

# Structured literacy guidance

To support the development of a whole school instructional model



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# English and Structured Literacy

## English

The English Curriculum is a specific learning area focused on developing students' skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Literacy is a broader skill set that can be applied across the entire curriculum.

## Structured literacy

Structured literacy (SL) approaches emphasise highly explicit and systematic teaching of all important components of literacy. These components include both foundational skills (e.g., decoding, spelling) and higher-level literacy skills (e.g., reading comprehension, written expression). SL also emphasises oral language abilities essential to literacy development, including phonemic awareness, sensitivity to speech sounds in oral language, and the ability to manipulate those sounds.<sup>1</sup>

An SL approach to teaching English may include the following components, depending on the age and needs of the class: phonemic and phonological awareness skills, phonics, spelling, fluency, reading and language, comprehension, writing, and handwriting.

*Structured literacy lessons do not cover the whole of the English curriculum.* Additional time needs to be allocated across the school day to explicitly teach English and to practice applying this in an integrated way across the curriculum.

## Systematic Synthetic Phonics

As outlined in the [Curriculum, assessment, reporting and certification policy](#)<sup>2</sup>, Schools must implement a systematic synthetic phonics approach from Transition to Year 2.

Phonics is the process of linking individual speech sounds (phonemes) to written symbols (graphemes). It must be taught in way that is:

- Systematic – explicit and carefully sequenced
- Synthetic – includes the practice of synthesising, or blending sounds together

A systematic synthetic phonics approach would occur during the *Phonemic Awareness and Phonics* section of a structured literacy lesson with learning revisited throughout the school day. Older students should continue to be taught using a systematic synthetic phonics approach until they have automatic recall of letter-sound correspondences.

## Models of reading

Theorists have developed a broad array of reading models to represent the reading process. Many of the common models are discussed in the article [Reading models: putting the jigsaw together](#)<sup>3</sup>.

## The Big Six of reading instruction

Skilled readers apply all six components of [the Big 6](#)<sup>4</sup> to comprehend text, though teachers may focus on specific elements at different times. Phonological awareness, phonics, and fluency are constrained skills, with fluency bridging word reading and comprehension. These constrained skills should be taught systematically to match students' development. Meanwhile, oral language, vocabulary, and comprehension are unconstrained skills, evolving over time as students are exposed to more content and engage with a

<sup>1</sup> <https://dyslexiaida.org/heres-why-schools-should-use-structured-literacy/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/curriculum>

<sup>3</sup> <https://petaa.edu.au/Mp/Mp/Curric-Res/PPs/PETAA-PAPER-221.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.pearson.com/en-au/media/2481428/research-process-and-the-big-six.pdf>

range of texts. Early focus on constrained skills helps students develop the complex, unconstrained skills essential for lifelong learning.

The structured literacy lessons outlined below integrate the components of the Big 6 to provide a comprehensive and effective approach to reading instruction. By systematically and explicitly teaching these components, structured literacy ensures that students develop the necessary skills to become proficient readers and writers. Oral language is developed throughout the language comprehension and writing sections of the model.

## Structured literacy lesson outlines

### Connection to how students learn

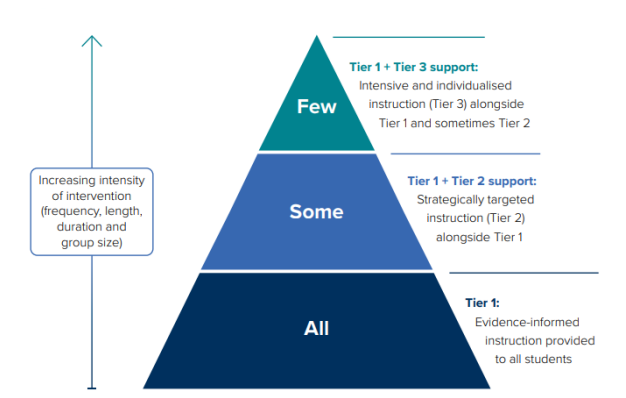
Teaching practices that are aligned with how students learn are the most effective in improving education outcomes for all. There is strong evidence about the processes that occur during learning.

AERO's [Teaching for how students learn: A model of learning and teaching](#)<sup>5</sup> provides guidance on teaching that aligns with how students learn. These practices should be used when implementing structured literacy.

### Connection to Signature Strategies

The following lesson outlines can support the development of a [whole school instructional model](#)<sup>6</sup>.

### Connection to Multi-Tiered System of Supports



AERO's introduction to [the multi-tiered system of supports \(MTSS\)](#)<sup>7</sup> defines Tier 1 as the evidence-based instructional practices and supports delivered to all students in general education classrooms that facilitate achievement of learning defined in the curriculum.

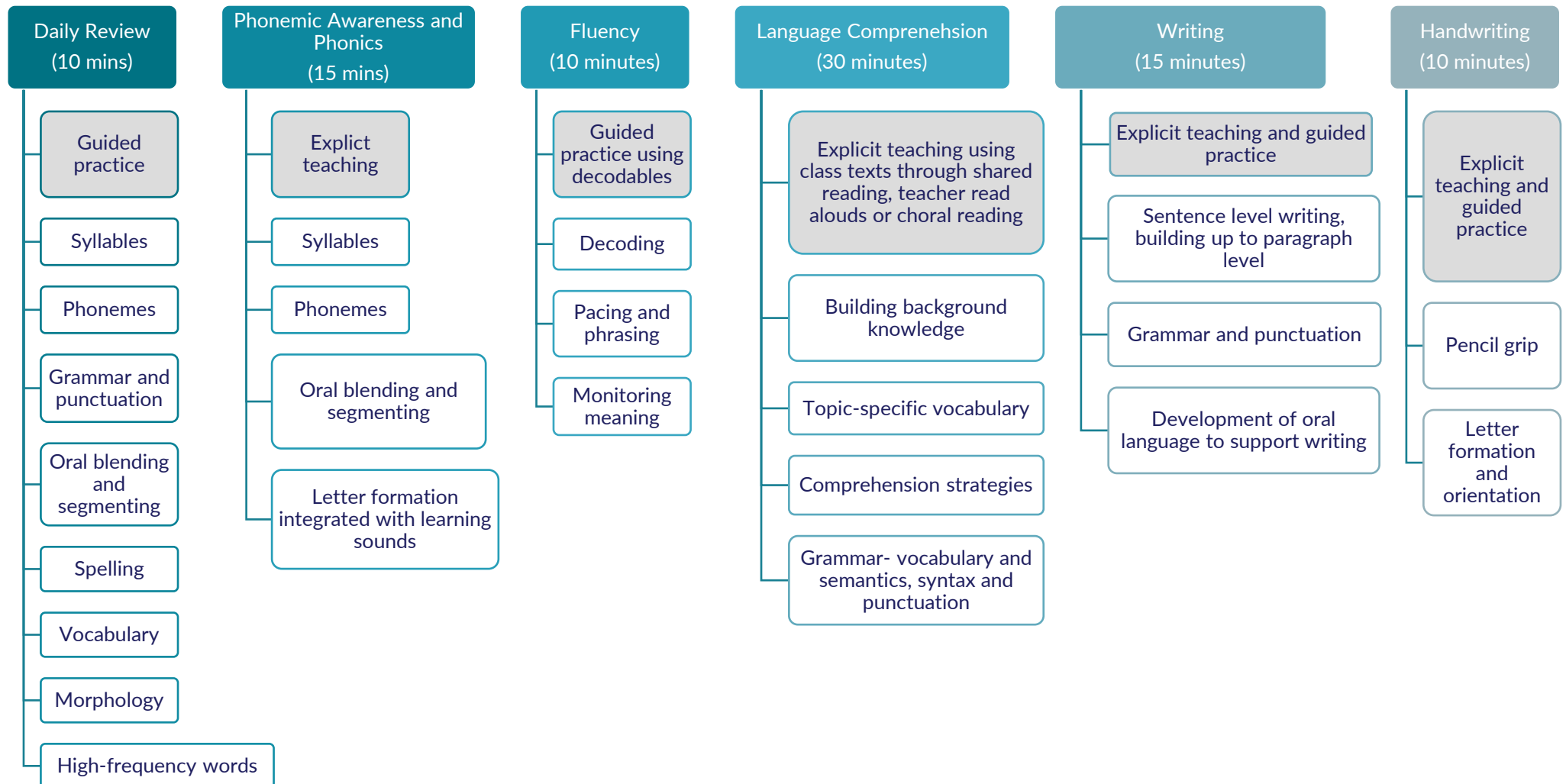
Structured Literacy approaches should form part of Tier 1 instruction provided to all students including those who have a language background other than English.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/guides-resources/practice-resources/teaching-how-students-learn-model-learning-and-teaching>

<sup>6</sup> <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/school-improvement/set-goals/signature-strategies/engage/e5-whole-school-instructional-model>

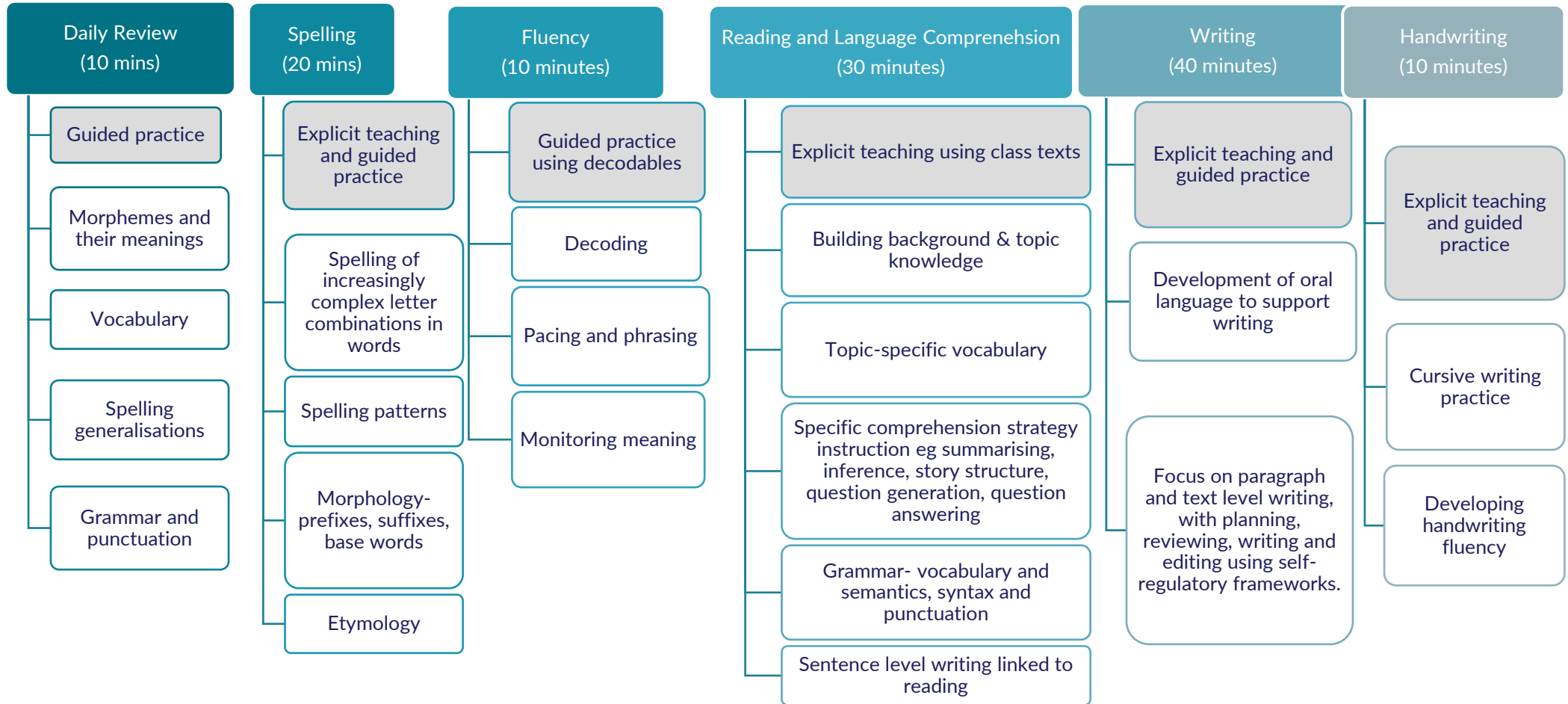
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/summaries-explainers/explainers/introduction-multi-tiered-system-supports>

## Transition to Year 2<sup>8</sup>



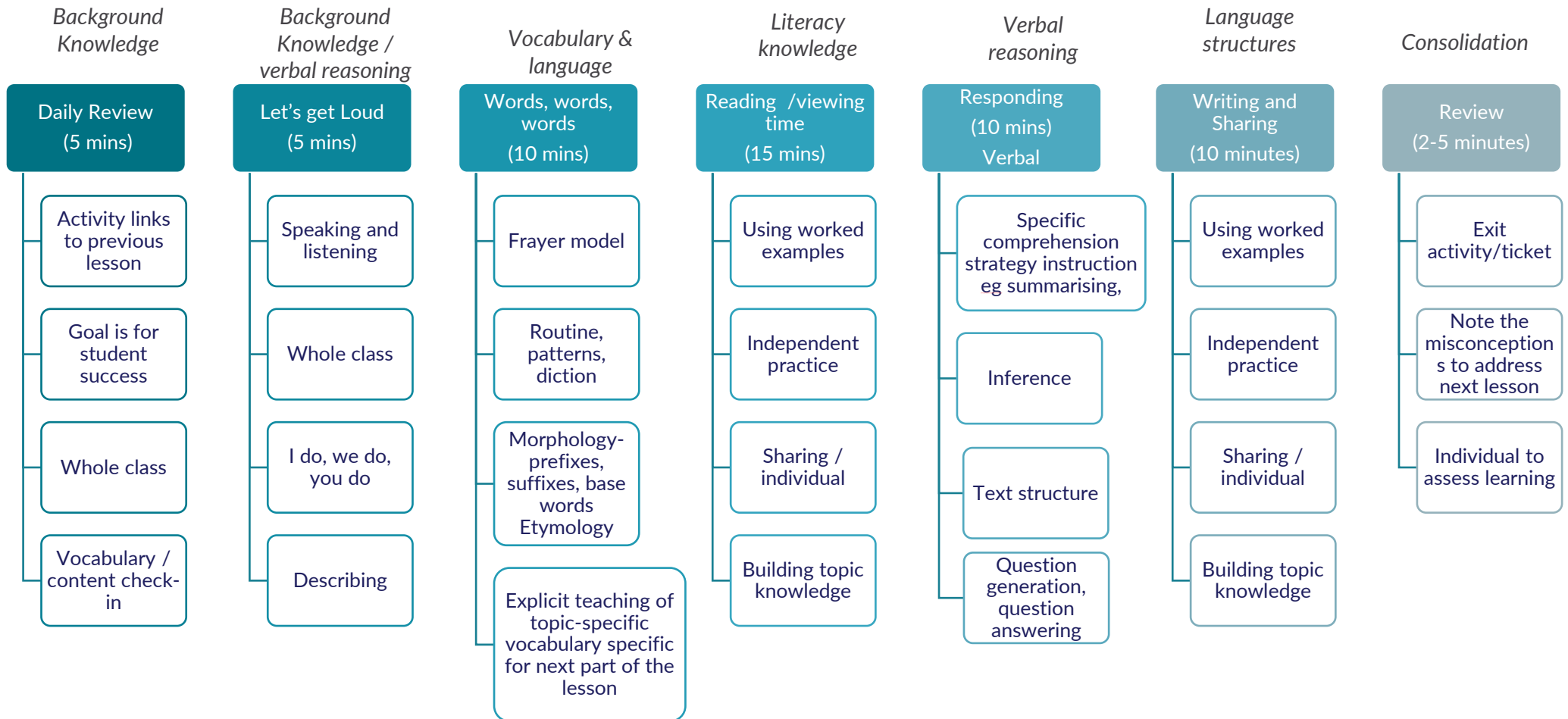
<sup>8</sup> Adapted from <https://www.literacyimpact.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Literacy-Block-Overview-P-2.pdf>

## Year 3 to Year 6<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Adapted from <https://www.literacyimpact.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Literacy-Block-Overview-3-6.pdf>

## Roadmap to Stage 1 (Suggested for Years 7 to 10)





## Supporting resources

### ADaPS

The [assessment design and performance standards documents](#)<sup>10</sup> (the ADaPS) can be used to support professional discussions about the AC V9.0 year level standards, task and assessment design and student achievement.

### T-6 components

Component	Students are...	Example of free supporting resources
Phonemic and Phonological Awareness skills	developing the ability to hear and work with the smallest sounds in words and recognising and working with larger sound chunks, like syllables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">EsseNTial English Scope and Sequences (T-2)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Phonological and Phonemic Awareness kit</a></li> </ul>
Phonics	learning the relationship between letters and their corresponding sounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SA T-2 Phonics and Spelling scope and sequence</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Literacy Hub phonics progression</a></li> </ul>
Spelling	learning spelling patterns, rules, and common word structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SA T-2 Phonics and Spelling scope and sequence</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SA 3-6 Spelling and morphology scope and sequence</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Literacy Impact Teaching Morphology: Resource kit</a></li> </ul>
Fluency	developing their speed, accuracy, and proper intonation when reading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Literacy Hub fluency development slides</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Literacy Impact High Impact Reading Fluency instruction</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SPELD Decodable Readers</a></li> </ul>
Reading and Language Comprehension	understanding and interpreting written texts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">EsseNTial English Scope and Sequences (T-2)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">EsseNTial English Scope and Sequences (3-6)</a></li> </ul>
Writing	express their ideas clearly and effectively using the writing process by developing coherent paragraphs and using proper grammar and punctuation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">EsseNTial English Scope and Sequences (T-2)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">EsseNTial English Scope and Sequences (3-6)</a></li> </ul>
Handwriting	learning proper letter formation, spacing, and alignment to improve the overall clarity and readability of their writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Booklet and posters</a></li> </ul>

### Year 7-10 components

Students who have not mastered year level expectations for literacy will need targeted support. This can be approached at the whole class level using the lesson outline (Roadmap to Stage 1) above. Further information about the full Roadmap to Stage 1 resource can be requested via the [TLS Request for Service](#)<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/teaching-and-learning/australian-curriculum-v90/t-10-essential-english#resources19124>

<sup>11</sup> <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/teaching-and-learning-services-portal>