

What is expected of students from Kindergarten to Year 12?

Early Stage 1

In Kindergarten, students frequently use letters and symbols to represent words. These may or may not match the words that they are trying to write. By the end of Kindergarten, most students are expected to:

- copy print displayed around the classroom
- contribute ideas to joint class writing activities which label, describe, recount or tell stories
- with assistance, write short texts, using capital letters, full stops and accurate spelling
- develop and practise correct pencil grip and correct letter formation.

Stage 1

During Years 1 and 2, students learn to write more complex sentences. They become aware that writing can be planned, reviewed and changed. By the end of Year 2, most students are expected to:

- organise their writing and talk about its purpose
- write simple procedures, recounts of experiences, stories, information reports and basic explanations
- construct sentences correctly, using capital letters, lower case letters, full stops and question marks
- begin to proofread and edit their own writing and spell common words accurately
- develop handwriting of consistent size and spacing
- use computer software to write texts.

Stage 2

During Years 3 and 4, students further develop their writing and are able to write longer and more complex texts. They begin to recognise and use many of the structures and grammatical features of a variety of texts. By the end of Year 4, most students are expected to:

- construct a range of texts for different audiences and purposes on familiar and researched topics
- present written work in a variety of forms, such as projects, letters, diagrams, posters
- use a range of planning and drafting strategies, such as using key words to take notes
- write well-formed sentences, using the appropriate grammatical features and making correct use of punctuation, including direct speech marks and apostrophes for contractions, e.g. aren't
- spell common words accurately
- use handwriting of a consistent style
- use basic word processing functions to write texts.

Stage 3

During Years 5 and 6, students begin to organise their writing to achieve the social purpose of the text being written. They write well-structured sentences and use a variety of grammatical features effectively. By the end of Year 6, most students are expected to:

- use their knowledge of grammatical features to write well-planned, cohesive and extended texts
- relate to their audiences through the subtle use of language, such as humour and irony
- use correct punctuation and experiment with punctuation, such as colons and exclamation marks
- apply their knowledge of spelling strategies and conventions to ensure a high level of spelling accuracy
- develop a personal handwriting style that will enhance fluency, speed and legibility
- use a range of computer software and applications to develop and enhance texts, e.g. borders, tables, graphics, word processors and web tools.

Stage 4

During Years 7 and 8, students apply their writing skills and strategies to write in all subject areas, in order to produce more sophisticated texts. By the end of Year 8, most students are expected to:

- analyse how writing achieves the specialised purposes of writing in different subject areas
- write well-structured and well-presented texts in each subject area
- use grammatical features and writing conventions to shape their writing
- make accurate use of technical and abstract vocabulary
- experiment with a variety of handwriting, layout and computer skills so that these can be adapted to a variety of specialised writing contexts.

Stage 5

During Years 9 and 10, students select from a wide range of writing skills and understandings in order to meet the increasing demands of the subjects in which they are writing. By the end of Year 10, most students are expected to:

- analyse and experiment with the ways in which a range of school and community texts have been structured to achieve simple, specialised or complex purposes
- reflect critically on the purposes and audiences of texts, in a range of school and community contexts
- adapt knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to produce increasingly innovative technical and abstract texts
- write well-crafted texts for a wide range of purposes and audiences
- use an extended range of editing and proofreading skills and strategies to ensure accuracy in all writing
- experiment with ways of improving the layout and design of the texts they produce.

Stage 6

During Years 11 and 12, students expand their understanding of the production of written texts in order to become confident, mature, skilled writers in personal, academic and community contexts. By the end of Year 12, most students are expected to:

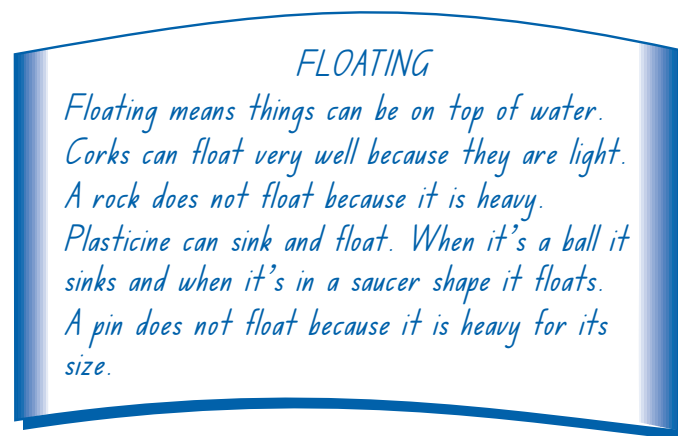
- understand how a wide range of personal, academic, technical, workplace and community texts have been structured to achieve their purpose
- investigate and experiment with the ways in which grammatical features and writing conventions are shaped by the purpose, content and intended impact of the text
- produce polished, high-quality writing which achieves specialised or complex purposes
- experiment with and apply skills and strategies used by professional editors and proofreaders
- use a variety of layout and design features to enhance the text when desktop publishing
- demonstrate an awareness of the historical, social and cultural context of a wide range of texts.

You do not have to be an expert. Help your child with those areas of writing with which you feel confident. Share your writing experiences with your child. As you do so, talk about the different purposes and audiences for writing. For example, discuss why you are writing something and who you expect to read it. Make writing experiences at home purposeful and interesting for yourself and your child.

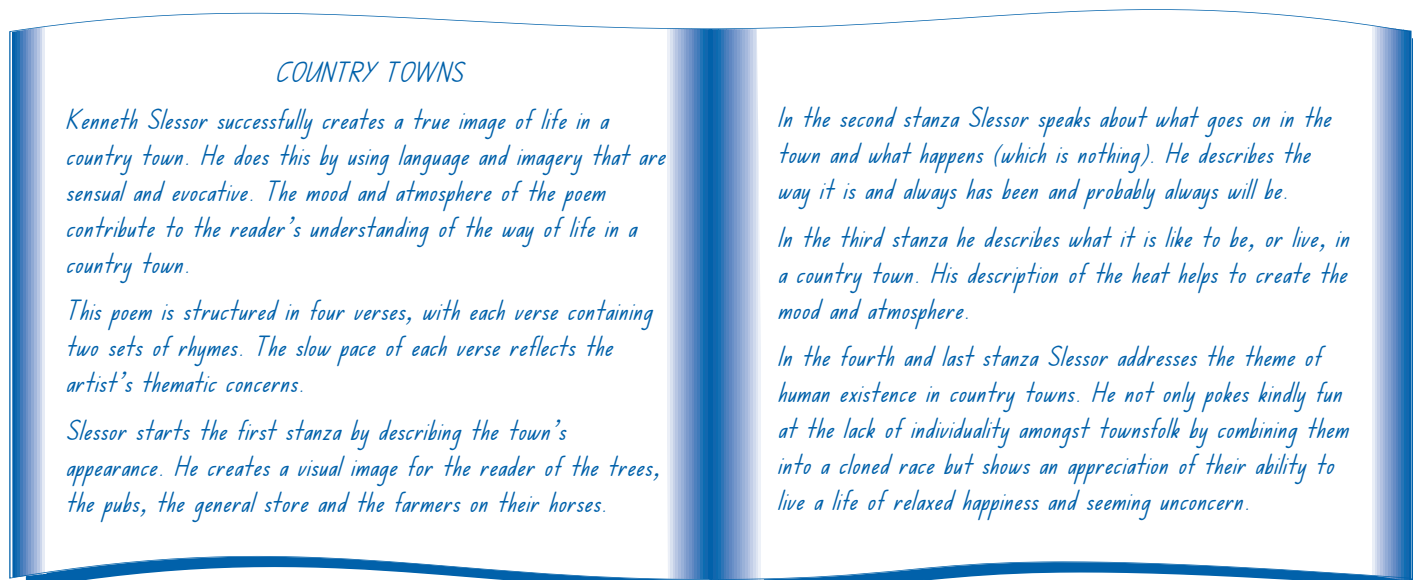
What are audience and purpose?

- The *purpose* is the reason why a text was written.
- The *audience* is the person or people for whom the text was written.

The purpose of the following Stage 1 text is to explain the concept of floating. The audience for this text might be the teacher, wanting to assess whether or not the concept of floating has been understood.



The Stage 5 text below is a response to a poem. Its purpose is to analyse poetic techniques and comment on their effect on the reader. The audience for this response might be the teacher or other class members.



Why are audience and purpose important?

They are important because they determine the tone and form that a text takes. For example, a note from a parent to a child (audience) reminding him or her to do a job on arriving home (purpose) will have quite a different form and tone from a letter to an aunt (audience) inviting her to join a family celebration (purpose).

How can I help my child with writing?

How can I encourage my child to write?

- Read your child's writing or have him or her read the writing to you and comment on the positive aspects, for example, "I really like the way you've described this."
- Praise your child for having a go at writing words that are new and explain how to spell words which are causing difficulty.
- Talk to your child about why an author or film maker might create a book, play or film in a particular way. What points of view are presented? What is the author's purpose?
- Read and talk about the writing that your child brings home from school.
- Praise your child for using neat and legible handwriting.
- In order to develop spelling and vocabulary, play word games such as *I Spy*, *Scrabble*, *Boggle*, *Scattergories* and crosswords.

How can I help with writing at home?

- Have your child label things that he or she designs or makes.
- Compile a photo album or scrapbook with your child and have him or her write captions for the photos and pictures, or encourage your child to keep a diary of special events, e.g. a holiday diary.
- Make the writing of notes, letters and stories a normal part of family life.
- Involve your child in helping to complete forms, such as insurance or Medicare claims, and in writing job applications or résumés.

How can I support my child with homework?

- Help your child to understand the purpose of the given task, asking him or her to talk about what has to be done.
- Encourage your child to use various types of paper for drawing and writing and to use a variety of instruments, such as pens, pencils, crayons and textas.
- If you have a typewriter or word processor at home, make it available for your child to use.
- Help your child to use reference materials such as dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopedias, CD-ROMs and the Internet.
- Before your child attempts an assignment, help him or her to understand what reference materials are needed by talking about it and asking questions which will guide the child's planning.
- Draw attention to the technical words in writing and look them up together.
- Help your child to understand and use the information presented in graphs, diagrams and pictures which may be needed for a written assignment.
- If your child is having difficulty with homework, talk to the teacher.
- Encourage your child to use neat and legible handwriting.



Where can I obtain further information?

Your child's teacher can provide more information about writing, handwriting and spelling.

Copies of the following documents have been sent to schools.

Publications of the NSW Department of Education and Training

Parent literacy programs K-8

Helping your child with literacy in Years 5-8

Focus on literacy

Focus on literacy: Spelling

Focus on literacy: Writing

Contact EduSales
Telephone (02) 9822 7270
Facsimile (02) 9822 7511
Address PO Box 564
Moorebank NSW 1875

Publication of the NSW Board of Studies

Introducing the English K-6 syllabus to parents and school community members

Contact Board of Studies
Telephone (02) 9367 8178
Facsimile (02) 9367 8484
Address GPO Box 5300
Sydney NSW 2000

Board of Studies syllabus documents and support materials are available on:

<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

Parent organisations

Organisations such as the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations, the Federation of School Community Organisations and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group might be active in your child's school.

Contact the principal for further information about how these organisations operate in your school to provide support for parents and students.



Praise your child for having a go at writing words that are new and explain how to spell words that are causing difficulty.



Draw attention to the technical words that you both see and hear and look them up together.



Helping your child with writing

from Kindergarten to Year 12

Teaching writing

Students in all grades and subject areas are taught to write for a variety of purposes. These purposes include writing to:

- inform
- entertain
- argue a point of view
- recount an experience
- discuss
- describe.

Students are taught to consider how their writing can influence their intended reader.

Students are also taught how to draft, revise, discuss, edit and proofread their writing before publishing it. There is always an emphasis on correct spelling, grammar and punctuation and neat and legible handwriting.

The teaching of writing is closely linked to the teaching of talking, listening, viewing and reading.



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