

This newsletter and the Secondary Student Achievement Professional Learning and Development initiative is funded by the Ministry of Education. The providers are The University of Auckland and Te Tapuae o Rehua consortium.

National Newsletter: English

Information and resources for middle leaders in secondary schools | Term 1 2013

Welcome you to a new year and to our first 2013 newsletter. We hope that you find our newsletters useful for highlighting new resources and developments, and for provoking some reflective thinking about programme design and delivery. Newsletters will be published at the start of each term.

Mary Libby and Mal Thompson will continue to provide support for English middle leaders in their regions. We also welcome Nigel Mitchell as a regional facilitator in Central South.

Suggestions for improvements and possible content for future newsletters are welcome.

NCEA level 3 alignment with the NZC

NCEA Levels 1 to 3 in English are now aligned with NZC Levels 6 to 8. Completing this alignment positions the curriculum at the heart of teaching and learning programmes for senior secondary students.

What you need to know

- The Level 3 aligned achievement standards for English are now registered and published with supporting assessment resources, and teaching and learning guides.
- Aligned achievement standards and support materials for English can be viewed here: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/levels/>
- The Secondary Education Portal on TKI provides information and guidance about curriculum and NCEA, and resources to support middle leaders: <http://secondary.tki.org.nz>
- Level 3 non-aligned internally-assessed standards are valid for internal assessment only, until December 2013.

Differentiation: new English online resource

Teachers from Massey High School and Tamaki College share their approaches to differentiated writing programmes in the junior school. The stories focus on two classes from each school. Video clips feature teachers talking about their approaches, and snapshots of classroom practice. These are linked to different stages of the inquiry cycle. This is a resource that could be used for departmental or individual professional development, especially if you are looking to embed the teaching as inquiry process.

<http://englishonline.tki.org.nz/English-Online/News/Two-approaches-to-differentiation-Massey-High-School-and-Tamaki-College>

What's new?

NCEA Updates

The latest NCEA Update (issue 14, December 2012) includes information re level 3 alignment, and other useful links. The key purpose of this online publication is to ensure consistent and accurate sharing of information. These NCEA Updates are published online in the last week of each term. You can subscribe to receive an email notification when they are available online.

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/publications/newsletters-and-circulars/ncea-update/issue-6-september-2012/>

SecQual

S2012/030 - 20 Nov 2012

Request for Clarification replacing Optional Teacher-selected Evidence

Teachers may ask specific questions of moderators about how to interpret the standard. This document will no longer be directly associated with student work and making assessment judgments.

Latest standards exclusion list

http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/generated_pdfs/english-5276.pdf

NZQA's Moderation Best Practice Workshops

Information about these, including dates, is now available from NZQA. Note that there is a charge of \$120 for these this year. Remember enrolments close a month before the due date. Go to

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/events/best-practice-workshops/>

Using portfolios to improve the learning in writing

What is a writing portfolio?

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in writing. Therefore, students must be given the time throughout the year to explore the process of writing and produce pieces of writing that they may wish to polish for inclusion in their final selection. Writing portfolios can be used at any level in English but are specifically encouraged for students at NCEA Levels 2 and 3.

A portfolio contains all of a student's writing attempts, including pieces of writing kept because they are instructional, for example, partially finished work that focuses on or includes an area of concern for the student. Early on in the writing process the student may seek and receive quite detailed and specific feedback on their writing from either their teacher or peers. This level of feedback is discussed in the Conditions of Assessment as "hands on". As a marker you need to feel confident that summative work is the student's own, so by the time they are ready to produce work to be included in the final selection they need to be in a position to complete that writing largely unaided ("hands off").

Students should be encouraged to take risks with their writing and to try different things. Not all of these attempts will be successful. However, parts of them might be useful to use in other pieces of writing. At the end of the year (or writing process), students review their writing portfolio and decide what pieces should be selected for assessment. It is useful to conference with the students about this choice so that the pieces chosen best exemplify the student's ability as a writer.

NZQA does not have any requirements as to how many pieces should be included in the portfolio throughout the year, however, the standard requires a **selection**, which is defined as a least 2 pieces of writing. Only the pieces assessed in the selection need to be submitted for external moderation.

How can I best help my students with their portfolios?

First and foremost, make portfolios a part of your normal classroom routine. Create a classroom community that values reading, writing, and thinking. Like anything else, becoming a writer takes practice. Students should be given regularly scheduled blocks of time to practise their craft.

Encourage students to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. Use the writing process to support students in honing their writing skills. By setting clear goals, and regularly revising and evaluating their writing and the writing of their peers, students will become more reflective as they develop as practising writers. Also encourage them to read widely to see the way 'experts' write.

A statement of intent for each piece can, in effect, act as the "task" for that piece of writing and can also help the student to organize their thoughts. It should explain the **specific audience, purpose and style** of the piece. Level 3 students might consider a statement of intent for their whole portfolio and to try to link the pieces in some way; for example, by style, narrative perspective, genre or theme. This can also be used as a starting point for planning, and for review during the drafting process.

Any work that students prepare for other standards in English and other subjects can be put into the portfolio (e.g. practice essay, research report, personal response, speech transcript) although the pieces will need to be **re-crafted** to meet the criteria for the writing standard at Level 2 or 3 and students will need guidance on the crafting process.

National workshops – focus on Level 3 NCEA

A series of national workshops for English middle leaders is planned. Further details will be sent to schools once venues are confirmed. Dates are:

Monday 4th March: Auckland
Thursday 7th March: Bay of Plenty
Thursday 14th March: Taupo
Monday 18th March: Gisborne
Wednesday 20th March: Hawkes Bay
Thursday 4th April: Wellington
Friday 5th April: Upper Hutt
Tuesday 9th April: New Plymouth
Thursday 11th April: Palmerston Nth
Monday 6th May: Northland
Tuesday 14th May: Christchurch
Thursday 16th May: West Coast
Tuesday 21st May: Nelson
Monday 27th May: Invercargill
Wednesday 29th May: Dunedin
Friday 14th June: Waikato

Have you seen...

NZQA English subject page

Clarifications for the aligned Level 2 and 3 Achievement Standards are now available online.

TKI resources

<http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-aligned-standards/English>

New tasks

There are new tasks available on TKI for 1.7 AS 90855 create a visual text
1.7(Av2) "Making Music"
1.7(Bv2) "Tuakiri. Ahurei. Ora. Identity. Uniqueness. Life."
<http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-aligned-standards/English/Level-1-English>

There is an additional task for 2.4 AS91101 Produce a selection of crafted and controlled writing
2.4(C) "Lyrical Genius"
<http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-aligned-standards/English/Level-2-English>

There are also new versions of a number of other tasks. When sending in tasks with external moderation, ensure you include the version number of the task used.

Conditions of Assessment

Revised Conditions of Assessment for all levels are now online.

Literacy in English

By Mal Thompson, National Literacy Coordinator

Kress defines English as "...above all, the subject which deals with the means of representation and communication: the means whereby we say who we are, to ourselves and to others; the means whereby we can examine the visions others before us have had about themselves and their times.." (Kress 1995 p viii).

Are, then, English and literacy the same thing?

As English teachers, we would say they are closely linked but our NZ curriculum document also points to all learning areas having a set of literacies that are relevant to them. No longer are English teachers required to be the 'gatekeepers' for literacy and shoulder the responsibility for students' literacy results. However, English and literacy are closely interlinked and English teachers have had, and continue to have, the teaching of reading, writing, visual and oral communication at the centre of their programmes.

English is concerned with how language works in a range of contexts and media. Words on classroom walls support our students to write more effectively. Students are exposed to lots of information when they connect instantly and communicate with worldwide audiences, sharing information with others around the world with an immediate response. The use of multiple formats and channels of communication through such means as blogs, wikis, Facebook, UTube, messaging and texting has motivated English teachers to include different teaching methods and different ways of assessing work in the English classroom. All this means that students have multiple opportunities to develop literacy strategies through English. Teachers have expressed concerns about the 'standards' dropping where literacy is now widely assessed in all learning areas, but this may be a challenge to us to review our programmes, and strengthen students' skills which can be transferred to other learning areas.

Our newly aligned standards demand that we English teachers embrace critical literacy skills: when studying texts we question how we are to read the text and whether the reader can read it from different viewpoints. A reader must draw on knowledge of language and text forms, features, audience and purpose. There is clearly a place for literacy in English but not exclusively. With more time without the worry of literacy being solely our responsibility, English teachers can focus on innovative and engaging programmes and enjoy studying a wide range of texts.

Resources for critical literacy can be found on Literacyonline to support students in building their reading and writing skills. Dr Susan Sandretto has published *Planting Seeds*, which defines critical literacy and describes some strategies teachers can use in their teaching and learning programmes.

Useful web sites

Secondary Literacy Online

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Secondary-Literacy>

NZQA Subject pages (links to literacy and numeracy)

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/>

Literacy Unit Standards resources

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy-level-1/>

Useful links

English online

<http://englishonline.tki.org.nz/>
A site for all teachers of English.

Communities on TKI

<http://www.tki.org.nz/Communities>
Includes curriculum documents, news, guidance, resources, and stories and Assessment Information and assessment tools to improve teaching and learning, including [e-asTTle](#).

NCEA on TKI

Go to <http://ncea.tki.org.nz/>

NZQA English subject page

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/levels/>

Everything you need to know in relation to English and NZQA including the standards, clarifications, moderators' newsletters, benchmark samples for the internal standards and sample external exam papers and benchmark samples.

NZATE

<http://www.nzate.co.nz/>

Information about regional associations and resources that are available to support you in the delivery of NCEA.

NZATE conference 2013

Start planning now for 'Vintage to Visionary' at Karamu High School, Hastings from the 17-19 July.

<http://www.nzateconference.co.nz>

Studyit

www.studyit.org.nz

Assistance for students and teachers with NCEA.

Down the Back of the Chair

www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz

0800 660 662

A place to get copies of Ministry of Education teaching and learning resources.

Teachers Council

<http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/rtc/index.stm>

The Registered Teacher

Criteria describe the criteria for quality teaching in New Zealand. All teachers seeking to maintain full registration are required to meet the Registered Teacher Criteria.

University Entrance literacy

SecQual S2012/026 - 30 Oct 2012 outlines the changes for this year, and for 2014 and beyond. It gives links to the standards that earn literacy credits this year (English and English for Academic Purposes), and to the standards across subjects that will earn literacy credits from 2014. Questions have been asked about year 12 students in 2013. The following clarification has been provided by NZQA.

- Anyone gaining University Entrance (fulfilling all requirements) from 2014 will need 10 credits of literacy
- If students have 8 literacy credits but do not get UE (all requirements) until after 2013, the literacy requirement is checked anew – their 8 literacy credits will not be enough, they will need 10 literacy credits.
- 8 literacy credits in year 12, 2013, will not be sufficient to meet the literacy requirement if that student is going to university in 2015 – they will need 10 credits.
- If someone gains UE in 2013, (all requirements) with 8 credits of literacy, and then doesn't go to university until 2015 or later, they still have UE.

This means that students gaining University Entrance **in its entirety** from next year will be required to meet the 'new' literacy requirements. From 2014 2.2 and 2.7 will no longer count toward the reading requirement for UE literacy. 2.2 will continue to count toward the writing requirement for UE literacy.

A panel of literacy experts from each university determined the reading and writing skills students would need to be successful at university. Students can gain the connections standard by looking at connections solely across visual texts, and can present their material orally.

Workshops/cluster meetings

We will continue to offer workshops in a range of locations across the country. In the first half of the year these will focus on NCEA level 3. They will offer opportunities for middle leaders to share experiences about their level 3 programmes to date and to explore teaching practices that are proving successful for raising achievement. Flyers with further details will be sent to schools early in the term. We will also continue to support regional cluster meetings when possible.

National newsletters

These national newsletters are developed for every learning area by national co-ordinators from The University of Auckland and/or Te Tapuae o Rehua consortium (University of Canterbury, University of Otago and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu). For more information about Ministry-funded professional development for secondary middle leaders, visit this page on TKI:

<http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Secondary-middle-leaders/Professional-learning-and-development>

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If you are receiving this newsletter in error or are aware of anyone whom you think would benefit from receiving it (particularly any new heads of department in your area) we would appreciate hearing from you.