Arthur Phillip High School

Literacy Policy

2018

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Rationale

At APHS the Literacy program is developed to address the specific literacy needs of all students with internal and external data used to identify and address the specific areas for improvement in our students' literacy development. All teachers in the school recognise that they are teachers of literacy with literacy being embedded in all teaching and learning programs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- To utilise the opportunities provided by the school to read widely and for pleasure.
- To actively participate in the skill specific activities of all classes.
- To develop skills in reading comprehension.
- To develop skills in drafting and editing their written work. Use a dictionary and thesaurus to build their literacy skills.

Teachers

- Provision of regular opportunities for student's to build and extend their vocabulary.
- Using a range of text types and strategies such as TEEL and ALARM to promote student's experiences with writing.
- Regular checking of student's written work and provision of literacy specific feedback regarding spelling, grammar and written expression.
- Rewarding students who demonstrate an improvement in their literacy skills.
- Assisting students in understanding the metalanguage of their faculty subject.
- Referring any students who are exhibiting difficulties with the literacy component of their course to the Learning Support Team.
- Using Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs) for students with identified additional learning needs as a guide in the preparation of lessons and assessment tasks.
- Using Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) for Aboriginal students as a guide in the preparation of lessons and assessment tasks.
- Being vigilant in their awareness of the learning needs of all students, ensuring materials used and content taught take into consideration the literacy needs of students by using NAPLAN and other school data to shape teaching and learning programs.

Parents

- Regularly sight and read through their child's written work, assisting them with written drafts and proofreading.
- Discuss literacy and learning issues with the school whenever the need arises.
- Promote reading in the home environment by providing reading materials, and modelling reading for enjoyment as well as reading for information.

Literacy Strategic Focus

As part of a coordinated and systematic approach to improving the literacy outcomes of all your students at APHS, we have undertaken a three pronged approached to the explicit instruction of literacy skills and improving the capability of all teaching staff to embed literacy instruction in their teaching through meaningful and relevant professional learning. The three elements of our literacy strategy as part of our 2018-2020 School Plan are:

1. TELL – Otherwise known as Teaching English Language Learners (TELL) is aimed at preparing every teacher in professional knowledge and application of differentiating the Curriculum for all students but specifically the English as an Additional Language

learner. TELL explores developing an understanding of EAL/D education as well as appropriate language and literacy strategies in teaching EAL/D learners. The professional learning focuses on creating high challenge, high support environments as well as specific areas such as talking, reading and writing to learn. There are a number of APHS staff who are trained facilitators and as part of the school's professional learning plan will deliver the course over the next two years to all teaching staff.

2. To support our students who are below national benchmarks and or who require additional literacy support, the school has developed literacy "**I can**" statements. The statements are written in student-friendly language so that they can identify and track their own progress in meeting the learning targets and to reflect on their progress. These literacy "**I can**" statements allow our students to set their own learning goals and identify literacy areas that they need assistance in and guidance with.

3. Writing Focus – using TEEL and ALARM.
   i) TEEL is a structure that provides an effective way of organising a paragraph. TEEL stands for Topic sentence, Explanation, Evidence, and Link. The **Topic sentence** is the first sentence in a body paragraph that tells the reader what the main idea or claim of the paragraph will be. **Explanation** is the writer explaining what they mean in greater detail. **Evidence** is where the writer provides evidence to support their idea or claim. To do this, they refer to their research. Finally **Link** is a summary of the main idea of the paragraph, and make clear how this paragraph supports the overall argument. All these elements together, as body paragraphs can then form the building blocks of the writer's argument.

   ii) ALARM is a cognitive scaffold, which provides a framework for student writing, learning and assists students in their deconstruction of questions and how they give feedback and reflect on the material being covered. ALARM is a powerful tool that helps improve literacy and assists students with written responses for assessment tasks and in exams. By using the ALARM system students are able to write more sophisticated written responses that help them progress from a Band 4 or 5 to a Band 6.

   ALARM helps students break down questions down to understand what is being asked. It uses the NESA key words to explicitly teach students to identify, describe, explain, analyse, interpret, critically analyse and evaluate. This hierarchy of thinking and writing skills is aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy to enable students to understand the different complexities required for different questions. This helps students produce more sophisticated written response answers in secondary school, the HSC and beyond. All too often students do not know how to move beyond a 'C Grade' paper that simply describes and explains. To get top marks, students also need to know how to analyse, interpret and evaluate when constructing written responses.

   ALARM is not just a literacy tool it helps students to view **learning as a process**. It promotes deeper understanding by employing higher order thinking skills, such as analysis and evaluation, and enhances student inquiry and reflection. ALARM helps students go from the level of content to the level of concept. School subjects are often content driven. ALARM, however, uses the content to arrive at the level of concept. In addition, it provides students with a skills set that is transferable across school subjects and school years. Another major benefit of using ALARM is that it increases metacognition by making the learning process explicit. Understanding HOW to learn is integral for students to become lifelong learners.