing another character or the audience.

Students may gain valuable insights into how to develop their voice through the investigation of techniques employed by actors in stage plays or movies. When actors interpret characters for live audiences, they base their portrayal on the implicit and implied evidence supplied by the writer in the written text.

When students start choosing and refining spoken techniques to shape their dramatic presentation, they should consider:

- their choice of selective vocabulary to suit the character
- their character's "actions" or particular mannerisms
- their character's perspectives or opinions they hold towards events and other characters
- how their character would behave in emotive situations
- their previous experiences with similar characters and events.

Prior to administering this assessment, students should have the opportunity to:

- identify noun and verb groups in written texts that work together to help build a visual picture in a reader's mind
- analyse characters in literary texts compared with movies to ascertain how personality traits may be built up using verbal and non-verbal spoken techniques
- incorporate visual aids in spoken presentations and dramatisations.

## **Implementation**

Teachers choose a literary text that has recently been shared as a whole class reading activity. This enables a greater consistency for both the teacher's and students' understanding of the different character personalities. From this text, the teacher identifies a list of strong characters that the students may choose from to develop a two-minute monologue.

When developing their monologue students need to:

- choose a character from the list identified by the teacher and re-read a part of the text that describes the character's involvement in a particular emotive event
- list specific vocabulary (noun groups and verb groups) from the text that helps develop characterisation through visualisation
- compose a two-minute monologue that recounts the event in the role of the chosen character
- select simple visual aid/s to suit the character's appearance and personality
- present a two-minute monologue to the class audience.

The teacher records written observations to monitor the effectiveness of student delivery in relation to their chosen character.

## Sample: Observation record — characterised monologue

Story title ..... Dramatised event .....

Evidence		Observation
Voice	effective intonation: high/low	
	stress patterns: pitch/volume/pace	
Delivery	register: formal/neutral/formal/casual/ volume/pause/pace	
	body language/gestures	
Construction	vocabulary selection/character personality/situation/emotion	
	figurative language: suitable idioms/metaphors/similes	
Visual aids	selection of visual aid/s adding to meaning and engagement of audience	

# Reading and Viewing

## Concept map

### *Targeted indicator*

**RV 6 iv.**

Independently read a range of texts and show understanding by:

- summarising the main ideas, concepts, arguments and supporting details
- synthesising information within texts and between texts
- inferring meaning from stated and implied ideas, and supplying evidence from interrelated parts of texts
- evaluating and reflecting on the author's point of view, quality of the author's craft, accuracy or reliability of content and how well they meet their purpose.

### *Context*

This assessment provides examples of behaviours that the teacher may observe when monitoring students' reading and viewing skills when comprehending a newspaper report using a Fishbone graphic organiser.

### *Teacher information*

Understanding the "main idea" of texts can be a difficult task. In this assessment students are required to identify the main idea from a newspaper report by summarising information, identifying arguments and justifying these arguments using supporting details.

Although reporters clearly convey the facts that surround an issue or event, students need to be aware that other issues or biases may be present.

The details provided in a newspaper report support the main idea by reporting on who, what, when, where, why and how. However, the ability to determine importance of details in text requires the reader to draw inferences and think critically about all the information presented. This requires the reader to predict, identify key words or phrases, make connections to prior knowledge and experiences, visualise and question the text in order to infer hidden meaning.

Student comprehension is increased when they can make links between topics, identify main ideas and summarise details.

Prior to this assessment, students should have the opportunity to:

- investigate a newspaper report layout and journalistic techniques including modality of text, size and position of article in the paper
- use the Fishbone graphic organiser to extract evidence from a report
- identify explicit main idea (literal) from text
- use inference strategies to identify implied messages made through the reporter's deliberate choice of language and illustrations.

## Implementation

The teacher is required to select a recent newspaper report that is of local importance, age appropriate and topical to students' interests.

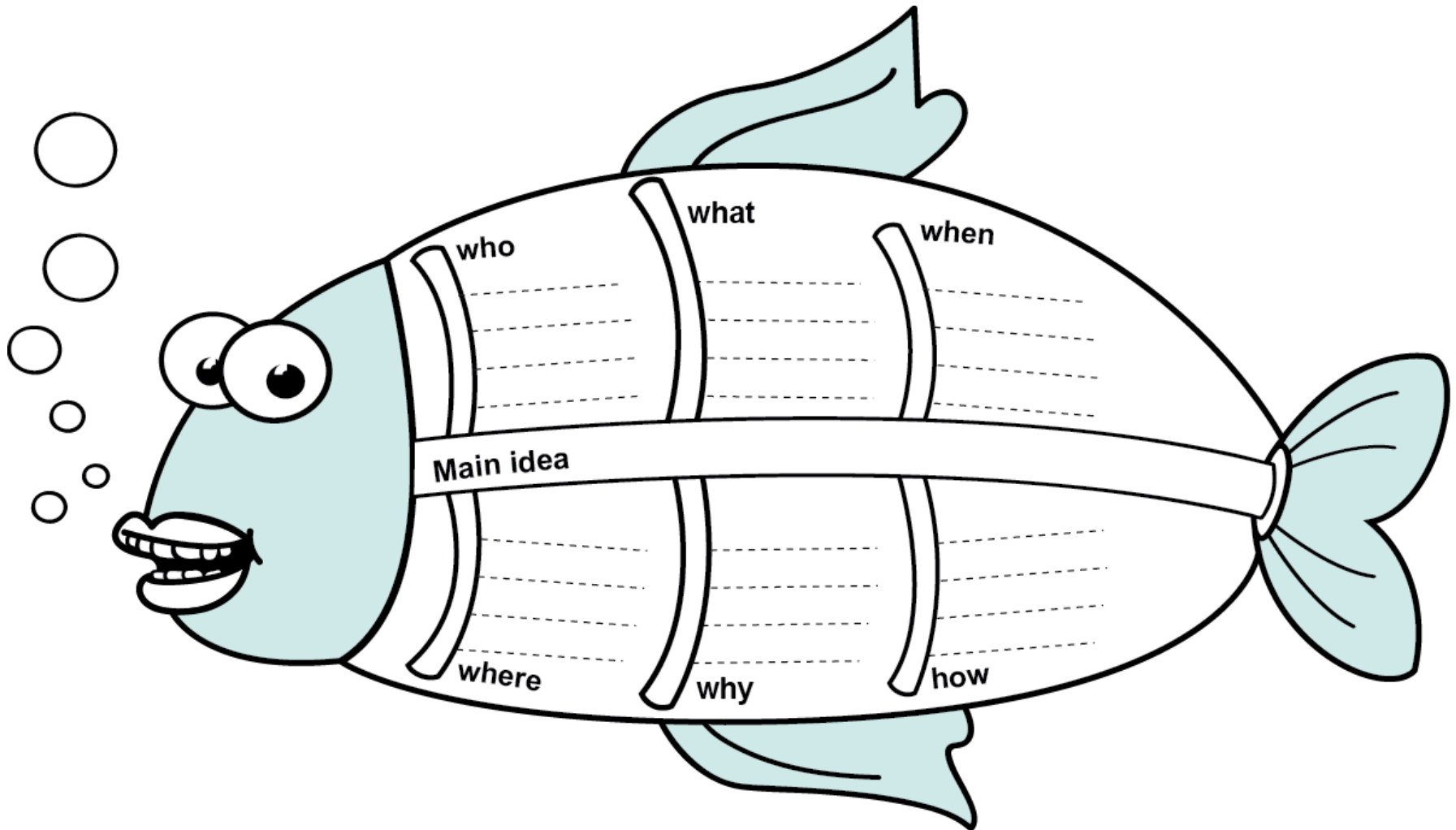
Students will need to:

- read the newspaper report
- identify key points and evidence from the report using a highlighter
- sort and record literal key points and issues on the Fishbone according to the six headings
- take into account any inferred meaning from their point of view and add this to the Fishbone
- use the key below the Fishbone organiser to classify their supporting evidence as literal or inferential evidence
- consider all evidence collected to summarise and record the main idea of the report.

When monitoring students' ability to meet the requirements of the indicator, the teacher need to consider the evidence students have collected from the report to assess whether they are able to identify both the literal and implied messages, and record a valid main idea.



Sample stimulus: Fishbone — finding the main idea



## Short response

### Targeted indicators

#### RV 6 iii.

Predict, confirm and make meaning from literary and non-literary texts by activating a range of comprehension strategies, including:

- using prior knowledge about text type, subject matter and author
- building a mental picture of the major features, actions and concepts in texts to enhance understanding
- questioning texts about context, subject matter, purpose and points of view
- seeking clarification when meaning is not clear
- self-correcting to repair comprehension breakdowns
- drawing conclusions using stated and inferred information about significant concepts, arguments or descriptions from the text.

#### RV 6 iv.

Independently read a range of texts and show understanding by:

- summarising the main ideas, concepts, arguments and supporting details
- synthesising information within texts and between texts
- inferring meaning from stated and implied ideas, and supplying evidence from interrelated parts of texts
- evaluating and reflecting on the author's point of view, quality of the author's craft, accuracy or reliability of content and how well they meet their purpose.

### Context

This assessment provides examples of behaviours which the teacher may observe when monitoring students' reading comprehension skills in the context of a book club.

### Teacher information

Authors deliberately choose words to suit their characters and enhance story development. Noun groups provide specific descriptions of items, places or people. These groups of words help the reader visualise what that character is like. Verb groups explain what is happening with the mental, verbal and action processes of a character, e.g. what the character is thinking, feeling, saying or doing.

In this assessment the teacher uses the context of a book club where students can share their thoughts and opinions about book characters. This allows the student to demonstrate their comprehension of the book they chose through discussions and sharing with others.

Prior to this assessment, students should have the opportunity to:

- identify noun and verb groups and phrases from literary texts using Table 1 Sample retrieval chart
- visualise how groups of words work together to build up a mental picture
- draw inferences by collecting relevant evidence from a text using the graphic organiser.

### Table 1 Sample retrieval chart

Book title: ..... Author:.....

Character: .....

This chart will help provide evidence from the text to support the conclusions you have made about your character.

Noun group	Verb group

### Implementation

Students:

- choose a character from a recently read book
- identify noun and verb groups from the text using Table 1 Sample retrieval chart
- use the sample retrieval chart to document evidence on Table 2 Sample evidence to draw inference
- use inference strategies to provide more evidence to Table 2 to draw inferences, conclusions and make an inferred character statement
- participate in a book club meeting where students may share their opinions backed up with statements of evidence.

The teacher uses the sample retrieval chart and graphic organiser to monitor how accurately students were able to draw conclusions and document inferences gathered from the text.

## Table 2 Sample evidence to draw inference

Book title: .....Author:.....

Character: .....

What is the author trying to tell me about this character?

Student prompt	Student inferred evidence
Evidence from the text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written text</li> <li>• images, illustrations, photographs, graphics and diagrams</li> <li>• headings and subheadings.</li> </ul>	
Prior knowledge and experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do I already know about this?</li> <li>• Have I experienced something like this before?</li> </ul>	
Inferred character statement: I think the character is...	



### Reference

Adapted from:

Queensland Department of Education and Training 2009, *Insight into Inference* (CD-ROM, DVD)

## Concept map and short response — plot profile

### Targeted indicators

#### RV 6 iii.

Predict, confirm and make meaning from literary and non-literary texts by activating a range of comprehension strategies, including:

- using prior knowledge about text types, subject matter and author
- building a mental picture of the major features, actions and concepts in texts to enhance understanding
- questioning texts about context, subject matter, purpose and points of view
- seeking clarification when meaning is not clear
- self-correcting to repair comprehension breakdowns
- drawing conclusions using stated and inferred information about significant concepts, arguments or descriptions from the text.

#### RV 6 iv.

Independently read a range of texts and show understanding by:

- summarising the main ideas, concepts, arguments and supporting details
- synthesising information within texts and between texts.

### Context

This assessment provides examples of behaviours that the teacher may observe when monitoring students' reading comprehension strategies using a plot profile.

### Teacher information

A plot profile is a combination of a timeline and a rating scale. Each main event in the text is summarised, listed and then rated according to a vertical scale. The rating scale can be varied to suit the plot of the chosen text. For example, the vertical scale may require students to rate the events according to excitement levels (calm to exciting) or mood (sad to happy), or tension/suspense.

This assessment asks students to rate on a mood scale of sad to happy, a comparison of the emotions of two main characters sharing similar events throughout a literary plot. (Suggested text: Paterson, K 1977, *Bridge to Terabithia*, Harper Collins, Australia)

When beginning a plot profile, students use a literary text to identify and sequence main ideas. This creation of an incident summary allows the teacher to monitor students' literal understanding, and their ability to identify main ideas and sequence events.

The subsequent rating of each incident using the vertical scale requires students to evaluate and make judgments of the author's intent. Students should be instructed to look for emotive and descriptive language in the text that would support their rating for that incident. This descriptive and emotive language employed by the author is integral for supporting the conclusions students have drawn (see Table 1 Sample incident summary — evidence drawn from text). Every incident summary may contain different events and be plotted on the grid based upon students' individual interpretation.

**Table 1 Sample incident summary — evidence drawn from text**

Incident summary — events	Evidence I found in the text: (descriptive or emotive language)	
Story characters	Jess	Leslie
Jess feels alone and ignored by his family.	<i>He gazed miserably out of the window... ...with the numbness flooding through him</i>	
Leslie becomes the fastest kid in fifth grade at new school.	<i>All Jess' anger was bubbling out....</i>	
Jess' mother favours his sisters over him and Jess' father works away.		
Jess and Leslie become friends.		
Create imaginary kingdom in woods.		
Name Terabithia and declare themselves King and Queen.		
Jess is victim of school bully Janice.		
They spend every day in Terabithia to face their real world fears.		
Leslie receives Prince Terrien as a Christmas present — makes him protector of Terabithia.		
Jess has a crush on his music teacher (Miss Edmunds).		
Jess accompanies Miss Edmunds to National Gallery of Art.		
Leslie goes to Terabithia alone while Jess is in Washington.		
Rope breaks and Leslie drowns in creek.		
Jess goes back to Terabithia and makes memorial wreath for Leslie.		
Jess rescues May Belle from creek during ceremony.		
Jess builds bridge over Terabithia — makes May Belle the new		

Queen.		
--------	--	--

Table 1 Sample incident summary investigates the main characters of Jess Arons and Leslie Burke from *Bridge to Terabithia*.

Prior to administering this assessment, students need experience in:

- building incident summaries on literary texts
- identifying emotive language in literary texts
- plotting incident summaries based on a vertical scale (see rating scale in Sample plot profile).

Finished plot profiles may be shared in pairs or small groups to allow students the opportunity to justify their choices. The teacher may observe these justifications as they demonstrate how students have engaged with the text at a deeper metacognitive level by interpreting the way key events have been represented in the text, and have been plotted on the vertical scale.

### Implementation

To complete this assessment students are required to:

- complete an incident summary of chosen text (see Table 1 Sample)
- identify and record emotive language from text to support character feelings at a particular incident or event
- rate and plot character emotions on the sample rating grid using a colour key.

### Sample plot profile — rating grid



# Writing and Designing

## Open-ended task

### *Targeted indicators*

#### **WD 6 vi.**

Write paragraphs that maintain the pace or sense of texts, using headings and subheadings and logical structures that support the purpose including problem-and-solution, cause-and-effect or comparison-and-contrast.

#### **WD 6 ix.**

Write sentences that have dependent and independent clauses, using appropriate conjunctions to extend and elaborate ideas and information, including direct and indirect speech, and combine more than two clauses while retaining meaning.

### *Context*

This assessment provides examples of evidence that teachers may observe when monitoring students' writing skills when composing an exposition.

### *Teacher information*

The ability to develop a well structured and rationally supported argument based on fact in the form of an exposition is a way students can learn to organise and justify their opinions. This assessment would be most effective if implemented just prior to, or upon return from school camp, when students' emotions and interests are most heightened on the topic.

Brainstorming or reflective sessions may highlight "factually" why camp is an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for all students. A camp focuses on developing the skills of communication, cooperation, safety, teamwork, trust, creativity, problem solving, initiative and activity.

Prior to starting this assessment, students should have the opportunity to:

- construct complex sentences containing dependent and independent clauses
- structure paragraphs using a topic sentence, followed by supporting evidence, and to organise and link a series of paragraphs using a planning device
- read expositions as a deliberately structured information text that presents an argument based upon fact
- present justified evidence through problem/solution, cause/effect and comparison/contrast (see Table 1).



**Table 1 Sample logical structure**

Pattern	Description	Cue words
Problem/solution	Explain how two or more things are alike and different.	different, in contrast, alike, same as, on the other hand
Cause/effect	Identify one or more causes and the resulting effect or effects.	reasons why, if, then, as a result, therefore, because
Comparison/contrast	State a problem and list one or more solutions for the problem.	problem is, dilemma is, puzzle is, question, answer

## Implementation

The teacher provides students with a copy of the “No more school camp!” newspaper report stimulus.

Students:

- read the “No more school camp!” stimulus
- participate in a whole class discussion
- independently complete their written task.

When monitoring the indicators the teacher may refer to Table 2 Sample student evidence.

**Table 2 Sample student evidence**

Written structure	Evidence
paragraph and sentence structure effectively maintains the pace of text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct topic sentence stating fact/opinion</li> <li>• several complex supporting sentences</li> <li>• elaboration of statement</li> <li>• concluding statement leading on to next paragraph.</li> </ul>
paragraphs enhance the meaning of text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• paragraphs addressing separate key issues identified from the stimulus.</li> </ul>
exposition is organised logically to support argument process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• argument flowing logically from one idea to another</li> <li>• opening paragraph clearly identifying the position and giving a preview of points of argument</li> <li>• paragraphs organised gradually to build up a picture for the reader</li> <li>• concluding paragraph restating position forcefully in light of the arguments presented.</li> </ul>
Problem/solution Cause/effect Comparison/contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear identification of the problems resulting from the topic in the stimulus</li> <li>• supporting evidence for each problem identified</li> <li>• offer of solutions, identification of causes and resulting effects</li> <li>• identification of areas for comparison.</li> </ul>

## Stimulus — No more school camp!

# Premier to ban camps

Yesterday, the State Premier conducted talks with the Education Minister and advisors regarding some of the educational issues highlighted in the media.

The Premier has suggested that teachers cut down on activities that do not have a direct effect on the mathematics and spelling results of Queensland students.

This would mean that the fun and excitement of school camps could become something of the past.

During the interview, the Premier spoke largely of the importance of education and school being academic learning, not social calendar events and excursions.



(Image source: Working at Village Camps spring outdoor education camps in Anzere, Switzerland, a Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic licensed photo from Robert Thomson's Flickr stream, accessed June 29, 2010.)

“Teaching students social skills is the role of the family,” the Premier stated.

Other contributing factors can be blamed on the current global economic downturn and the resulting diminishing disposable income of most families. It was suggested that parents should not feel pressured to pay large sums of money for their children to spend time away from learning activities.

It is expected that the Teachers’ Union will also support this ban.

page 151 Wednesday, 29 June 2010

1. Read the above newspaper article.
2. Write a letter to the Premier in response to the issues raised in the article to convince parliament they **SHOULD NOT** implement this ban.
3. In your letter, identify your statement of position and present an argument or point of view that is supported by factual information.
4. You should take the time to:
  - a. plan and organise your information using logical structures
  - b. write legibly in structured paragraphs
  - c. edit your work for accuracy and fluency.

## Short response

### *Targeted indicator*

#### **WD 6 xii.**

Confirm spelling, word meaning or word choice using:

- knowledge about word origins, base words, word endings and affixes (prefixes and suffixes)
- knowledge about spelling patterns and the spelling system
- knowledge of technical words including nominalisations developed from prior learning, reading or research about the subject matter
- online or print dictionaries, thesauruses and technical texts.

### *Context*

This assessment provides examples of evidence that the teacher may observe when monitoring students' knowledge of spelling patterns and skills using prefixes and suffixes.

### *Teacher information*

In word recognition and spelling, students use the same orthographic information to make meaning but use it differently, e.g. encoding and decoding.

The teacher must provide ongoing exposure to the orthographic system through instruction focusing on four spelling knowledge areas. These are:

- visual (meaning and functional)
- functional (morphemic)
- meaning (phonological)
- history (etymological).

These orthographic systems need explicit teaching to show how they relate to word knowledge in reading. This must be sequential, targeting knowledge of the spelling system and active spelling strategies while focusing on the developmental aspect of word study.

Knowledge of affixes and root words assists in the spelling of words:

- affix – added to root words to alter their meaning (see Table 1 Teacher reference). They are divided into:
  - prefix — affix added to the beginning of a root word
  - suffix — affix added to the end of a root word.
- root word — a word that stands alone and has a meaning or several meanings; or has a prefix and/or suffix added to it (e.g. disagreement has the prefix “dis-“ and the suffix “-ment” added to the root word “agree”).

**Table 1 Teacher reference**

<b>Prefix</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Example/s</b>
dis	Latin	apart, not, opposite of	disagree, discontent
mis	Middle/Old English	wrongly, wrong	mistreat, misinterpret
mid	Middle/Old English	middle	midday, mid-flight
pre	Latin	before	preschool, preview
in/im	Latin	not	improper, incorrect
re	Latin	again	replay, reappear
un	Middle/Old English	not	uncomfortable, unfriendly
<b>Suffix</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Example/s</b>
ly	Middle/Old English	like, every	daily, sisterly
less	Middle/Old English	without	childless, penniless
ness	Middle/Old English	state of, condition of	loneliness, darkness
ion, tion	Latin	act, process of	starvation, recommendation
ment	French	action or state of	enjoyment, refreshment

## Implementation

Students will:

- use an online or print dictionary to complete Table 2 Prefix or suffix?
- complete Table 3 Choosing the correct prefix or suffix.

## References

Queensland Studies Authority 2007, *Scope and sequence: Spelling Yrs 1-9* accessed May 2009, <[www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/early\\_middle/qcar\\_ss\\_english\\_spelling.pdf](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/early_middle/qcar_ss_english_spelling.pdf)>

*Dictionary.com 2010*, accessed May 2010, <<http://dictionary.reference.com/>>

### Table 2 Prefix or suffix?

Using an online dictionary or print dictionary, determine the origin of the following prefixes and suffixes, write their meaning and give **two** examples for each.

Prefix	Origin	Meaning	Examples
dis			
mis			
mid			
pre			
in/im			
re			
un			
Suffix	Origin	Meaning	Examples
ly			
less			
ness			
ion, tion			
ment			

### Table 3 Choosing the correct prefix or suffix

Insert the correct prefix or suffix into the spaces in this text to make meaning. Choose from the following affixes.

There was a \_\_\_\_\_ agreement between two students because of the treat \_\_\_\_\_ of another member of the class. The teacher explained that there was not to be any \_\_\_\_\_ proper or \_\_\_\_\_ appropriate behaviour in the classroom. All students were expected to act in a friend \_\_\_\_\_ way and show kind \_\_\_\_\_ and compassion for others. Anyone found to be \_\_\_\_\_ behaving or acting in a thought \_\_\_\_\_ manner would need to explain their behaviour. The teacher believed it was \_\_\_\_\_ likely that any student would \_\_\_\_\_ offend.

<b>dis</b>	<b>mis</b>	<b>pre</b>	<b>in</b>	<b>im</b>	<b>un</b>	<b>ly</b>
<b>less</b>	<b>ness</b>	<b>re</b>	<b>tion</b>	<b>ment</b>	<b>mid</b>	



---

## **Queensland Studies Authority**

154 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane

PO Box 307 Spring Hill

QLD 4004 Australia

**T** +61 7 3864 0299

**F** +61 7 3221 2553

**[www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)**

---