

## Designing the *Literacy Learning Progressions*

### Introduction

This paper provides the rationale for key decisions that shaped the *Literacy Learning Progressions*. Because the development of the progressions was an iterative, not linear process, the order in which the decisions are explained does not necessarily mean that they were made sequentially. In addition, shifts in the context for the development, in particular the new government's policy to develop and implement national standards for reading and writing, meant that some decisions took on more significance in the final version than had been envisaged at the beginning of the development. The most notable of these is the decision to link the *Literacy Learning Progressions* to the demands of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, and, in doing so, focus them firmly on the students' purposes for reading and writing.

### Background to the *Literacy Learning Progressions*

The literacy progressions were developed within the context of reframing the national Literacy Strategy. In late 2006, data on literacy achievement confirmed a group of learners who were not making the progress they needed to make in order to achieve success in their schooling. The Ministry of Education responded by developing expectations for student progress and achievement in literacy.

The draft Literacy Learning Progressions were developed in 2007 to a set of specifications that were determined by the Ministry in consultation with its sector reference group for literacy. The progressions remained in draft form throughout 2008 to provide an opportunity for input from a wider group of experts, including teachers who used them in their teaching and learning programmes.

In December 2008 the Government passed legislation giving the Minister of Education the power to set national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The work that had been undertaken to develop the draft *Literacy Learning Progressions*, as well as feedback from consultation on this draft during 2008, provided a useful platform for the standards development. The responses to the draft document were analysed at the beginning of 2009, and the progressions were then revised alongside the development of the national standards.

### The brief for the *Literacy Learning Progressions*

The Ministry developed a brief for the draft Literacy Learning Progressions after consulting its National Literacy Reference Group (NLRG) early in July 2007<sup>1</sup>. The brief specified that the progressions had to:

- be set in context of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and the Literacy Strategy;
- align, where possible, with current literacy materials (including assessment tools) used in New Zealand schools and the theories about literacy learning these

---

<sup>1</sup> The questions the Ministry put to the National Literacy Reference Group are listed in Appendix A.

are based on. In particular, the *Literacy Learning Progressions* had to reflect the articulation of practice outlined in the Ministry of Education's publications, *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*, and *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5-8*<sup>2</sup>;

- make links between reading and writing, and highlight, where appropriate, the importance of oral language in underpinning reading and writing;
- make the expectations for student progress and achievement clear. Expectations at specific points could be a mix of actual and aspirational achievement;
- be produced in a way that enabled teachers to easily engage in the content as a whole, possibly even produced as a wall mural. In particular, the document had to be "slim".

### **An Iterative Process**

The development of the draft progressions took place over a four month period in order to meet the deadline that had been set by the Minister of Education. Because most of the team were already busy with other work, the project director and the writer worked with team members in small sub-groups and on an individual basis, in an iterative process.

Throughout the development, feedback was sought from teachers, leaders and other educators who would be key users of the proposed progressions. These users were shown draft prototypes of the progressions, and their comment was sought on aspects such as scope and specificity of the descriptors. They were asked about their use of current assessment tools, school-based tools and their teaching and learning needs. They were also asked to highlight any risks they were concerned about, so that these could be addressed during the development of the draft.

The final version of the progressions took account of the recommendations made after an analysis of feedback to the draft document<sup>3</sup>, and in the context of the development of *The New Zealand Curriculum: Reading and Writing Standards for years 1-8*.

### **A Design-Lead Development**

From the outset, the development team worked with an idea of what the progressions should look like in their finished form. A designed prototype was drawn-up based on the specification that the progressions were to be "easily engaged with" and "slim". In particular, it was considered critical that teachers were able to see the full set of progressions at a glance. The constraints determined by the prototype helped the development team to be disciplined in their decision-making about content. The prototype also dictated elements such as how the content could be structured (for example sub-headings are not used in the competency descriptors because of the

---

<sup>2</sup> These handbooks, which were developed on the recommendation of the Literacy Taskforce (1999), are based on the evidence about dimensions of effective literacy practice identified in both New Zealand and international studies.

<sup>3</sup> The recommendations from the analysis of feedback on the draft are listed in Appendix C.

potential to create confusion with the themes used to structure English in *The New Zealand Curriculum*).

Because the sector's response to the design of the draft progressions was overwhelmingly positive, the same constraints applied in developing the final version. This meant that some content, in particular the characteristics of text that students read and write at particular levels, had to be left out in order to keep the reading and writing progressions side by side across the fold-out pages<sup>4</sup>.

## The Key Decisions

### The scope for *Literacy Learning Progressions*

The first step in the development of the draft literacy learning progressions was to determine the scope in terms of what "literacy" should cover. Because the progressions had to reflect existing resources and approaches to literacy teaching and learning in New Zealand schools, as well as be aligned to the English curriculum, the definition of literacy used in those resources was adopted. These existing resources and approaches are underpinned by the definition of literacy as a dynamic set of social and cultural practices:

Literacy is the ability to understand, respond to, and use those forms of language that are required by society and valued by individuals and communities

*Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5-8*, Ministry of Education, 2006 page 18.

Using this definition, the Ministry has developed guidelines for effective teaching that are based on the understanding that literacy learning has three main aspects:

- Learning the code of written language.
- Making meaning of texts.
- Thinking critically about texts<sup>5</sup>.

These three aspects are described in the Introduction to the *Literacy Learning Progressions* as follows:

Literacy learners need to learn the code of written language. This learning includes phonological awareness, knowledge of the alphabetic principle and of grapheme-phoneme/phoneme-grapheme relationships, knowledge of how words work, and automatic recognition or spelling of familiar words;

Literacy learners need to learn to make meaning of texts. This learning includes the use of background knowledge (including culture, language and identity), vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of how language is structured, knowledge about literacy, and strategies to get or convey meaning

---

<sup>4</sup> The characteristics of texts that students read and write are listed in the standards document, Reading and Writing Standards for years 1-8, and will also be available in the Ministry's on-line professional materials.

<sup>5</sup> The ways in which these three interrelated aspects develop are described in the Ministry's handbooks, *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1-4* and *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5-8* (Ministry of Education 2003a, 2006)

Literacy learners need to think critically. This includes analysing and responding to texts and bringing a critical awareness to reading and writing.

*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, Ministry of Education, 2010, page 4.

The knowledge, skills and attitudes that students draw on to use the code, make meaning of texts and think critically about texts were further teased out to guide the development of content for the progressions<sup>6</sup>. There were some slight shifts in focus from the handbooks in the draft, and further shifts in the final version. These were decided after considering work published after the two handbooks (for example, Snow et al, 2005; Pressley, 2006) along with feedback to the draft document from literacy experts. In particular more emphasis was placed on developing students' knowledge about the structure and features of the different kinds of texts they need to be able to read and write to meet specific purposes across the curriculum, as well as more focus on the development of spelling, grammar and vocabulary<sup>7</sup>.

Motivation and metacognition were also considered to be critical dimensions of reading and writing acquisition, but it proved too difficult to develop meaningful progressions for each of these, and the decisions was to treat them as essential threads throughout the progressions.

The outline of scope and content was checked against the curriculum maps used in the assessment frameworks for the national and international assessments of literacy that are used in the New Zealand education system. In particular the content and coverage were examined in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the OECD's International Programme for Student Assessment (PISA) and asTTle.

### The role of oral language in reading and writing

The brief required the *Literacy Learning Progressions* to highlight the significant role of oral language in thinking and learning.

Not only do students need to learn the language of the classroom in order to participate in every curriculum activity, they also specifically draw on their language knowledge and skills to develop their expertise in reading and writing. This includes knowledge of vocabulary (words and phrases) as the forms and features of text.

*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, Ministry of Education, 2010, page 5.

Feedback on the draft document made it clear that the role of oral language in underpinning reading and writing needed to be made even more explicit throughout the progressions. In response to this request, the final document also includes statements drawn from the Ministry of Education's oral language handbooks, *Learning Through Talk Oral Language in Years 1 to 3*, and, *Learning Through Talk Oral Language in Years 4 to 8*.

---

<sup>6</sup> These components (content) for reading and writing are listed in Appendix B.

<sup>7</sup> Consultation on the draft indicated in particular that more focus needed to be given to spelling, but still within the writing progressions, as well as oral language. The word "encoding" is used in the progressions to connect to "decoding" in reading.

## How to describe increasing expertise

Because learning to read and write is a complex, iterative and uneven process, producing a single set of progressions to show how a diverse group of students develop fluency and independence was always going to be a particular challenge<sup>8</sup>. The theoretical basis for developing literacy, described in the handbooks, brings together three related concepts:

- the pathway to literacy is developmental
- social and cultural practices shape literacy learning
- students take individual and multiple pathways in their learning

*Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5-8*, Ministry of Education, 2006, page 21.

Preliminary work involved exploring a number of options for describing developing expertise. One option was to develop profiles of readers and writers at six monthly intervals as they develop their expertise along typical pathways. An alternative was to develop more detail under the framework provided by the English curriculum.

The curriculum and assessment frameworks used in other systems for the purpose of clarifying expectations for students' progress and achievement in literacy learning were reviewed to see how they were structured, in particular how they dealt with students' increasing range, fluency and independence.

A key decision, therefore, was where to place the signposts that would serve as reference points for students' developing expertise.

## Deciding where to place the "signposts"

Because the initial brief for the *Literacy Learning Progressions* did not specify how they should be linked to particular points in time or the system, (that is, year levels or age), one of the early decisions concerned where to place the signposts that would serve as markers for student progress and achievement. Clearly there had to be some markers if the progressions were to meet their original intent: to provide a goal for students' progress and achievement in literacy.

The draft *Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy* that had been developed for the adult/tertiary sector also provided a model of how learners' knowledge and skills be described at successive points as they built their expertise in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The *Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy*<sup>9</sup> were based on descriptive standards as the end point. These descriptive standards for adult reading and writing describe the competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) that adults need if they are to meet the everyday reading and writing demands in their work, life, and learning settings. The "signposts" are the significant clumps of learning for most adults on a typical pathway towards that end. They are deliberately not tied to the levels of the

---

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Clay (1998).

<sup>9</sup> Tertiary Education Commission (2008).

National Qualification Framework in order to place the focus on learning rather than an assessment measure.<sup>10</sup>

The original intention for the school *Literacy Learning Progressions* was to do something similar, that is, decide what the significant signposts (descriptors or descriptions of competencies) on typical pathways would look like, and then overlay these signposted pathways on to the levels of the schooling system or time at school to provide some guidance as to when students were expected to reach them. However, it was soon apparent that this approach would make the progressions too complex. It also did not take sufficient account of the effect of teaching on students' learning, including the way in which teachers' expectations affect students' progress and achievement.

Instead, it was decided to start with the structure of the schooling system and describe the knowledge and skills needed at specific points of the system. This decision was affirmed once the development got under way and the significance of describing literacy-related knowledge and skills in terms of meeting the demands of *The New Zealand Curriculum* became clearer.

Therefore, the levels of the system were selected as a means of ensuring that teachers maintained a focus on where students needed to be at particular points of their schooling in order to make the progress expected of them over time, as well as being able to read and write the instructional materials used across the curriculum at that time.

This decision assumes that the topics and themes of most teaching and learning programmes are organised around year levels, within which differentiated teaching takes account of students' being at different curriculum levels. Understanding the reading and writing demand of the curriculum at particular points in schooling should be a key factor in shaping teachers' expectations for students' literacy acquisition. It is a critical factor in understanding the "actual versus aspirational" dilemma that is discussed later.

The decision to use the levels of the schooling system was reinforced when the standards development began, as the Government's policy for national standards in reading, writing and mathematics specified that they were to be set at year levels<sup>11</sup>.

### The framework – where the signposts are placed

The descriptions of literacy learning in the final version of *The Literacy Learning Progressions* is organised in two parts: *In the First Year* and *The Progressions*.

#### *In the First Year*

The draft progressions started with a description at school entry to show the kinds of literacy practices and understandings that five-year olds have that enable them to meet the demands of literacy instruction from their first day at school. Early childhood educators provided additional advice to that gained from studies such as the Competent Children study, and examples were taken from *Te Whariki*<sup>12</sup>. Although the development

---

<sup>10</sup> The rationale for decisions concerning the adult progressions is explained in Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy and Numeracy: Background Information.

<sup>11</sup> Policy 2008:Education.

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Education (1996a).

team was careful not to describe this set of knowledge and skills in a way that could be used to label some children as failures, the feedback from consultation during 2008 made it clear that this attempt was only partially successful and that the description looked too prescriptive (as well as daunting).

Hence, the school entry description was reworked and re-titled in the final version as *Starting School* to mitigate against the idea that it is a school entry assessment. It was also placed **outside** of the set of progressions in a new section called *In the first year*. This section also includes a description of students' literacy learning in the first year at school that replaced the "after six months" statement developed for the draft.

The first four sets of progressions in the draft document were described in terms of the time students have spent at school in order to meet the Literacy Strategy's focus on accelerating learners' progress in the early years. They started with a description of the knowledge and skills that students should be demonstrating as they were reading and writing after six months at school.

Feedback from the draft raised concern that pegging the first set of descriptors to "after six months at school" did not take sufficient account of the wide disparity in students' knowledge and skills at school entry, and therefore the time needed to get them to the expected level after one year at school. However, teachers indicated that they found the actual description of knowledge, skills and attitudes very helpful.

On the basis of this feedback, a new statement was developed for the final document to describe literacy progression in the first year at school. The statement serves as a prompt for teachers to deliberately look for the knowledge and skills students should be demonstrating if they are going to make the progress that most experts consider to be essential in this critical period. Moreover, the advice from experts working at this level of the school is that the progress described is not only desirable, but do-able.

### *The Progressions*

The frame for progressions in years 1 to 3 is aligned to the time students have spent at school:

- After one year at school.
- After two years at school.
- After three years at school.

By year 4 the students' year level becomes more significant than the time they have spent at school. Consultation with the key education sector groups in 2007 confirmed that from year 4 the progressions should describe students' literacy expertise at transition points in their schooling. Hence, in the draft, the progressions from years 4 - 10 were described in terms of the literacy-related knowledge, skills and attitudes students need in order to meet the demands of *The New Zealand Curriculum* by the end of each year for years 4, 6, 8, and 10.

The initial plan had been to finish the progressions at year 8, but the advice of those literacy experts working in secondary schools was that the texts and task demands were significantly different by year 10, where students not only encounter a wide variety of texts (many of which are written for a general adult audience) but are required to engage with them with much less support from their teachers.

The draft document did not include progressions for years 5, 7, and 9 because it is too difficult to differentiate the texts and tasks related to the curriculum in those years in a meaningful way. However, feedback to the draft indicated that teachers wanted these years addressed in some way to guide literacy teaching and learning programmes. The development of standards for reading and writing in years 1-8 also meant that each year level had to be addressed. The decision was to treat year 5 and 6, 7 and 8, and 9 and 10 in two year bands in the final version.

### Linking the *Literacy Learning Progressions to The New Zealand Curriculum*

The decision to describe literacy learning in terms of how it enables students to engage with *The New Zealand Curriculum* was also made early in the development of the draft. The focus on students' purposes for reading and writing (rather than reading and writing as ends in themselves) is based on work lead by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that underpins programmes such as such as Progress in International Student Achievement (PISA).

Students need to **use** their reading and writing to meet the demands of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. These demands are integral to many of the teaching and learning activities designed to support students to develop the key competencies as well as knowledge and skills in all the essential learning areas.

The decision to position and develop the progressions in this way was further sharpened during the development of the national standards for reading and writing when debate in the sector raised concerns that a focus on reading and writing could narrow *The New Zealand Curriculum*. In fact, successful engagement with the breadth of *The New Zealand Curriculum* depends on students' ability to read and write.

### Reading and writing as interactive tools

The OECD project, *Defining and Selecting Key Competencies*<sup>13</sup> developed the competencies model that influenced both the way developing expertise is described in the progressions as well as the concept of reading and writing as interactive tools that students use in order to engage with all learning areas of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Students need to read, respond to and think critically about texts in order to engage with the curriculum. Similarly they need to create texts in order to think about, record, and communicate experiences, ideas and information to meet specific learning purposes from across the curriculum.

While some of the texts students read and write will be literary texts (and almost always taught within the English curriculum,) many of them will be texts such as procedural texts and information reports that are integral to learning in other areas of the curriculum.

As language is central to learning and English is the medium for most learning in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, the importance of literacy in English cannot be overstated.

*The New Zealand Curriculum*, Ministry of Education, 2007, page 16.

In the early years, many of the texts that students read or write largely by themselves within classroom contexts are part of their literacy instructional programme. That is, teachers have selected texts and designed tasks in order to teach specific aspects of literacy.

---

<sup>13</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2005).



As their literacy-related knowledge and skills develop, students use their reading and writing increasingly to meet specific learning purposes across the curriculum. In addition, the actual literacy-related knowledge and skills that students develop is shaped by the kinds of texts and tasks that the curriculum requires them to engage with.

### Engaging with increasingly complex texts and tasks

The texts that students read and write and the tasks with which they must engage as they move through the school system become increasingly complex. At the same time, the content (subject matter) they are reading or writing about becomes more abstract and specialised.

The reading and writing demands that underlie the progressions were identified through an analysis of the achievement objectives for each learning area, and examples of the texts and tasks used in programmes designed to meet those objectives, for example in *The New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars*<sup>14</sup>.

A text's complexity is affected by the complexity of its content, structure and language - the kinds of information in a text and the ways in which that information is related and presented. The characteristics that make texts more complex and the main tasks for which the students need to use their reading and writing are included in the document that sets out the Reading and Writing Standards for years 1-8. The development team acknowledged that many teachers would need to develop their professional knowledge about the how texts become more complex<sup>15</sup>.

### The descriptors (i.e. the way developing expertise is described in the progressions)

At each "signpost" there is a description of the reading and writing expertise that students need to be able to draw on if they are to meet the reading and writing demands at that point in the system.

Various options were explored for describing the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students need to be able to demonstrate as they build their expertise, including separating knowledge from skills, but the decision was made to keep them integrated on the basis that the strategies used in reading and writing are a product of knowledge and skill being used in combination.

Early development also included identifying the knowledge and skills that are common to both reading and writing, and some work was done to draft a single set of progressions for these particular components, for example the development of vocabulary. The team continued to explore ways to make the links between reading and writing as explicit as possible<sup>16</sup>. Even through to the late design stage for the draft document, those items of knowledge and skills common to both reading and writing were laid out in one block of descriptors, but eventually they were separated into reading and writing, even if this meant repeating them in each set.

---

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Education (2003).

<sup>15</sup> For example, many teachers rely on the "reading ages" provided as an indicator to the level of a text in the School Journal. The concept of reading age provides only a rough guide to the complexity of a text, and the term is not a valid way to describe a student's level of reading expertise.

<sup>16</sup> Reading and writing are strongly reciprocal, not only in how they develop, but in how they are used. Many curriculum tasks require students to use their reading and writing together to a greater or lesser extent. The progressions for years 9 and 10 pay particular attention to this aspect.

Literacy learning is cumulative and builds on existing expertise. Certain knowledge and skills are prerequisites for further learning, and for most students the way these are developed follow a similar pattern. Several options for structuring the progressions to take account of these points were explored, while still adhering to the “clear and simple” guiding principle. In particular, the stems were carefully worded to support the concept of developing expertise, although comments in feedback on the draft document suggested that the stems were not always read.

The development of the descriptors in the progressions was influenced by Paris’s writing on “constrained” and “unconstrained” knowledge and skills<sup>17</sup>. In the draft, the descriptors were laid out with the constrained knowledge and skills at the top of each list, moving through to the unconstrained knowledge and skills at the bottom. However the final version moved away from this organisation in order to emphasise that the discrete items of knowledge and skills are used in the service of reading and writing processes and strategies.

In the early years there is a clear focus in the progressions on the constrained knowledge and skills students need in order to decode and encode. When students are able to process texts fluently, they are able to use more of their cognitive resources to engage with meaning, examine texts critically, and use their reading more flexibly<sup>18</sup>.

Similarly in writing, once students can use the code fluently to create texts, they are able to use more of their cognitive resources to convey meaning.

Knowledge and skills are introduced at the point in the progressions they are expected to be under control, and able to be demonstrated by students largely by themselves. The concepts of competencies being “under control” and able to be used by students “largely by themselves” are central to the development of the metacognitive strategies that underpin expertise<sup>19</sup>.

There are two clear implications from the decision to structure the progressions in this way:

- students will be beginning to develop these competencies earlier than when they appear in the progressions; and
- students will continue to use and build on them after they are mentioned.

The terminology “largely by themselves” was used in the draft to acknowledge that, in the classroom setting, students will still be receiving a small amount of support, for example of the kind that they might expect to get in a guided reading lesson, or when teachers help students frame up a report. However feedback from consultation indicated that this term was confusing and possibly also underplayed the importance of students’ developing independence in reading and writing.

The level of specificity of the descriptors was carefully controlled throughout the writing and editing process of the development of the progressions to ensure that descriptions were clear but that they also retained enough richness to demonstrate the complexity involved.

---

<sup>17</sup> Paris (2005).

<sup>18</sup> See for example Pressley (2006).

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Davis (2007).

The development team was concerned that the descriptors could become checklists to be taught in an itemised way. Various options were explored to mitigate this risk, including turning the bulleted lists into a running narrative – a rich description. However, this approach did not provide enough clarity for teachers in terms of guiding them to notice specific knowledge and skills. As noted earlier, considerable attention was paid to wording the stems. This included trying out many options to convey the meaning that the items of knowledge and skills were those that students needed to be able to draw on in order to read and write.

For the final version, the development team decided to structure the progressions to highlight the demand first, the overall processes and strategies students use to meet this demand, and then the specific items of knowledge and skills that they **now** need to draw on (in addition to those mentioned at earlier years) to meet this demand.

### Should the descriptors be aspirational or actual?

The development team looked at evidence about New Zealand student achievement in reading and writing from a range of sources: international surveys (PIRLS and PISA), national data sets and norms from assessment tools (asTTle, NEMP, PATs, the Observation Survey), regional (Reading Recovery data, data from schooling improvement clusters), and local (data from a range of schools).

For some competencies, particularly in the early years, although the norms in assessment tools showed most students were performing at a particular level, there were compelling cases to “shift the goal posts” in order to support the emphasis of the Literacy Strategy on accelerating early literacy learning. Therefore, some knowledge and skills, for example, concepts about print, have been deliberately introduced earlier in the progressions than is current practice in many classrooms. The level of *Ready to Read* texts that students should be reading is also more demanding than is currently the case in many classrooms.

In other cases, the actual student achievement is below that required to meet the demands of *The New Zealand curriculum*. This is especially the case in writing.

Thus the descriptors are determined by the reading and writing demands of the curriculum at that point in the system, not the students’ current reading and writing achievement. Whether the descriptors are actual or aspirational therefore depends on how well aligned current literacy achievement is with the reading and writing demands of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, including the need to make good progress in the early years in order to meet the demands later in the curriculum.

## References and bibliography

- Allcock, J. (2004). *Switch on to Spelling*. Paremata:M.J.A. Publishing.
- Allen, J. (1999). *Words, Words, Words – Teaching Vocabulary in Grades 4 -12*. Maine: Stenhouse.
- Assessment Resource Banks (ARBs) in English, Mathematics and Science. Available at [www.arb.nzcer.org.nz](http://www.arb.nzcer.org.nz)
- asTTle Technical reports and user manual. Available at [www.tki.org.nz/r/asttle](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/asttle)
- Beers, K. (2003) *When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do – A Guide for Teacher 6-12* Portsmouth: Heinemann
- Biemiller, A., & Slonim, N. (2001). "Estimating Root Word Vocabulary Growth in Normative and Advantaged Populations: Evidence for A Common Sequence of Vocabulary Acquisition". *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93, pp. 498-520.
- Borderfields Consulting (2009). *Literacy Learning Progressions: Report on Analysis of Feedback on the Draft Document*. Available at [www.minuedu.govt.nz](http://www.minuedu.govt.nz)
- Braunger, J. and Lewis, J. (2006). *Building a Knowledge Base in Reading*, Second edition. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Clay, M. (1991). *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Clay, M. (1998). *Different Paths to Common Outcomes*. York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers
- Clay, M. (2002). *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, Second edition. Auckland: Heinemann.
- Croft, C., with Mapa, L. (1998). *Spell-write-Revised Edition*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Crooks, T., & Flockton, L. (2005). *Reading and Speaking Assessment Results 2004*. National Education Monitoring Report 34. Dunedin: Educational Assessment Research Unit, University of Otago.
- Crooks, T., & Flockton, L. (2007). *Writing Assessment Results 2006*. National Education Monitoring Report 41. Dunedin: Educational Assessment Research Unit, University of Otago.
- Cunningham, A.E. & Stanovich, K.E. (1997). "Early Reading Acquisition and Its Relation to Reading Experience and Ability 10 Years Later". *Developmental Psychology*, 33(3), pp. 934-945.
- Curriculum Corporation (1998). *Literacy Benchmarks Years 5 & 7 Writing, Spelling and Reading*. Melbourne: Curriculum Corporation. Available at <http://online.curriculum.edu.au/litbench>

- Curriculum Corporation (1998). *Literacy Benchmarks Year 5,7 Writing, Spelling and Reading*. Melbourne: Curriculum Corporation. Available at <http://online.curriculum.edu.au/litbench>
- Darr, C., McDowall, S., Ferral, H., Twist, J., & Watson, V. (2008). *Progressive Achievement Test: Reading 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Teacher Manual*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Davis, A. (2007). *Teaching Reading Comprehension*. Toronto: Thomson Nelson.
- Department for Education and Skills, *Primary Framework for Literacy ad Mathematics* . Available at [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primaryframeworks/literacy/learningobjectives](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primaryframeworks/literacy/learningobjectives)
- Dombey, H., Moustafa, M. & the staff of the Centre for Language Learning in Primary Education. (1998). *Whole to Part Phonics: How Children Learn to Read and Spell*. London: Centre for Language Learning in Primary Education: Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Ehri, L. (1995). "Phases of Development in Learning to Read Words by Sight". *Journal of Research in Reading*,18(2), pp.116-125.
- Elley, W. (2000). *STAR:Supplementary Test of Achievement in Reading for Years 4-6*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Elley, W.B., & Croft, A.C. (1989). *Assessing the Difficulty of Reading Materials: The Noun Frequency Method*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Franken, M., May, S., & McComish, J. (2005). *Pasifika Language Research and Guidelines Project: Literature Review*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Fry, E.B., & Kress, J. E. *The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Graves, M.F. (2006). *The Vocabulary Book: Learning and Instruction*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Henry, M.K. (2003). *Unlocking Literacy – Effective Decoding and Spelling Instruction*. Baltimore:Paul H. Brookes.
- International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (2006). *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) Assessment Framework and Specifications*. Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.
- Johnston, P.H. (2004). *Choice Words: How our Language Affects Children's Learning*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse.

- Locke, A. (2006). *One Step at a Time. A Structured Programme for Teaching Spoken Language in Nurseries and Primary Schools*. London: Network Continuum Education.
- Makin, L., Jones Diaz, C., & McLachlan, C. (2002). *Literacies in Childhood – Changing Views, Challenging Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Sydney: Elsevier.
- McDonald, T. & Thornley, C. (2004). “Literacy Strategies for Unlocking Meaning in Content Areas: Using Student Voices to Inform Professional Development”. *Thinking Classrooms*, 5(3). pp. 7-14.
- McDonald, T. & Thornley, C. “Literacy Teaching and Learning During the Secondary Years – Establishing a pathway for success to NCEA and beyond”, **set 2**, 2005.
- McMahon P.T. (Unpublished report 2007). “*Expectations of Literacy: What is Assessed in National and International Assessments of Reading and Writing Literacy*”.
- McNaughton, S. (2002). *Meeting of Minds*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (1996a). *Exploring Language: A Handbook for Teachers*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (1996b). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early Childhood Education*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (1999a). *Literacy Experts Group Report to the Secretary of Education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education (1999b). *Report of the Literacy Taskforce*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education (2003a). *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1 to 4*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (2003b). *The New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars*. Wellington: New Zealand: Learning Media and the Learning Centre trust of New Zealand. Available at [www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/exemplars](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/exemplars)
- Ministry of Education (2003c). *Effective Literacy Strategies in Years 9-13*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (2005). *Draft Descriptive Standards – Describing the literacy, language and numeracy competencies that adults need to meet the demands of the everyday lives*. Available at [www.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.minedu.govt.nz)
- Ministry of Education (2006). *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 5 to 8*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education, (2007a). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington. Learning Media.

- Ministry of Education (2007b). *Ready to Read Teacher Support Material: Emergent Level*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (2008a). *Pasfika Education Plan 2008-2012*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education (2008b). *The English Language Learning Progressions: Supporting Language Learning in English-medium Contexts*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (2009a). *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success: The Maori Education Strategy 2008-2012*, updated ed. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education (2009b). *Learning through Talk: Oral Language in Years 1 to 3*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (2009c). *Learning through Talk: Oral Language in Years 4 to 8*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education (2009d). *Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1-8*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Nagabhand, S., Nation I. S. P., & Franken M (1993). "Can Texts Be Too Friendly?" *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 9, pp. 895-907.
- Nagy, W.E. & Scott, J.A. (2000). "Vocabulary Processes". In M.L. Kamil, P.B. Mosenthal, P.D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research*, vol.3, pp. 269-284. Mahwah, New Jersey: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- National Institute for Literacy. Available at <http://eff.cls.utk.edu>
- National Reading Panel (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel*. Washington DC: Government Printing Office. Available at [www.nationalreadingpanel.org](http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org)
- Nicholson, T. (2005). *At the Cutting Edge: The Importance of Phonemic Awareness In Learning to Read and Spell*. (Second edition). Wellington: NZCER Press.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2003). *The PISA 2003 Assessment Framework- Mathematics, Reading, Science and Problem-Solving Knowledge and Skills*. Available at [www.pisa.oecd.org](http://www.pisa.oecd.org)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2005). Definition and Selection of Competencies (DeSeCo). Available at [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/61/35070367.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/61/35070367.pdf)
- Paris, S.G. (2005). "Reinterpreting the Development of Reading Skills". *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40(2), pp.184-202.
- Pressley, M. (2006). *Reading Instruction that Works: The Case for Balanced Teaching*. (Third edition). New York, New York: The Guildford Press.

Progressive Achievement Tests (PATs) website at [www.nzcer.org.nz/tests](http://www.nzcer.org.nz/tests)

Snow, C.E., Griffin, P., & Burns, M.S., (Eds.), (1998). *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Washington DC: National Academies Press.

Snow, C.E., Griffin, P., & Burns, M.S., (Eds.). (2005). *Knowledge to Support the Teaching of Reading: Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Stanovich, K.E. (1986). "Matthew Effects in Reading: Some Consequences of Individual Differences in the Acquisition of Literacy". *Reading Research Quarterly*, 21, pp. 360-407.

Tertiary Education Commission (2008). *Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy*. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission.

Tertiary Education Commission (2008). *Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy and Numeracy: Background Information*. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission.

Weissberg, B. (2000). "Developmental Relationships in the Acquisition of English Syntax: Writing vs. Speech. *Learning and Instruction*, 10(1), pp. 37-53.

Wylie, C., Thompson, J., & Lythe, C.C. (2001). *Competent Children*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.



## Appendix A

### Consultation with the National Literacy Reference Group (NLRG)

The Ministry had established the National Literacy Reference Group in 2005 to provide advice on the reframing of the Literacy Strategy for schools. This group was specifically convened in June 2007 to guide the development of the draft Literacy Learning Progressions. Members were presented with a draft conceptual framework and asked to reflect on a number of questions.

#### *Questions for the NLRG*

- Where should the Reading & Writing Progressions start and end?
- What should the “signposts” represent?
- How complete should each “signpost” be?
- How specific should they be?
- How should we describe and organise the content for reading and writing (the components)?
- How do we deal with constrained and unconstrained skills and knowledge, and the relationship between the components?
- How do we deal with the iterative nature of learning? And the complexity? But still ensure that expectations are clear?
- How much do we need to say about texts and tasks?
- What “overlays” or exemplification would help teachers to personalise learning for their students?
- What links should be made to other tools and resources?

As well as providing clear guidance through their responses to these questions, the NLRG also articulated what they considered to be risks, in particular that the progressions could become the de facto curriculum. The group reinforced the specification that the progressions had to be clearly aligned with existing documents, including the draft framework for English language learning.

## Appendix B

The following outline was used to guide scope and content for the draft document:

### Reading Components

- Concepts about print
- Decoding, including:
  - Alphabetic principle
  - Phonological awareness
  - Automaticity
- Vocabulary
- Knowledge of language and text features (including grammar)
- Comprehension
- Critical Thinking

### Writing Components

- Encoding (spelling) including:
  - Alphabetic principle
  - Phonological awareness
  - Morphological knowledge
  - Automaticity
- Vocabulary (and its relationship to spelling)
- Knowledge of language and text features
- Purposes and Audiences
- Writing Processes (planning, composing, revising, editing)

## Appendix C

### Summary of Recommendations from the Report on the analysis of feedback to the draft *Literacy Learning Progressions*

- The *Literacy Learning Progressions* continue to be positioned as tool for teachers to identify the reading and writing demands of the curriculum as a whole.
- The mismatch in language used in the various documents is addressed in the next stage of development of the progressions.
- Consider reframing the descriptors of knowledge and skills in the progressions so that it is more clear that these are used in the service of reading and writing.
- Keep the same level of specificity.
- Take account of feedback concerning specific items.
- Make the underpinning role of oral language in reading and writing more explicit in the progression descriptors and further elaborate the statement on oral language in the introduction.
- Redevelop the writing progressions to incorporate a more systematic approach to the development of spelling.
- More focus is placed on supporting teachers to understand the literacy demands of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, and the need for some students to make greater rates of progress than those resulting from current practice and reflected in current achievement norms.
- Work with early childhood educators to develop a statement that more effectively fulfils the intention of describing the skills and knowledge of children who are well on their way to reading and writing when they start school.
- Accepting that the descriptors in the draft progressions describe the knowledge and skills necessary for all children to access the curriculum, consider reframing the descriptors to prompt teachers to investigate and respond with urgency where children have not made the expected progress after 6 months at school.
- Consider reframing the progressions in two-year bands for years 5 & 6; 7 & 8; and 9 & 10.