



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Communication, language and literacy

Junior Cycle Level 1 Priority Learning Unit (PLU)

Prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

PLU 1: Communication, language and literacy

Communication underpins all learning and is fundamental to the capacity to transfer learning. Communication and language form the foundation for all other PLUs. Learning in this unit covers both verbal and non-verbal ways of receiving and giving information. Language development requires social interaction between the student and a communication partner. Some of the students in this cohort may first need to be alerted to the fact that they live in a world outside of their own body. Communication for some can be enabled and progressed with aids like augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), visual and object cues, verbal prompts, facial expressions, gestures, sign language (such as ISL), electronic devices, Braille (or Moon¹), and the written form. Through developing communication skills, students enhance their social interactions and improve their self-esteem.

Exposure to a broad literacy experience is a feature of all JCL1LPs. This definition of literacy includes multi-modal literacies encompassing spoken, printed, visual, and digital literacies.

The Communication, language and literacy PLU is made up of 5 elements, which include:

- Developing communicative relationships
- Understanding
- Exploring and using
- Reading
- Written expression.

A student will work on learning outcomes based on their strengths, interests and needs as indicated in their SSF. A student may achieve a learning outcome at any one of the eight progression pathways. Curriculum content from any curriculum area can be used to achieve the learning outcomes.

Element	Students should be able to...
Developing communicative relationships	1.1 indicate awareness of sensory stimuli in the learning environment
	1.2 establish consistent patterns of attending to stimuli/personnel/activities in the immediate environment
	1.3 engage in an activity requiring joint attention with one or more people
	1.4 demonstrate turn-taking with a communicative partner
	1.5 show awareness of and/or use tone, body language, gestures, pace, vocalisations, and volume to impact communication
	1.6 initiate communication with a familiar adult and peers
	1.7 engage in and enjoy a meaningful exchange with a communicative partner

¹Moon is a reading system of embossed symbols for the blind. It is claimed by its supporters to be easier to understand than Braille.

Element	Students should be able to...
Understanding	<p>1.8 show recognition of personal and/or standardised objects of reference</p> <p>1.9 respond to verbal and non-verbal cues related to familiar communicative routines</p> <p>1.10 attend and respond to increased vocabulary in text²</p> <p>1.11 consistently respond to familiar factual questions</p> <p>1.12 show signs of anticipating next steps in a familiar activity when presented with a stimulus</p> <p>1.13 predict outcomes for a familiar or unfamiliar story or event choosing from a range of possible outcomes</p>
Exploring and using	<p>1.14 clearly indicate preferred objects and/or activities and refuse non-preferred items</p> <p>1.15 request repetition and/or more of and/or change of objects or events</p> <p>1.16 make a request and/or express a need, verbally or non-verbally</p> <p>1.17 participate in the sharing of a familiar or personal story, activity or event</p> <p>1.18 communicate to express feelings verbally or non-verbally</p> <p>1.19 express interests and opinions through a range of verbal or non-verbal communication methods</p>
Reading	<p>1.20 illustrate signs of engagement and enjoyment with stories, texts, poetry, funny or favourite reading material</p> <p>1.21 choose and handle books, demonstrating familiarity with book handling skills</p> <p>1.22 show recognition and understanding of symbols, signs, logos, familiar words, letters or visual representations of items</p> <p>1.23 seek meaning from combinations of signs, symbols or text for enjoyment or practical purposes</p> <p>1.24 read a book, magazine or other text with understanding</p> <p>1.25 recall a story read or personal experience using objects, marks, gestures or vocalisations</p>
Written expression	<p>1.26 show enjoyment while making marks and or texts, and use gestures, sounds or words to focus attention on these, showing signs of understanding that texts carry meaning</p> <p>1.27 engage in/with mechanics of mark-making exercises to create a form of text according to their strengths, interests and needs, using motor or eye-gaze skills as appropriate</p> <p>1.28 explore a variety of implements³ and surfaces⁴ for creating texts</p> <p>1.29 place marks, signs, symbols or texts in the correct sequence and/or with the correct orientation to infer meaning</p> <p>1.30 use signs, symbols or text to share experiences, thoughts, opinions and preferences with peers with growing confidence</p>

²Throughout the JCL1LP Programme Statement, 'text' includes all products of language use: oral, gesture, sign, written, visual, electronic and digital.

³Implements to include but not confined to any object capable of mark making, such as hands/feet, electronic device, wheelchair, crayon/pencil/paint, foam, etc.

⁴Surfaces to include but not confined to any surface used for applying marks, such as paper, a digital device, floor, wall, desk, etc.



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