

# LITERACY LEARNING PROGRESSION

As students learn basic skills like reading, writing, spelling, adding and subtracting their progress can be tracked, as these skills are usually developed in a predictable order.

Students whose first or main language is not English may follow a different path as they develop literacy skills. Below is an indication of how a student who is learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) might progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Their skill development includes developing literacy skills in their first language while simultaneously learning English.

## How does my child learn literacy skills if their first language is not English?

### Talking and listening in the home language/dialect

- Asks and answers questions about a text.
- Retells a story or talks about an idea in detail.
- Correctly uses new words they have learnt.
- Gives detailed answers to 'how' and 'why' questions.
- Uses gesture or body language to communicate e.g. tugs on the teacher's arm
- Copies everyday words used by teachers and classmates e.g. toilet.
- Uses their home language/dialect with people they know.
- Listens attentively to simple stories and songs.
- Responds to simple instructions and questions in English e.g. Come to the mat. What's your name?
- Checks understanding with home language speakers.
- Distinguishes between English and home language.
- Attempts English pronunciation and intonation.
- Repeats short phrases with correct word order.

### Reading in the home language/dialect

- Reads a few words or a short section of text.
- May repeat part of the text from memory.
- Finger traces to follow the text.
- Points to and names some letters.
- Recounts a text including most key details.
- Answers a range of questions about the text.
- Guesses what might happen on the next page.
- Shows interest in reading and looking at English books.
- Recognises some differences between their home language print and English print e.g. different print direction.
- Learns to match English sounds with the appropriate letters (graphemes).
- Recognises their own name in writing.
- Follows text read from left to right/top to bottom.
- Recognises some English sound-symbol relationships and some common letter patterns.
- Recognises some taught English words automatically.
- Sounds out unfamiliar words.
- Relies on visuals to understand vocabulary.
- May use home language/dialect with peers and teachers.

### Writing in the home language/dialect

- Observes and copies writing behaviours.
- Makes shapes and lines to represent letters.
- Names and finger traces over letters.
- Types a few letters to attempt familiar words.
- Attempts to write their own name.
- Writes letters inconsistently.
- Copies writing from their classroom environment e.g. other children's names.
- Writes simple sentences with familiar words and phrases or text describing everyday experiences.
- Writes words displayed around the classroom.
- Uses English print direction.
- May include some words or letters from home language/dialect.

Developing home  
language/dialect

Transitioning to school

Developing English and  
maintaining home language