



Using data from the English Online Interview (EOI) and other sources to support differentiated planning

This paper relates to the following Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

Standard 1:

Know students and how they learn

- 1.2 Understand how students learn
- 1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities

Standard 2:

Know the content and how to teach it

- 2.1 Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area
- 2.2 Content selection and organisation
- 2.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting
- 2.5 Literacy and numeracies strategies

Standard 3:

Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning

- 3.1 Establish challenging learning goals
- 3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs

3.3 Use teaching strategies

Standard 5:

Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning

- 5.1 Assess student learning
- 5.3 Make consistent and comparable judgements
- 5.4 Interpret student data

Standard 6:

Engage in professional learning

- 6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs
- 6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice
- 6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice

Standard 7:

Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/caregivers and the community

- 7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements



What is the role of formative assessment in the teaching and learning of English?

Assessment has been identified as a contributing factor to improved instruction and a means of measuring the results of instruction (Wiliam, 2019). [Formative assessment](#) can be defined as any assessment that is used to improve teaching and learning. It involves collecting student data, interpreting the data and using the data to plan for instruction (Schildkamp et al., 2020). The inferences that teachers make when analysing student data, which then impact teaching decisions rely on strong pedagogical content knowledge of English, as well as understanding the [developmental progressions](#) that reflect how students become literate. Deane and Sparks (2019) argue that formative assessment in English is strengthened when teachers align assessment with literacy progressions and key literate practices. Key literate practices involve the simultaneous use of several skills. For example, students recounting an excursion need to remember events, use specific vocabulary, use past tense and logically sequence ideas. This notion brings together assessment and pedagogical content knowledge.

The English Online Interview (EOI)

The English Online Interview (EOI) is an online literacy assessment tool to use with Foundation to Level 2 students in Victorian primary schools. In 2022, the EOI was enhanced by the addition of phonic items which were made available in 2023. These items provide teachers with information about the students' abilities to apply their knowledge of phonics when reading words. The EOI recognises that literacy is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon. Hence, the items in the assessment are drawn from the 3 modes of English: Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening. Unlike some other assessments administered in schools, the EOI is designed to be administered by a qualified teacher. This is due to the inferences teachers can make and real time analysis required throughout the interview. These observations support teachers to consolidate their understandings about what the student knows and can do, which can inform future planning and teaching. Additionally, the interview is the opportunity to strengthen the teacher-student relationship, as teachers interact one-on-one with each student.



How can leadership teams use EOI data?

Several reports are generated from the EOI data which can help leadership teams make decisions about how to best support literacy teaching in the early years of schooling, as well as identify students who need literacy intervention support. For example, the Custom Reports function allows for comparison between groups of students, based on criteria such as gender or Indigenous status. Similarly, reports can be generated to show cohort strengths and challenges across different modes of English, giving a broad view of student achievements. Additionally, a more detailed insight into students' literacy knowledge and skills can be obtained by generating reports that showcase achievements at the task or item level.

Information obtained from the EOI alongside the analysis of data from other sources across the school, such as NAPLAN data can help to set whole school priorities in literacy, consider school-based literacy goals, monitor groups of students over time, identify students who need additional support and consider professional learning for teachers on the development of pedagogical content knowledge for literacy teaching and learning.

Used over time, these data sources form trend data where leadership teams can examine changes in students' literacy progress and investigate the factors which have contributed to the changes.

Analysis of the class level EOI reports provides information about the abilities across the class for each of the areas assessed by the EOI. This provides an at-a-glance overall view of the students' strengths and areas for targeted improvement. The item analysis report provides more nuanced information, as it shows each student's responses for each item. Knowledge of these reports can inform and target teacher professional learning, so that professional learning is linked to students' needs. Additionally, these reports can be used to compare students across classrooms, which could facilitate collegial discussions and literacy moderation. Data from the EOI can be used by leadership teams to:

- identify students needing intervention or extension
- enable understanding of student ability at the beginning of the school year so that all individuals can be supported to succeed in their next steps of learning



- support the development of teacher knowledge and skills for targeting and monitoring student progress in literacy
- identify school-based priorities in one or more of the English modes
- inform planning for literacy teaching and learning from the start of the school year

For further information about EOI reports at school, class and individual refer to the EOI guide.

What information can teachers obtain from the EOI data?

Teachers obtain information from the EOI in two ways. Firstly, in real time as they administer the assessment. For example, the EOI assesses how a student participates in a conversation and whether they understand conversational conventions. For this part of the assessment, teachers need to make real-time judgements about a student's confidence and the degree to which they successfully contribute to a conversation. Secondly, information can be gained by teachers from the EOI reports. The Summary Report shows the distribution of results for one class according to the levels of the Victorian Curriculum. This information is useful when considering the degree

of differentiated teaching required. The Student Report provides data which links individual students to a level of the Victorian Curriculum, further supporting the planning for differentiated teaching.

The Student Profile shows the student's raw scores in each of the areas assessed. For example, in Module 2 the areas assessed are reading comprehension, reading accuracy, concepts about print, conversation, vocabulary, storytelling, listening comprehension, writing and spelling, phonological skill, and phonics and word knowledge. The colour coding of the raw scores provides comparative insights and highlights if the student has achievement discrepancies between the modes of English. The Item Analysis Reports show results for each of the items assessed, providing teachers with information about individual students, but also identifying students who may be grouped together for instruction (See [EOI guide](#)).



How can teachers use the EOI data for literacy instruction?

1. Monitoring student progress

The EOI provides baseline data about a student's literacy achievement, which can be used to monitor progress throughout the first 3 years of schooling. While the EOI data is valuable for initial assessments and planning instruction, its currency is time-limited. This is because students can progress rapidly in certain concepts and skills that the EOI assesses. Therefore, constant monitoring through observation becomes essential.

2. Framing observations

To monitor student progress, teachers need to understand not only what their students know and can do, but also what the students need to know and do next. The EOI data can help to frame observations. That is, the data can help to determine what teachers need to look for during informal classroom observations conducted while students are involved in activities where they utilise their literacy knowledge and skills.

3. Providing constructive and informed feedback

Frey, Hattie and Fisher (2018) argue that students are often left out of assessment considerations. To effectively bridge this gap, teachers can provide feedback to students

in manageable amounts to help students set achievable goals. For example, a teacher may say, "You read the consonants well, now let's work on the short vowel sound for the letters E and I." Such targeted feedback not only pinpoints areas for improvement but also fosters the metacognitive learning process. This process is especially crucial for young students who might find it difficult to recognise their literacy learning trajectory.

4. Organising a sequence of teaching events

The EOI and other literacy data provides evidence regarding what the students know and can do in reading, writing and speaking and listening. This information will help teachers organise the sequence of teaching events, so that they are working within students' zones of proximal development. The zone of proximal development, a concept introduced by psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978), refers to the range between what a student can do independently and what they can achieve with the guidance of a skilled instructor. Essentially, it represents the optimal learning zone where instruction is most beneficial for a student, challenging them just beyond their current abilities but not overwhelmingly so. In using a scope and sequence framework for English instruction, teachers may use EOI to evaluate their class



results against it to identify areas that may require further review and dedicated teaching time.

5. Grouping according to a skill or knowledge

The Item Analysis Report provides information about the answers students gave for each question. Teachers can use this report to identify students with similar learning needs, and group students accordingly for instruction.

6. Organising instruction

The Item Analysis Report can also be used to identify teaching priorities. This report can highlight the concepts and skills that need to be taught to all students and identify those students who need differing levels of scaffolded instruction.

7. Engaging in professional dialogue

Discussing students' results, highlighting the literacy achievements, strengths or challenges of individual student or groups is a collegial way to share responsibility for student learning across the school. Organising professional discussions about where students are at, what their next steps are and what the best pedagogical practices might be to support students are practical ways that schools

can help to develop teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. (See [Professional Learning Communities](#))

8. Selecting pedagogical practices

The EOI and other data sources are not only useful for understanding students' current knowledge of English and skills in literacy, but importantly can be used to plan instruction. Instruction involves the selection of pedagogical practices. The selection of pedagogical practice will depend on the level of a student's proficiency with a given skill or understanding. [In line with the gradual release of responsibility model](#) (Duke & Pearson, 2002), some pedagogical practices will involve greater teacher support. For example, a student in Grade 1 whose EOI and Diagnostic Assessment Tools in English results show inaccurate decoding, but strong oral language comprehension and retelling skills will require pedagogical practices that offer high support. Explicit instruction in grapheme/phoneme correspondences, blending and segmenting in addition to guided reading and guided writing, would provide a range of pedagogic practices that would support a student to learn and practise successful decoding.



When making pedagogical choices, it is worth noting that literacy is multifaceted, involving the simultaneous application of knowledge and skills. Well-designed instruction gives students the opportunity to refine knowledge and experience reading and writing in diverse and meaningful language environments (Nation, 2017). Instruction that supports decoding and meaning making should be encouraged (Wyse & Bradbury, 2022). Additionally, Duke and Mesmer (2019) suggest that students need to understand why they are learning skills or knowledge and providing meaningful contexts for students to apply their learning is imperative.

What other literacy data can early years teachers use?

The [Diagnostic Assessment Tools in English \(DATE\)](#) is another online assessment tool to assess English content knowledge and skills in Foundation to Level 4 of the Victorian Curriculum. The DATE can be used to complement findings from the EOI or it can be used as a standalone assessment. Items for one or more of the English modes can be cross checked and discussed with ongoing teacher observations.

[The Ability Based Learning and Education Support \(ABLES\)](#) assessment is centred in the pre-Foundation levels (A—D) of the Victorian Curriculum. This assessment is designed to support students with disability and diverse learners.

Teacher observations and informal diagnostic assessments made from daily interactions with students should be used in conjunction with formal assessments. These observations and informal assessments are important, particularly to gain information about students who may find test situations difficult. Observations and informal assessments may be affected by teacher bias, so professional dialogue and comparison of these results with formal assessments is useful.



Suggestions for further discussion



1. Think about what literacy moderation practices are currently in place. Do our current practices support teachers to develop and apply professional judgement to literacy data?



2. Examine the EOI data and other literacy data. What does the literacy data tell us about individual students, groups of students or the student year level cohort?



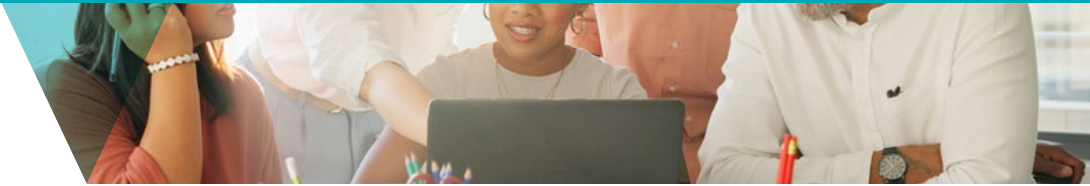
3. Discuss the pedagogical practices that will support different groups of students to progress in their literacy learning. Do we need to arrange teacher-to-teacher classroom observation to further refine our pedagogical practices?



4. Identify areas of priority for student literacy development and teacher pedagogical knowledge building. Where are the priority areas of literacy to target in the short, mid and long term?



5. Map a trajectory for professional learning dialogue. What professional learning do teachers need to support their use of the EOI data for differentiated teaching and what opportunities will they have for collegial discourse?



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