

# National Languages

## The medium of education

The medium of education for P1-3 will be a national language to be selected by the school. At P4, the medium of education will change to English for all schools and learners. It is essential that learners develop good communication skills in their national language in P1 to 3 so that they can transfer these skills to English in P4. All the evidence suggests that it is best for young learners to learn to read and write in a familiar language and then transfer this ability to English. This will be the focus of the subject on P1-3.

## Aims

A national language contributes to the development of young people as:

- Good citizens of South Sudan
- Successful life-long learners
- Creative and productive individuals
- Environmentally aware members of society

## Rationale

The ability to communicate is fundamental to life and to learning. Facility in speaking, listening, reading and writing enables learners to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. It enables learners to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction. New technologies have extended the contexts of communication so that learners can speak and listen to others electronically, and can read and write in a wide variety of forms.

The emphasis in P1-3 is on communication with others, and the building of the skills that can be transferred to English in P4. This is a practical subject with communication at its core. It is about learning to use language in communication. Learning about the theory and structure of language can come later. After P4 the emphasis is on using the language effectively and creatively.

## National language within the framework

National Language makes an important contribution to the development of all the four framework competencies. First of these is, of course, communication which is the whole purpose of language. Facility with language also underpins

the ability to think critically and creatively. It is language that provides the tools for thought and fuels imaginations. Communication makes possible co-operation because working together as a team would not be possible without the ability to exchange ideas and information. The fourth competency is culture, and a national language is the gateway to a national culture. It combines a system of thought and expression with access to the stories and understandings that define a culture.

## Teaching and learning a national language

Children develop their ability in any language by using it in context. The development of language ability is not a theoretical exercise, but a practical one. Speaking, listening, reading and writing all need practice, and that practice is best carried out in real situations where learners communicate with others for a purpose. Role-play and drama are very important in providing this practice.

Learners should be given as many opportunities as possible to express their ideas, ask and answer questions, explain what they are doing and join in discussions and conversations. This builds up vocabulary and the ability to manipulate language. Being able to speak with facility is an essential step towards being able to write.

Young learners should be encouraged to communicate in writing even when their early attempts may appear as 'scribble'. This can be refined into formal writing as they develop. The physical skills of writing develop with increased fine motor control and this is helped by a wide variety of activities such as drawing, painting and games that require close control.

The ability to read starts with a familiarity with books and texts and an enjoyment of talking about what they contain. The ability to distinguish letter shapes is supported by a range of activities in involving line and shapes and the ability to detect patterns.

Learners need a wide variety of purposes and audience to develop their communication skills, and need also to develop the confidence to use them.

## The Strands

The subject is set out in four strands: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Most learning experiences will involve many or all of these strands at once; they cannot be learned in isolation. Detailing the requirements under each strand separately ensures that all essential learning content is covered. As learners develop their skills, the emphasis needs to be on communication rather than on academic study. Learners must build up a good vocabulary and use appropriate grammatical structures, but need to do so in order to communicate with others. Learning should be based on real and realistic situations that call for the use of a range of language skills.

<b>Listening</b>	<p>Learners listen and comprehend so that they can respond appropriately to others. They listen carefully for gist and detail, understanding the key points and interpreting idiomatic usages appropriately. Learners should have opportunities to listen to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories being read</li> <li>• Each other</li> <li>• Adults giving explanations</li> <li>• Recordings (<i>eg radio and TV</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Speaking</b>	<p>Learners speak clearly, fluently and confidently to different people. They express ideas and communicate information and experiences to others. They ask and answer questions, and know how to initiate and develop conversations. Learners should have opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell stories</li> <li>• Describe events and experiences</li> <li>• Speak to different people</li> <li>• Share ideas and experiences</li> <li>• Talk about likes and dislikes</li> <li>• Make plans and investigate</li> <li>• Comment and report</li> <li>• Take part in role-play and drama</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	<p>Learners read a variety of texts with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment. They understand written information in a variety of sources such as signs, labels, books, posters, advertisements and electronic media. They begin to recognize the intentions and techniques used by authors. Learners should have opportunities to read and listen to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories and poems with predictable language (<i>eg with rhymes, repetitions and refrains</i>)</li> <li>• Traditional folk tales</li> <li>• Stories and poems from a range of cultures</li> <li>• ICT-based text where available</li> </ul>
<b>Writing</b>	<p>Learners write with appropriate structures, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling for a range of purposes and audience. They vary their language to suit the context, audience and purpose, and adapt language they already know for different contexts. Learners should have opportunities to write:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a range of forms and styles including narratives, poems, notes, lists, signs, labels, captions, messages, instructions etc</li> <li>• For a range of purposes including to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ communicate to others</li> <li>○ create imaginary worlds</li> <li>○ explore experiences</li> <li>○ organise and explain information</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Using a range of media including books, paper, posters, and electronic media where available</li> </ul>

	P1	P2	P3	P4
<b>Listening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen attentively to others and respond</li> <li>Respond to patterns in language (<i>eg rhymes and repetitions</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen carefully and respond with increasing appropriateness</li> <li>Remember specific points that interest them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the main points of what is being said</li> <li>Ask questions to clarify their understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand longer passages including some unfamiliar materials from which attitudes and emotions can be recognised</li> </ul>
<b>Speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about matters of immediate interest</li> <li>Convey simple meaning to a range of listeners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use growing vocabulary</li> <li>Show awareness of the listener by including relevant detail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapt talk to different contexts (<i>eg vocabulary and form</i>)</li> <li>Communicate more complex ideas and information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrate events, tell a story or relate the plot of a book or film and give opinions about it</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise, understand and read out familiar words in simple contexts</li> <li>Use knowledge of letters and sounds to read words and establish meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read simple texts with accuracy and understanding</li> <li>Use more than one strategy in reading unfamiliar words (<i>eg phonic, graphic, context</i>)</li> <li>Express opinions about stories, poems and non-fiction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read independently, using strategies appropriately to establish meaning</li> <li>Read texts fluently and accurately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read simple texts relating to familiar contexts independently and fluently</li> <li>Understand main points and express preferences in their reading</li> </ul>
<b>Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form letters that are clearly shaped and correctly oriented</li> <li>Communicate meaning through simple words and phrases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form letters accurately and consistent in size</li> <li>Spell simple words correctly</li> <li>Communicate meaning in both narrative and non-narrative forms</li> <li>Develop ideas in sequences of sentences appropriately punctuated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write imaginatively, clearly and in an organised way</li> <li>Write sequences of sentences that extend ideas logically and where grammar is correct</li> <li>Choose words for variety and interest</li> <li>Spell polysyllabic words correctly</li> <li>Use punctuation appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce simple texts on familiar topics spelling words correctly and using punctuation appropriately</li> <li>Take account of the rules of grammar, and use punctuation effectively</li> <li>Choose words for more detailed and complex sentences using phrases and clauses</li> </ul>

	P5	P6	P7	P8
<b>Listening</b>	Comprehend the gist of a range of authentic passages in complex situation.	Understand the main points of an authentic spoken passage or conversation involving one or more speakers.	Understand the main points of authentic spoken passages and conversations in a range of different context	Identify the majority of points and infer the meaning of a range of authentic passages and conversation spoken at near native speed
<b>Speaking</b>	Take part in discussion giving and justifying ideas creatively and confidently.	Give a presentation effectively and confidently on a chosen theme and respond readily to questions	Give a presentation fluently on a chosen theme and argue view points with some degree of success	Participate proficiently in discussions relating to a variety of situations and topics, taking the initiative where possible
<b>Reading</b>	Understand texts including some unfamiliar materials from which attitudes and emotions can be recognised.  Understand a wide range authentic texts in familiar contexts	Understand authentic written texts of moderate length and complexity, and produce a summary covering the majority of points.  Begin to appreciate the plot and structure of simple stories.	Understand authentic texts of some degree of complexity and abstractions in a range of different context; produce a summary covering most essential points.  Recognise how authors can achieve effect through sentence pattern and use of figurative language.	Understand and be able to infer the meaning of a range of more complex texts and produce a detail report covering all essential points.  Identify how character and setting are created in literature, and how plot is developed in literature.
<b>Writing</b>	Produce formal and informal texts on familiar topics  Communicate ideas creatively and accurately in an appropriate style	Structure writing to produce a coherent text in an appropriate register for specific purposes ( <i>e.g. An application letter for a job or an account of a visit</i> )	Write coherent text in an appropriate register for different purposes ( <i>e.g. a review, an article or a report</i> )	Write extended texts using a wide range of language in a variety of register covering more specialised context ( <i>e.g. work related or in a specialised area of study</i> )