English 12: African Heritage

Guide

NOVA SCOTIA
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English 12: African Heritage

Prepared by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

This is the most recent version of the current curriculum materials as used by teachers in Nova Scotia.

English 12: African Heritage
Implementation Draft

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Introduction

Background

English 12: African Heritage is based on the framework provided by the Atlantic Canada essential graduation learnings and *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*. This curriculum focuses on African heritage, but encourages the use of diverse resources from all cultures and races. English 12: African Heritage offers students the opportunity for specialized study within the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts curriculum.

English 12: African Heritage has been developed with the intent of

- responding to continually evolving education needs of students and society
- providing greater opportunities for all students to become literate
- preparing students for the literacy challenges they will face throughout their lives

Pervasive, ongoing changes in society, for example, rapidly expanding use of technologies, require a corresponding shift in learning opportunities for students to develop relevant knowledge, skills, strategies, processes, and attitudes that will enable them to function well as individuals, citizens, workers, and learners. To function productively and participate fully in our increasingly sophisticated technological, information-based society, citizens will need broad literacy abilities, and they will need to use these abilities flexibly.

English 12: African Heritage Curriculum

The English 12: African Heritage curriculum is shaped by the vision of enabling and encouraging students to become reflective, articulate, and literate individuals who use language successfully for learning and communicating in personal and public contexts. This curriculum is based on the premise that learning experiences in English language arts should

- help students to develop language fluency not only in the school setting but also in their life in the wider world
- contribute to the students' achievement of the essential graduation learnings (See *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, pp. 5–9.)

Purpose of the English 12: African Heritage Curriculum Guide

This guide has been developed to support teachers in the implementation of the English 12: African Heritage curriculum. It provides a comprehensive framework on which teachers of English 12: African Heritage can base decisions concerning learning experiences, instruction, student assessment, resources, and program evaluation.

These guidelines

- recognize that language development at the grade 12 level is part of an ongoing learning process
- reflect current research, theory, and classroom practice
- place emphasis on the student as a learner
- provide flexibility for teachers in planning instruction to meet the needs of their students
- suggest experiences and strategies to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning and teaching process

The Nature of English 12: African Heritage

English 12: African Heritage encompasses the experience, study, and appreciation of language, literature, media, and communication from an African heritage perspective. It involves language processes: speaking, listening, reading, viewing, and writing and other ways of representing.

Language is the principal means through which we formulate thought and the medium through which we communicate thought with others. Thus, language in use underlies the processes of thinking involved is listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing and other ways of representing. The application of these interrelated language processes is fundamental to the development of language abilities, cultural understanding, and creative and critical thinking.

Language is learned most easily when the various processes are integrated and when skills and strategies are kept within meaningful language contexts. The curriculum guide specifies that English 12: African Heritage be taught in an integrated manner so that the interrelationship between and among the language processes will be understood and applied by students. This integrated approach should be based on students' prior experiences with language and on meaningful activities involving speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing.

English 12: African Heritage curriculum engages students in a range of experiences and interactions with a variety of texts designed to help them develop increasing control over the language processes, to use and respond effectively and purposely, and to understand why language and literacy are so central to their lives.

People of African descent have inhabited this province for almost four hundred years and continue to arrive from various places. They have contributed a great deal to the culture and heritage of our province, but the contributions of African Nova Scotians and others of African descent have not been fully acknowledged.

English 12: African Heritage focuses on writers and artists of African descent and their contributions. The writers and artists and their works, the history and culture depicted in and reflected by their works, and the ideas and values therein can all contribute to the

intellectual growth of our students and to their appreciation of African heritage. This course will help students to understand and appreciate African heritage as being the heritage of us all.

English 12: African Heritage offers students the opportunity to

- make African heritage part of their own broad heritage and a source of pride
- explore the changing perceptions of people of African descent as they are reflected in a wide range of forms of expression and popular culture
- explore the contributions and exclusion of African heritage in our broader society
- examine their perceptions of African Canadians and enrich their understanding of cross-cultural differences and similarities
- enhance their understanding of Canadian identity, community, and culture and help them to develop personal, social, cultural, historical, and national awareness and identity
- participate actively in discussion as members of a variety of groups
- respond in a range of modes to in-class and out-of-class reading
- interact with and respond to texts written by and about a wide array of people, events, and phenomena
- see themselves reflected in resources and identify with characters, setting, and situations
- reflect on their own and others' processes of constructing meaning
- reflect on and analyze societal forces that impact differently on the aspirations and life experiences of Canadian of various backgrounds
- discover a deeper understanding of themselves as readers of works as a form of aesthetic expression
- enhance their understanding of themselves as readers, as learners, and as members of Canadian communities

Drawing on recent advances in theory and practice that have shown the important relationship between the reader, the text, and the context, English 12: African Heritage crosses borderlines between text-centred and reader-centred approaches to the study of language arts, and provides opportunities for both personal and critical response. This course brings authors, texts and readers closer together.

Principles Underlying the English 12: African Heritage Curriculum

- Language is a primary instrument of thought and the most powerful tool students have for developing ideas and insights, for giving significance to their experiences, and for making sense of both their world and their possibilities within it.
- Language learning is an active process of constructing meaning, drawing on all sources and ways of knowing.
- Language learning is personal and intimately connected to individuality.
- Language expresses cultural identity.
- Language learning develops out of students' home language and their social and cultural experiences.
- Language learning is developmental. Students develop flexibility and fluency in their language use over time.
- Language is best learned when it is integrated. All of the language processes are interrelated and interdependent.
- Language is learned holistically. Students best understand language concepts in context rather than in isolation.
- Students learn language through purposeful and challenging experiences designed around stimulating ideas, concepts, issues, and themes that are meaningful to them.
- Students learn best when they are aware of the strategies and processes they use to construct meaning and to solve information-related problems.
- Students need frequent opportunities to assess and evaluate their own learning and performance.
- In the process of learning, students need various forms of feedback from peers, teachers, and others—at school, at home, and in the community.
- Language learning is continual and multidimensional. It can best be assessed by the use of multiple types of evidence that reflect authentic language use over time.
- Students must have opportunities to communicate in various modes what they know and are able to do.
- Assessment must be an integral and ongoing part of the learning process itself, not limited to final products.

Meeting the Needs of All Students

This curriculum is inclusive and is designed to help all learners reach their potential through a wide variety of learning experiences. The curriculum seeks to provide equally for all learners and to ensure, insofar as possible, equal entitlements to learning opportunities.

The development of students' literacy is shaped by many factors, including gender, social and cultural backgrounds, and the extent to which individual needs are met. In designing learning experiences for students, teachers should consider the learning needs, experiences, interests, and values of all students.

In recognizing and valuing the diversity of students, teachers might consider ways to

- provide a climate and design learning experiences to affirm the dignity and worth of all learners in the classroom community
- redress educational disadvantage—for example, as it relates to students living in poverty
- model the use of inclusive language, attitudes, and actions supportive of all learners
- adapt classroom organization, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, time, and learning resources to address learners' needs and build on their strengths
- provide opportunities for learners to work in a variety of learning contexts, including mixed-ability groupings
- identify and respond to diversity in students' learning styles
- build on students' individual levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- design learning and assessment tasks that draw on learners' strengths
- ensure that learners use strengths as a means of tackling areas of difficulty
- use students' strengths and abilities to motivate and support learning
- offer multiple and varied avenues to learning
- celebrate the accomplishment of learning tasks that learners believed were too challenging for them

A GenderInclusive Curriculum

In a supportive learning environment, male and female students receive equitable access to resources, including the teacher's time and attention, technology, learning assistance, and a range of roles in group activities. It is important that the curriculum reflect the experiences and values of both male and female students and that texts and other learning resources include and reflect the interests, achievements, and perspectives of males and females.

Both male and female students are disadvantaged when oral, written, and visual language creates, reflects, and reinforces gender stereotyping. Through critical examination of the language of a range of texts, students can discover what texts reveal about attitudes toward gender roles and how these attitudes are constructed and reinforced.

Teachers promote gender equity in their classrooms when they

- articulate equally high expectations for male and female students
- provide equal opportunity for input and response from male and female students
- model gender-fair language and respectful listening in all their interactions with students

Valuing Social and Cultural Diversity

Social and cultural diversity is a resource for expanding and enriching the learning experiences of all students. Students can learn much from the diverse backgrounds,

experiences, and perspectives of their classmates in a community of learners in which participants discuss and explore their own and others' customs, histories, traditions, values, beliefs, and ways of seeing and making sense of the world. In reading, viewing, and discussing a variety of texts, students from different social and cultural backgrounds can come to understand one another's perspectives, to realize that their ways of seeing and knowing are not the only ones possible, and to probe the complexities of the ideas and issues they are examining.

All students need to see their life and experiences reflected in literature. To grow as readers and writers, students need opportunities to read and discuss the literature of their own and other cultures—to explore, for example, the differing conventions for storytelling and imaginative writing. Learning resources should include a range of texts that allows students to hear diverse social and cultural voices, to broaden their understanding of social and cultural diversity, and to examine the ways in which language and literature preserve and enrich culture.

Students with Special Needs

The curriculum outcomes statements in this guide are considered important for all learners and provide a framework for a range of learning experiences for all students, including those who require individual program plans.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students

Students from language backgrounds other than English add valuable language resources and experiences to the classroom. The first language, prior knowledge, and culture of EAL students should be valued, respected, and, whenever possible, incorporated into the curriculum. The different linguistic knowledge and experience of EAL students can be used to extend the understanding of linguistic diversity to all students in the class.

While EAL students should work toward the achievement of the same curriculum outcomes as other students, they may approach the outcomes differently and may at times be working with different learning resources at different levels and in a different time frame from other students.

The learning environment and classroom organization should affirm cultural values to support EAL students and provide opportunities for individual and group learning. It is especially important for these students to have access to a range of learning experiences, including significant opportunities to use language for both formal and informal purposes.

Teachers may need to make explicit the ways in which different forms, styles, and registers of English are used for many different purposes. It is particularly important that EAL students make connections between their learning in English language arts and other curricular areas and use learning contexts in other subjects to practise, reinforce, and extend their language skills.

Students with Language and Communication Difficulties

Students with language and communication difficulties may need specialized equipment, such as braillers, magnification aids, word processors with spell checkers, and other computer programs, plus peripherals such as voice synthesizers or large print to help them achieve outcomes. Speaking and listening outcomes can be understood to include all forms of verbal and non-verbal communication, including sign language and communicators.

Teachers should adapt learning contexts to provide support and challenge for all students, using the continuum of curriculum outcomes statements in a flexible way to plan learning experiences appropriate to students' learning needs. When specific outcomes are not attainable or appropriate for individual students, teachers can use statements of general curriculum outcomes, key-stage curriculum outcomes, and specific curriculum outcomes for previous and subsequent grade levels as reference points in setting learning goals for those students.

Diverse learning experiences, teaching and learning strategies, motivation, resources, and environments provide expanded opportunities for all learners to experience success as they work toward the achievement of outcomes. Many of the suggestions for teaching and learning in this guide provide access for a wide range of learners, simultaneously emphasizing both group support and individual activity. Similarly, the suggestions for using a variety of assessment practices provide diverse and multiple ways for students to demonstrate their achievements. Teachers may also find it helpful to refer to guides for other grade levels for additional teaching, learning, and assessment suggestions to serve and support students with special needs.

The curriculum's flexibility with regard to the choice of texts offers an opportunity for supporting students who have language difficulties. Students at the lower end of the achievement continuum in a class need appropriate opportunities to show what they can do. For example, in working toward a particular outcome, students who cannot operate very successfully with particular texts should be given opportunities to demonstrate whether they can operate successfully with alternative activities or alternative texts—ones that are linguistically less complex or with which they might be more familiar in terms of the context and content.

Students with special needs benefit from a variety of grouping arrangements that allow optimum opportunities for meaningful teacher-student and student-student interaction. Diverse groupings include the following:

- large-group or whole-class instruction
- teacher-directed small-group instruction
- small-group learning
- co-operative learning groups
- one-to-one teacher-student instruction
- independent work
- partner learning
- peer or cross-age tutors

Gifted and Talented Students

The curriculum outcomes described in this guide provide goals and challenges for all students, including gifted and talented learners. Teachers should adapt learning contexts to stimulate and extend the learning of these students, using the continuum of curriculum outcomes statements to plan challenging learning experiences.

In designing learning tasks for advanced learners, teachers should consider ways in which students can extend their knowledge base, thinking processes, learning strategies, self-awareness, and insights. These learners also need significant opportunities to use the general curriculum outcomes framework to design their own learning experiences that they may undertake individually or with learning partners.

Many of the suggestions for teaching and learning provide contexts for acceleration and enrichment—for example, the emphasis on experiment, inquiry, and critical perspectives. The curriculum's flexibility with regard to the choice of texts also offers opportunities for challenge and extension to students with special language abilities.

Gifted and talented students need opportunities to work in a variety of grouping arrangements, including both mixed-ability and similar-ability co-operative learning groups, interest groups, and partner learning.

See also *Advanced English 12* (2012) and *Gifted Education and Talent Development* (2011).

Learning Preferences

Students have many ways of learning, knowing, understanding, and creating meaning. Research into the links between learning styles and preferences and the physiology and function of the brain has provided educators with useful concepts on the nature of learning. Howard Gardner, for example, identified eight broad frames of mind or types of intelligence: bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistics, logical-mathematical, naturalist, and spatial. Gardner believed that each learner has a unique combination of strengths and weaknesses in these eight areas but that all of them can be more fully developed through diverse learning experiences. Other researchers and education psychologists use different descriptors to categorize learning preferences.

How students receive and process information and the ways in which they interact with peers and their environment are indicated by and contribute to their preferred learning style. Most learners have a preferred learning style, depending on the situation and the type of information they are dealing with, just as most teachers have a preferred teaching style. By reflecting on their own style and preferences as learners and as teachers in various contexts, teachers can

- build on their own teaching-style strengths
- develop awareness and expertise in different learning and teaching styles
- recognize differences in student preferences
- vary teaching strategies to accommodate the different ways in which students learn

Learning experiences and resources that engage students' multiple ways of understanding allow them to focus on their learning processes and preferences. To enhance their opportunities for learning success, students need

- a variety of learning experiences to accommodate their diverse learning styles and preferences
- opportunities to reflect on their preferences and understand how they learn best
- opportunities to explore, experiment with, and use learning styles other than those they prefer
- opportunities to reflect on other factors that affect their learning—environmental, emotional, sociological, physical
- a flexible time line within which to complete their work

Engaging All Students

One of the greatest challenges to teachers is engaging students who feel alienated from learning in English language arts and from learning in general—students who lack confidence in themselves as learners or who have a potential that has not yet been realized. Among them are students who seem unable to concentrate, who lack everyday motivation for academic tasks, who rarely do homework, who fail to pass in assignments, who choose to remain on the periphery of small-group work, who cover up their writing attempts fearing the judgments of peers, who are mortified if asked to read aloud, and who keep their opinions to themselves. These students are significantly delayed when it comes to reading, writing, and relating. Some, though not all, exhibit behaviours in classrooms that further distance them from learning. Others are frequently absent from classes. Cumulatively, these are the disengaged students.

These students need essentially the same experiences as their peers in the area of English language arts—experiences that

- engage them in authentic and worthwhile communication situations
- allow them to construct meaning and to connect, collaborate, and communicate with one another
- form essential links between the world of the text and their own world
- give them a sense of ownership of learning and assessment tasks

They need additional experiences as well—experiences designed to engage them personally and meaningfully and to make their learning pursuits relevant. They need substantial support in reading and writing. They need positive and motivational feedback. They need all of these experiences within purposeful and interactive learning contexts. Ultimately, the English language arts curriculum for these students should prepare them for the world they will go into after high-school completion.

Preparing students means engaging them with texts and with people from whom they can learn more about themselves and their world. Many of these students feel insecure about their own general knowledge and are reluctant to take part in class discussions, deferring to their peers, who seem more competent. Through the English 12: African Heritage language arts curriculum, the students described above must find their *own* voice. The

learning environment must be structured in such a way that these students, alongside their peers, develop confidence, gain access to information and to the community, and develop competence with using language for real purposes.

The greatest challenge in engaging these learners is finding an appropriate balance between supporting their needs (by structuring opportunities for them to experience learning success) and challenging them to grow as learners. Teachers need to have high expectations for all students and to articulate clearly these expectations.

Establishing Community

A supportive environment is crucial for students who lack confidence in themselves as learners. If a true community of learners is to be created, teachers need to demonstrate a valuing of all learners, emphasizing that diversity enhances everyone's experience of learning. It is crucial that this happen very early in the school year and that it be continually reinforced. This kind of early intervention is vital for those students who tend not to readily engage in the lesson.

If a climate sensitive and responsive to the needs of all students is to be created, the students must come to know one another. This builds the base for peer partnerships, tutoring, sharing, and various other collaborative efforts. Through mini-lessons, workshops, and small-group dynamic exercises during initial classes, knowledge is shared about individual learning styles, interpersonal skills, and team building.

It is necessary that the teacher's role, as facilitator, be a very active one. The teacher circulates through the room, attending to the vocal and the silent members of each group, modelling ways of drawing everyone into the dialogue as well as ways of respecting and valuing each person's contribution, making mental notes about students to conference with them later on an individual basis.

Whenever there is a level of comfort and trust within a class, built on supportive teacher-student and student-peer relationships, the probability of the learner's engagement is multiplied. Having established community within the classroom, the teacher and the students together make decisions as to appropriate groupings for various activities. Flexibility is important for all students. It is especially important for those who need extra support. Whether students are working as a whole class or in small groups, pairs, triads, or individually, teachers should consider the following in terms of supporting the potentially disengaged:

- Ask for students' opinions on relatively safe topics (at first) during whole-class discussions, demonstrating that you are confident each student has something worthwhile to say on the topic.
- Guide peers to field questions evenly around the group.
- Encourage questioning, never assuming prior knowledge on a given topic.
- Select partners for students and also encourage them to select different partners for different reasons—for example, when students are revising written work, partners could be selected who will teach/share their understanding.
- Help students to establish a comfort zone—a small group in which they will be willing to speak and take some learning risks.

- Observe students within a group, get to know their strengths, and conference with them about the roles for which they feel most suited.
- Assist students to move beyond their comfort zone and out of one role into another.
- Allow students to work alone, if they choose, as long as they still benefit from some group experience.
- Conference with students to provide mini-lessons or strategy instruction on a one-on-one basis or with other students who have similar learning needs.

The Senior-High Learning Environment

Learning environments for English 12: African Heritage in grade 12 are

- participatory, interactive, and collaborative
- inclusive
- caring, safe, and challenging
- engaging and relevant
- inquiry based and issues oriented
- places in which resource-based learning includes and encourages the multiple uses of technology, media, and other visual texts as pathways to learning and as avenues for representing knowledge

An important responsibility of the teacher is to create language-rich environments in which learning takes place. The teacher structures the learning situation and organizes necessary resources. Assessing the nature of the learning task, the teacher may find that the situation calls for teacher-directed activities with the whole class, small groups of students, or individual students. Such activities include direct instruction in concepts and strategies and brief mini-lessons to create and maintain a focus for learning.

When students have developed a focus for their learning, the teacher moves to the perimeter to monitor learning experiences and to encourage flexibility and risk taking in the ways in which students approach learning tasks. The teacher intervenes, when appropriate, to provide support. In such environments, students will feel central in the learning process.

As the students accept more and more responsibility for learning, the teacher's role changes. The teacher notes what the students are learning and what they need to learn and helps them to accomplish their tasks. The teacher can be a coach, a facilitator, an editor, a resource person, and a fellow learner. (For more detail about the teacher's role, see *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, pp. 44–45.) The teacher is a model whom students can emulate and a guide who assists, encourages, and instructs the student as needed during the learning process. Through the whole process, the teacher is also an evaluator, assessing students' growth while helping them to recognize their achievements and their future needs.

Learning environments for English language arts places in which teachers

- integrate new ways of teaching and learning with established effective practices
- have an extensive repertoire of strategies from which to select the one most appropriate for the specific learning task
- value the place of dialogue in the learning process
- recognize students as being intelligent in a number of different ways and encourage them to explore other ways of knowing
- value the inclusive classroom and engage all learners in meaningful activities
- acknowledge the ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, and culture shape particular ways of viewing and knowing the world
- structure repeated opportunities for reflection so that it becomes an integral part of the learning process

Curriculum Outcomes

Introduction

This section provides

- information on the curriculum outcomes framework
- information on essential graduation learnings
- general curriculum outcomes statements
- key-stage curriculum outcomes statements
- an overview of the connection between essential graduation learnings and key-stage curriculum outcomes
- specific curriculum outcomes statements for speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing, and other ways of representing
- suggestions for teaching approaches, learning tasks and experiences, and assessment strategies and activities

Curriculum Outcomes Framework

Essential Graduation Learnings

Essential graduation learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. They are

- cross-curricular
- the foundation for all curriculum development
- found on pages 6–9 of *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum* and on page 16 of this curriculum guide

General Curriculum Outcomes

General curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in English language arts, grades primary to 12. They

- contribute to the attainment of the essential graduation learnings
- are connected to key-stage curriculum outcomes
- are found on page 14 of *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum* and on page 16 of this curriculum guide

Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes

Key-stage curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 as a result of cumulative learning experiences in English language arts. They

- contribute to the achievement of general curriculum outcomes
- are found on pages 15–35 of *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum* and on pages 17–19 of this curriculum guide

Specific Curriculum Outcomes

Specific curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level. They

- contribute to the achievement of key-stage curriculum outcomes
- are found on pages 21–31 of this curriculum guide, with accompanying suggestions for teaching and learning on pages 32–103

Essential Graduation Learnings

Graduates from the public schools of Atlantic Canada will be able to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the following essential graduation learnings:

Aesthetic Expression

Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

Citizenship

Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in both local and global contexts.

Communication

Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively.

Personal Development

Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

Problem Solving

Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.

Technological Competence

Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

General Curriculum Outcomes

The general curriculum outcomes are the foundation for all English language arts curriculum guides. They identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in English language art, grades primary to 12. Although the statements of learning outcomes are organized under the headings Speaking and Listening, Reading and Viewing, and Writing and Other Ways of General Curriculum Outcomes Representing, it is important to recognize that all of these language processes are interrelated and can be developed most effectively as interdependent processes.

Speaking and Listening

- Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly and to respond personally and critically.
- Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience, and purpose.

Reading and Viewing

- Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.
- Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information, using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.
- Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.
- Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.

Writing and Other Ways of Representing

- Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings and to use their imagination.
- Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.
- Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.

Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes

Key-stage curriculum outcomes for the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 reflect a continuum of learning. While there may appear to be similarities in outcomes across the key stages, teachers will recognize the increase in expectations for students according to

- the nature of learning language processes
- students' maturity of thinking and interests
- students' increasing independence as learners
- the complexity and sophistication of ideas, texts, and tasks
- the level or depth of students' engagement with ideas, texts, and tasks
- the range of language experiences and the repertoire of strategies and skills students apply to those experiences

The following key-stage curriculum outcomes describe what students will be expected to know and be able to do in English 12: African Heritage language arts by the end of grade 12. It should be noted that students work toward achieving these outcomes in grades 10 and 11 as well as in grade 12.

Speaking and Listening

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- examine others' ideas and synthesize what is helpful to clarify and expand their own understanding
- ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyze, and evaluate ideas and information
- articulate, advocate, and justify positions on an issue or text in a convincing manner, showing an understanding of a range of viewpoints
- listen critically to analyze and evaluate concepts, ideas, and information
- interact in both leadership and support roles in a range of situations—some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter

- adapt language and delivery for a variety of audiences and purposes in informal and formal contexts—some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- respond to a wide range of complex questions and directions
- reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others' use of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication
- consistently demonstrate active listening and concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others
- demonstrate how spoken language influences, manipulates, and reveals ideas, values, and attitudes
- address the demands of a variety of speaking situations, making critical language choices, especially of tone and style

Reading and Viewing

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests
- read widely and experience a variety of literary genres and modes from different provinces and countries as well as world literature from different literary periods
- articulate their understanding of ways in which information texts are constructed for particular purposes
- use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts
- articulate their own processes and strategies in exploring, interpreting, and reflecting on sophisticated texts and tasks
- access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and learning needs
  - use the electronic network and other sources of information in ways characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, or subject matter
  - evaluate their research process
- make informed personal responses to increasingly challenging print and media texts and reflect on their responses
- articulate and justify points of view about texts and text elements
- critically evaluate the information they access
- show the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context, and audience
  - note the relationship of specific elements of a particular text to elements of other texts
  - describe, discuss, and evaluate the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres
- respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts
  - examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions
  - examine how media texts construct notions of roles, behaviour, culture, and reality
  - examine how textual features help a reader and viewer to create meaning from the texts

Writing and Other Ways of Representing

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on
  - their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues
  - the processes and strategies they use
  - their achievements as language users and learners
  - the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes
- use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge
- explore the use of photographs, diagrams, storyboards, etc., in documenting experiences
- make effective choices of language and technique to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing
- produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the construction of texts can create, enhance, and control meaning
  - make critical choices of form, style, and content to address increasingly complex demands of different purposes and audiences
- evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media productions
- apply their knowledge of what strategies are effective for them as creators of various writing and other representations
- use the conventions of written language accurately and consistently in final products
- use computer and media technology effectively to serve their communication purposes
- demonstrate a commitment to the skilful crafting of a range of writing and other representations
- integrate information from many sources to construct and communicate meaning

Connections

The following English language arts grade 12 key-stage curriculum outcomes are examples of outcomes that enable students to achieve the essential graduation learnings:

Essential Graduation Learnings	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes
Aesthetic Expression *Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.*	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to • use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues • make effective choices of language and technique to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing • reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others' use of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication
Communication *Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively.*	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to • consistently demonstrate active listening and concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others • read widely and experience a variety of literary genres and modes from different provinces and countries as well as world literature from different literary periods • respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts and examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions
Citizenship *Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in both local and global contexts.*	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyze, and evaluate ideas and information use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions
Personal Development *Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.*	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to • select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests • access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and learning needs • use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes
Problem Solving *Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.*	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to • ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyze, and evaluate ideas and information • analyze thematic connections among texts and articulate an understanding of the universality of many themes • use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge to evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media productions

Essential Graduation Learnings	Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes
Technological Competence *Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.*	By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to • use the electronic network and other sources of information in ways characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, or subject matter • use computer and media technology effectively to serve their communication purposes • respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts and examine how media texts construct notions of role, behaviour, culture, and reality

Specific Curriculum Outcomes

Specific curriculum outcomes are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level. Once again, it is important to note that these outcomes represent a continuum of learning.

The curriculum should be balanced to provide wide-ranging experiences in each outcome through student participation in all aspects of the program. Suggestions for teaching, learning, and assessment are exactly that—*suggestions*. Instructional and assessment practices can and should be designed to provide multiple routes to achievement of the outcomes and multiple ways of demonstrating achievement.

Although the specific curriculum outcomes that follow are grouped according to language processes, it is recognized that classroom experiences develop these processes in an integrated manner.

This section provides

- an overview of specific curriculum outcomes
- specific curriculum outcomes with suggestions for teaching and learning, suggestions for assessment, and notes/vignettes

Students will be expected to speak and listen to explore, extend, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.

- examine others' ideas and synthesize what is helpful to clarify and expand their own understanding
- ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyze, and evaluate ideas and information
- articulate, advocate, and justify their position on an issue or text in a convincing manner, showing an understanding of a range of viewpoints
- listen critically to analyze and evaluate concepts, ideas, and information

Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly and to respond personally and critically.

- interact in both leadership and support roles in a range of situation—some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- adapt their language and delivery for a variety of audiences and purposes in informal and formal contexts—some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- respond to a wide range of complex questions and directions
- reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others' use of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication

Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience, and purpose.

- consistently demonstrate active listening and concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others
- demonstrate how spoken language influences and manipulates, and reveals ideas, values, and attitudes
- address the demands of a variety of speaking situations, making critical language choices, especially of tone and style
- express their individual voice, enabling them to remain engaged, but be able to determine whether they will express themselves or remain silent

Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.

- select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests
- read widely and experience a variety of literary genres and modes from different provinces and countries as well as world literature from different literary periods
- articulate their understanding of the ways in which information texts are constructed for particular purposes
- use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts
- articulate their own processes and strategies in exploring, interpreting, and reflecting on sophisticated texts and tasks

Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information, using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.

- access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and individual learning needs
  - use the electronic network and other sources of information in ways characterized by the complexity of purpose, procedure, or subject matter
  - evaluate their research processes

Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.

- make informed personal responses to increasingly challenging print and media texts and reflect on their responses
  - make connections between their own values, beliefs, and cultures and those reflected in literary and media texts
  - analyze thematic connections among texts and articulate an understanding of the universality of many themes
  - demonstrate a willingness to explore diverse perspectives to develop or modify their point of view
- articulate and justify their point of view about texts and text elements
- interpret ambiguities in complex and sophisticated texts

Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.

- critically evaluate the information they access
- show the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context, and audience
  - note the relationship of specific elements of a particular text to elements of other texts
  - describe, discuss, and evaluate the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres
- respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts
  - examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions
  - examine how media texts construct notions of roles, behaviour, culture, and reality
  - examine how textual features help a reader and viewer to create meaning in the texts

Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning and to use their imagination.

- use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on
  - their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues
  - the writing processes and strategies they use
  - their achievements as language users and learners
  - the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes
- use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge
  - explore the use of photographs, diagrams, storyboards, etc., in documenting experiences
- make effective choices of language and techniques to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing

Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.

- produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by the increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the construction of texts can create, enhance, or control meaning
  - make critical choices of form, style, and content to address the increasingly complex demands of different purposes and audiences
- evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media productions

Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.

- apply their knowledge of what strategies are effective for them as creators of various writing and other representations
- use the conventions of written language accurately and consistently in their final products
- use technology effectively to serve their communication purposes
  - design texts that they find aesthetically pleasing and useful
- demonstrate a commitment to the skilful crafting of a range of writing and other representations
- integrate information from many sources to construct and communicate meaning

Students will be expected to speak and listen to explore, extend, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- examine others' ideas and synthesize what is helpful to clarify and expand their own understanding
- ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyze, and evaluate ideas and information
- articulate, advocate, and justify their position on an issue or text in a convincing manner, showing an understanding of a range of viewpoints
- listen critically to analyze and evaluate concepts, ideas, and information

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

In their critical responses, students should

- examine critically their own biases, values and beliefs in personal and a global perspective
- demonstrate that they understand that everyone has a point of view and a voice that must be acknowledged
- make the effort to explore alternative voices and points of view so as to better appreciate them
- demonstrate that they understand how prior knowledge include the interpretations of what they hear
- make connections to understand the role of various texts in communities and cultures

Informal Observation

- record, through observation, notes, and checklists, the extent to which students become increasingly articulate, questioning, participatory, more active in critical listening, aware of the role of audience, and organized and creative in presentation of information and ideas
- self-assessment and peer assessment in the form of post-event discussion, and personal and group reflection

Formal

- predetermined and pre-communicated measures and criteria for evaluation, establishing specific outcomes for the specific event, e.g., Canadian Debate Federation Evaluation Form

Reflection

- students examine how biases, values and beliefs influence society social and political climate over time
- students and teachers reflect upon the application and development of presentation

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

It is important that teachers

- provide the historical, social, and political contexts of pre-colonial Africa and the period of slavery and reconstruction
- understand and help students to articulate the influence that pre-colonial Africa and the periods of slavery and reconstruction has had and continues to have on African heritage ideas and experiences
- model language and attitudes that will benefit students as they search for new ways to express and appreciate diversity
- model active listening and respond positively to students' ideas in order to provide a safe environment in which students can comfortably share their responses

It is suggested that students

- explore the geographical, historical, social and cultural contexts of African resources (pre-colonial Africa, Period of Slavery and Reconstruction, Renaissance, Contemporary)
- study and analyze classic speeches and orators as a modelling tool and for clarification of the social context and effect of the oration (e.g., Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, Nelson Mandela)
- present a well-researched individual or group formal presentation on a complex and global issue (This presentation may be constructed or written in combination with other media such as films or videos. It can be a multimedia presentation as long as it is primarily an oral presentation.)
- examine the writing or creation of a formal presentation in the global (generalized national or international) context of language and communication (e.g., using newspapers such as *The Halifax Herald* or *USA Today*)
- construct oral presentations on issues that have global significance and be able to communicate to a broader audience than the members of the school community
- participate in academic debate on a literary topic—e.g., a writer's style, the interpretation of complex text, a genre, or an era (This can be in the current or in a historical context.)
- as members of an audience, respond to the presentation of other students in order to present their analysis and synthesis as listeners

NOTES/VIGNETTES

The importance of knowledge from pre-colonial Africa and the historical periods of slavery and reconstruction to the African Canadian tradition cannot be understated. A thorough investigation of these periods needs to be undertaken. Possible cross-curricular links can be made with African Canadian Studies 11.

It is important that teachers provide

- historical and background information linked to African heritage.
- opportunities for students to focus on particular political, ideological and/or religious view points and encourage students to compare and respond to various social problems
- create conditions to engage students in discussion of social and political implications and issues arising from the presentations.

It is important that teachers prompt debate regarding protest topics and consider current issues around social justice as points of debate.

It is important that students discuss understand the social and political structure such as family, church, education, as well as, the role of community/political leaders and their impact on change in community.

Students should be encouraged to critically examine the importance of the voices of Black women and African Canadian writers and artists.

Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly and to respond personally and critically.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- interact in both leadership and support roles in a range of situations—some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- adapt their language and delivery for a variety of audiences and purposes in informal and formal contexts—some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- respond to a wide range of complex questions and directions
- reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others' use of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Assessment

In grade 12, assessment focuses on the students' performance in the context of formal language.

Public Speech

- examine and practise the conventions of formal speaking
- organize ideas into appropriate language
- present with appropriate tone, voice, and non-verbal language
- question and analyze the audience's perception(s) of the speech event
- refine through practice, questioning, and analysis

Debates

- examine and practise the conventions of formal debates
- research and rehearse
- present with appropriate tone, voice, and body language
- examine the fallacies and weaknesses in an argument and expose them through counter-arguments, questioning, and other spoken exchanges that are appropriate to the form (e.g., heckling)

In evaluating responses to reading, teachers need to remember that interpretation depends on understanding in a cultural context and the experience or inexperience of the reader with a variety of cultural contexts.

In their personal responses, student should

- demonstrate their understanding of character and motivation
- make connections between their text and their own lives
- reflect on their affective response to their text
- show they understand a text to be a mirror of human condition

Student demonstrate their abilities to respond critically when they, for example,

- develop, use, articulate, and reflect on their personal criteria in responding to text
- demonstrate an understanding that language changes over time
- analyze, compare, and critique different presentations of the same ideas, information, or issues
- critically evaluate media texts for meaning, point of view, aesthetic and commercial considerations, and accuracy and impact
- assess the accuracy and balance of news and information presented in print and other media
- develop criteria for evaluating the accuracy and objectivity of information found in a variety of print and electronic sources

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Students must be provided with opportunities to examine the writing, creation, delivery, and characteristics of formal presentations in a global context. They must be able to identify the communicative differences in contexts of culture and dialect. Students must recognize and accept these differences and understand how these elements affect a speech event in both formal and informal forms.

In formal speech events, there is an emphasis on similarities and differences. It is expected that students, listening in relation to the convention, will understand the expected structure in its original form and will be able to appreciate clever manipulation of the structure that triggers thinking and that challenges the listener to extend his/her thinking. Upon reflection, students should articulate an understanding of creative, innovative alterations in formal speech structures.

In the delivery of a well-researched individual formal presentation on a complex and global issue, students should examine the interrelationships and connections between supportive and leadership roles, with an emphasis on purpose and procedure.

Through formal academic debate, students will continue to participate in and examine varying roles in powerful speech presentations and will evaluate their role in these events.

It is important that teachers assist students in understanding that text is constructed, used, and manipulated in powerful ways to influence others; text is constructed with a specific audience and a specific purpose in mind and yet can have multiple readings.

As an audience in a formal speech event, students will evaluate

- the role of the audience and its effect on the speech event

- the relationship between the power of the event and the audience

It is important that teachers provide explicit instruction and demonstrations re critical responses. It is important that students

- respond in a variety of forms to become more aware of their own verbal and non-verbal interpretation and the elements of their own language
- listen and respond thoughtfully when their peers share their views in class
- respond critically to their own biases

NOTES/VIGNETTES

In groups, students can discuss particular political, ideological and/or religious view points and report their findings to the class

Students may explore the nature of their reflections and examine the reasons they respond in certain ways to their reading. In these reflections, students may consider the influence of personal and racial content, the multiplicity of messages in literature and formal presentations, the universality of issues linked to the human condition.

Students identify idioms that portray disabilities and persons with disabilities in a negative manner and discuss how the use of these idioms contributes to misinformation and negative attitudes. This activity should be used to examine racist, sexist, or ageist language and negative stereotypes in resources.

Half the class can assume the membership of one group and examine the portrayal from its perspective. The other half of the class can examine the portrayal from the perspective of non-members of the group or from the perspective of another group.

Resources

- Wright, Richard. *Native Son*
- Haley, Alex. Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X.*
- See appendix for additional resources.

Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience, and purpose.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- consistently demonstrate active listening and concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others
- demonstrate how spoken language influences; manipulates; and reveals ideas, values, and attitudes
- address the demands of a variety of speaking situations, making critical language choices, especially of tone and style
- express individual voice, enabling them to remain engaged, but be able to determine whether they will express themselves or remain silent

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Focus on

- the awareness of purpose, audience, and situation
- language choices (e.g., tone and style)
- content, organization, and delivery

External Modelling

Independently, students are expected to articulate

- the purpose of the speech event
- an understanding of the structure of the speech event
- an understanding of the creative components of the speech event
- the reasons for the level of success of the expression
- an analysis of the audience's reaction to the event

Students are also expected to

- use the language and conventions expected in formal settings (e.g., suitable vocabulary and manner, rhetorical devices, visual aids)
- tailor information, tone of voice, etc., to the listeners' reactions
- plan effectively for formal events
- help to establish criteria for evaluating spoken texts and use these to evaluate their own and others' participation in informal discussions and formal presentations
- comment on the effectiveness of various elements in speeches

- analyze, synthesize, refine, and produce speeches
- apply their socio-cultural understanding of the purpose of particular oral and media texts and the motivations of individuals such as public figures to infer meaning (e.g., be aware that the impartial appearance of current-affairs program items may be bogus and listen critically for bias)
- detect and apply strategies speakers use to influence an audience
- develop and use strategies for formal presentations (e.g., to overcome self-consciousness, use notes unobtrusively, cope with and recover from disruptions)
- notice the ways in which speakers engage audiences and try to use similar techniques
- evaluate their success in conveying ideas and information to particular audiences
- reflect on what their own responses to spoken texts reveal about their personal attitudes and values

Some speech events should be directly linked to students' reading/viewing experiences (e.g., participation in a debate on global issues).

Parliamentary Procedure

Students prepare wall charts as guides to aspects of parliamentary procedure, such as

- the order of business
- keeping minutes
- preparing a treasurer's report
- making, amending, and voting on motions
- common procedural terms (e.g., quorum and table)

Students explore the usefulness of parliamentary procedure through regular monthly parliaments to make decisions about the process and content of activities in the class.

Students consider, for example,

- the relationship of parliamentary procedure to the concept of democracy
- the significance of minority rights

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Teachers can encourage students to

- view the experience of individuals of African heritage to gain an understanding of identity, diversity and voice
- explore racism, ethnocentrism, and regionalism to gain an accurate understanding of cultural groups

It is important that students have opportunities to use standard English and to use language aesthetically—tone, intonation, etc.—for the purpose of meaningful communication in a formal context.

Students are required to independently observe models of formalized oral expression outside of the confines of the classroom. These models may be found in the business community, theatre community, academic community, and political community.

Students must be able to make adaptations in their oral language in order to function appropriately in each form.

Students might, for example,

- participate in video theatre, radio theatre, production meetings
- analyze or imitate speeches of a well-known orator or historical figure (e.g., Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandella, P. E. Trudeau during the FLQ crisis)
- in role, develop an impersonation of a broadcast personality; discuss language and delivery in terms of their intention and the audience they envisage
- isolate the spoken-word components from other audio and visual components used in television advertisements, news, and documentaries and describe their effectiveness relative to other techniques
- examine commercials in which a presenter speaks directly to consumers and analyze how the pitch, tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, volume, and assumed relationship with the audience affect persuasiveness/enhance the meaning/influence the interpretation of the commercial
- hold a formal public meeting
- discuss ways in which people can show respect for other cultures and points of view by what they say and through their body language (e.g., in the context of a visit to an unfamiliar place, participation in a multicultural event)
- discuss aspects of language use (e.g., vocabulary, rhythm, figures of speech) and how they enhance particular spoken texts

NOTES/VIGNETTES

To understand the alternative points of view of racial, ethnic, or dominant groups, students can examine the portrayal of such groups in resources.

It is important that the teacher makes available a variety of cultural expressions that students are most interested in and direct students to a variety of materials which are used to communicate cultural expressions.

Students can state through comparative essays the different cultural, political, and social issues present in various art forms.

Students can choose a field of arts and create a visual or performance piece that explores the cultural relevancy of the time.

In addition to providing a wide range of texts for students to explore for this period, it is important that teachers make available information about the time period from books, articles, films, videos, and internet.

Teachers should encourage students to examine speaking situations from their own lived experiences and from a critical perspective.

Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests
- read widely and experience a variety of literary genres and modes from different provinces and countries as well as world literature from different literary periods
- articulate their understanding of the ways in which information texts are constructed for particular purposes
- use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts
- articulate their own processes and strategies in exploring, interpreting, and reflecting on sophisticated texts and tasks
- demonstrate knowledge about the geographical, historical, social and cultural context of literary text

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Levels of interpretation can be determined by the degree to which students can

- make connections with their own experiences
- elaborate on the text
- make links between the text and their experiences

Students need to articulate their understanding of the discrepancies among texts and among the differing responses to texts by their peers, teachers, media, and the world around them.

Students will articulate an understanding of the literature of African heritage through

- written reflections about their reading
- the range of authors they have selected
- the range of genres they have read

Students need to be aware of their reasons for selecting or rejecting a text, with assessment focusing on a process that extends the learners' experiences to articulate what they like and don't like in discussion, that is challenged by teachers and peers.

Appropriate assessment strategies and activities might include

- checklists, interviews, surveys, observations, and self-commentaries and peer commentaries on texts
- describing how the mood and setting established by the opening sequence of a film might be established in a written text such as a short story
- interpreting representations of distribution as in graphs and charts

- recognizing that different kinds of texts require different kinds of reading and adjusting reading strategies appropriately (e.g., scan a brochure, highlight a technical text)
- exploring a subject of interest across national, cultural, and ethnic literatures
- recognizing that different kinds of text require different kinds of reading and adjusting reading strategies appropriately (e.g., scan a brochure, highlight and technical text)
- exploring a subject of interest across national, cultural, and ethnic literatures
- demonstrating familiarity with works of diverse literary traditions and with works by women and men of many racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in different times and part of the world
- journal writing and writing in a range of forms on issues and themes that have been explored
- responding to comprehension questions connected to readings
- creating power point presentations on topics that have been investigated and presenting them to the class

Where relevant, assessment of the group's oral or written presentation should consider how well students have examined

- the work of their selected authors
- the range of authors available for their chosen communities
- different time periods
- the author's purpose
- the author's audience
- the influence of literary trends
- the changes of social and economic conditions over time and place
- the impact of historical events
- the influence of social/cultural belief systems
- the effect of geography
- the particular and the universal concerns of the people

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Students need support from teachers to

- select complex and sophisticated texts to explore the geographical, historical, social, and cultural contexts of their chosen texts
- explore a range of genres that relate the conditions of Pre-colonial Africa, Slavery and Reconstruction, Renaissance, as well as the conditions in times of social and political change, including drama, prose forms, songs, poems, and stories from the folk and oral tradition
- understand and articulate the influence that the African heritage had and continues to have on its writers and artists
- have opportunities to reflect on and to respond critically to these texts (historical and social, popular and entertainment, information) in formal and constructive ways (e.g., in

debate, formal writing, video documentary) with the focus on their critical understanding of how the nature of these texts affects the message and the ways in which the reader/viewer constructs meaning
- support collaborative group examination of texts with the goal of constructing a mosaic that reflects social and political change

Appropriate learning experiences include those in which learners, for example,

- examine the qualities of texts, the reasons for their preferences in text, and the ways in which selection can meet their purpose
- examine the portrayal of the African diaspora (see Notes, p. 36) and its people with African heritage by reading authors who have written in a variety of genres and are of diverse literary traditions
- explore a subject of interest across national, cultural, and ethnic literatures
- seek out resources to explore the social and political contexts of their chosen texts
- examine how their uses of language and media are reflected in their choices in text
- explore how language is used in texts to convey tone, atmosphere, and point of view
- explore author's voice and the difference between it and character voice, where appropriate
- determine the relevance and value of texts and text sources
- work with multimedia texts and examine their purposes and uses
- explore where/how the text was constructed and consider this information in relation to their own interpretations of a text
- determine how literary trends during different time periods influence an artist's approach to the material
- compare the perception of the social conditions that one gets from literature with the perception one gets from other sources (e.g. art, film, songs)
- reflect on specific elements of text and their impact on audience
- observe the changes in the social conditions of the people of the African diaspora over time and place
- seek out and interview, or invite to call where practicable, authors, storytellers, and songwriters
- converse with authors on the Internet in small groups
- discuss the impact of social, religious, political and educational institutions on characters in the texts.

NOTES/VIGNETTES

It is important that teachers provide a variety of African heritage texts from different genres that can be collated according to themes or issues such as pre-colonial Africa, Slave Trade, Middle Passage, African diaspora, hardships encountered, struggles, resistance, accomplishments, contributions, racism, and discrimination.

It is important that teachers create a climate of awareness and respect in studying diverse time periods and cultures of Africa and people of African descent, and that students have access to historical and background information on various authors and their writings.

Teachers can illustrate the variety of voices which can exist within texts and other materials. Students can explore the relationship between a media and print version of a text and between oral traditions and historical text.

A connection can be made between pre-colonial Africa and the Slave Trade, as well as the social, economic, and political impact of the arrival of African peoples in the Americas.

The African diaspora refers to the global dispersal of African people throughout the enslavement period and beyond. These regions supported some form of enslavement of African people.

Teachers are encouraged to create conditions to engage students in discussion of social and political implications of issues arising from the text.

Teachers should prompt debate regarding protest literature and its validity as art and consider current issues around social justice as points of debate.

It is important that students read and understand the social and political structure, such as family, church, education, as well as, the role of community/political leaders and their impact on change in community. At this level, students should demonstrate independence in applying a wide variety of reading and viewing strategies to meet their purposes.

Students can use the internet to access information about countries of Africa. Students can select a country they wish to explore through literature study. Have as many countries of Africa represented as possible. As they read, students attach flags with the author's names to the appropriate areas of the maps.

At the end of the module, a literature circle presentation would allow students to share with the class authors they read and their ideas and impressions of these authors, so that a thorough picture of African heritage would emerge. Students can be encouraged to show how African heritage is linked to our Nova Scotian heritage. An important focus can be ancestral connections of pre-colonial Africa to African Canadians though geographical, historical, social, and cultural contexts.

Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information, using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and individual learning needs
  - use the electronic network and other sources of information in ways characterized by the complexity of purpose, procedure, or subject matter
  - evaluate their research processes

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Students will be expected to

- read from an efferent stance and to gain and reflect on information or for a specific purpose
- use critical thinking in the research and decision-making processes
- be independent in reading and reflection
- retrieve, select, and interpret information communicated through the mass media

Appropriate assessment strategies and activities might include

- teacher-student conferences and interviews
- journal logs reflecting and examining responses to texts
- assessing notes/records/information gathered through reading and viewing
- self-assessment
- observation of group discussions
- presentation of responses to differing texts
- responding to the authenticity of texts through research and response

Sample learning/assessment tasks include those in which students, for example,

- examine on-line media, reading and scanning for information and thinking critically about the issues
- research an issue presented in the text
- extend their understanding and examine their own engagement by exploring an issue presented in a variety of them
- compare and contrast texts and responses to them
- compare the content of news reports in various texts (print and non-print) and the effectiveness of different media in reporting the same event

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Teachers need to focus on

- helping students become increasingly aware of the interconnection of texts
- helping students become aware that reading and viewing experiences are not just between themselves and the author or creator of the text but that they become part of the many characters or persona in the event
- helping students understand how the creator of a text can construct attitudes and influences in the reader/viewer
- helping students understand that reading for different purposes can change the stance of the reader
- helping students understand that texts can have multiple meanings and can come from sources with differing values in different contexts
- encouraging students to question their purposes and processes in researching and synthesizing information

- helping students learn how to question the sources of information and how to value the information for their purposes
- the process of reading
- reader reflection and attitudes
- challenging preconceived notions toward texts
- exploring feelings, thoughts, and ideas triggered by viewing or reading
- justifying thoughts and reflections on texts
- exploring the similarities and the differences among texts
- examining the presentation of similar and different information presented in differing texts (e.g., print, multimedia, the Internet)
- the analysis and synthesis of researched information from a variety of sources

It is through talk that students rethink and reshape and validate or reject ideas from print publications, radio, television, electronic news groups, and conferences—talk is central to students' exploration, analysis, creation, and critique of the information. Through reflection and talk with others, students begin to develop a critical mindset with which to consider ideas and information. Teachers may promote the development of critical thinking by encouraging students to validate content and consider bias and point of view.

NOTES/VIGNETTES

Using Technology

Electronic information technologies such as e-mail, electronic conferencing, and newsgroups allow students to connect with both global audiences and specific individuals with whom they share a particular curiosity, question, or interest. Within this world, critical thinking and analysis are vital. Most available newsgroups and electronic conferences need careful examination to determine if the information and the way in which it is presented are valid and reliable. Control through pre-selecting and screening of resources used by students will be less possible to maintain in an information-intensive world.

Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- make informed personal responses to increasingly challenging print and media texts and reflect on their responses
  - make connections between their own values, beliefs, and cultures and those reflected in literary and media texts
  - analyze thematic connections among texts and articulate an understanding of the universality of many themes
  - demonstrate a willingness to explore diverse perspectives to develop or modify their point of view
- articulate and justify their point of view about texts and text elements
  - interpret ambiguities in complex and sophisticated texts

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

An interpretation of text is neither right nor wrong. An interpretation of text can be deeper, more detailed, or a more significant reflection of thoughts, as opposed to a straightforward response.

Responses may be reflected in numerous texts. By varying the form of the responses, students can have opportunities to reflect in ways that force them to think in different ways.

An effective way to respond to any text is through the keeping of a journal. Students can quickly make discoveries through the act of writing, drawing, etc.

In responding to visual texts, students tend to examine the effect of text on them personally. Students should be able to make a wide range of responses to visual and multimedia text identifying the elements of text that shape their responses.

In assessing responses to reading, teachers need to remember that interpretation depends on understanding in a cultural context and the experience or inexperience of the reader with a variety of cultural contexts.

Teachers need to focus not only on what students respond to in a text but also what they don't respond to in text.

Students who are responding to texts can

- notice details that are subtly presented
- recognize and acknowledge any personal bias that can interfere with character interpretation
- take into account influences such as time period, social class, ethnicity, gender, race, and education
- focus on key attitudes, ideas, and qualities

In assessing student learning, it is important for teachers to remember that student responses may be

- tentative and questioning of the text
- formal or informal in use of language
- exploratory yet sophisticated
- focused on specific aspects of the text
- repetitive in nature or may reinterpret and revalue the text

In assessing student progress, teachers need to remember that when moving through a wide range texts and experiencing a variety of different structures and orders, learners may demonstrate wide ranges of interpretation in the translation from text to text, sometimes not coming to immediate conclusions. Through discussion and articulation of ideas about texts, learners can come to conclusions about texts.

As the texts become more varied and more sophisticated, students may need more time for discussion and reflection.

Through self-assessment, peer assessment, teacher assessment, and questioning, students can become more aware of their prejudices and opinions and those of texts.

Students should be able to understand

- how culture defines text and our responses to texts
- how they define culture
- how they connect with differing texts to make meaning
- how aesthetics and the nature of expression and language affect them
- that response to text a continuing and changing process

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

It is important that teachers

- understand and help students to articulate the influence that African heritage had and continues to have on its writers and artists
- provide a range of texts to choose from, with a focus on the following periods: Pre-colonial Africa, Slavery and Reconstruction, Renaissance; provide recent writings connected to Social and Political Change, Portraits of Black Women, African Canadian Writers and Writings, and Visual and Performing Arts.
- support collaborative group examination of texts with the goal of constructing a mosaic that reflects African heritage

Students will develop an understanding that the world may be perceived as an emerging text. In this context, teachers need to encourage students to read and view text from the position of a global citizen.

Students can also, in small groups and individually,

- observe the changes of the social conditions of the people of the African diaspora over time and place
- compare the perception of the social conditions that one gets from literature with the perception one gets from other sources (film, songs, etc.)
- compare their responses to those of their group members to see that their perspectives may differ
- explore the reasons for differing perspectives
- research and role-play a situation in a text that is unfamiliar to them
- rewrite texts from the perspective of different characters
- write letters to characters in texts they read
- create texts such as scripts, poetry, stories, songs, videos, and collages reflecting varying voices, themes, and perspectives
- develop their own fictional characters and fictional character conflicts so that they can identify with the community around them
- create conditions of their own writing that identify their own communities and interests
- write reflectively in journal responses or in learning logs about their perceptions of what they have read

It is important that students

- reflect upon themes and issues revealed in texts and articulate and defend their positions in relation to their own interpretation and analysis, continually examining the universality of issues that are part of the human condition
- reflect on their responses and interpretations taking their own and others' cultural contexts into consideration
- include specific references to support their interpretations
- make connections among various features or parts of a text
- offer reasoned inferences and interpretations of ambiguities in a text
- explore the many layers of meaning in sophisticated texts
- seek an expanding audience for their responses to reflect upon their thinking and the thoughts of others
- respond in a variety of forms to become more aware of their own verbal and non-verbal interpretation and the elements of their own language
- express and explore the ambiguities in their feelings in responding to text
- explore the use of dialect and regional expressions in narrative and dialogue of selected texts
- develop a task/assignment of their own that encourages them to respond to a selected text
- read and view texts from increasingly sophisticated global and culturally rich positions

Teachers need to encourage students to respond to aesthetic and media texts. In examining these texts, students can examine the philosophies that are part of culture, media and aesthetics.

NOTES/VIGNETTES

It is important that teachers provide opportunities for students to focus on particular political, ideological and/or religious view point and encourage students to compare and respond to various social problems.

Students may explore the nature of their reflections and examine their reasons they respond in certain ways to their reading. In these reflections, students may consider the influence of personal and racial content, the multiplicity of messages in the literature, the universality of issues linked to the human condition and how literature mirrors the human condition.

To understand the alternative points of view of racial, ethnic, or dominant groups, students can examine the portrayal of such groups in texts.

Students can ask themselves what it was/is like to grow up in Canada, according to writings of African Canadians, and parallel the accounts they explore with own experiences.

After hearing a selected work, students can write their individual interpretations. Volunteers can pantomime the actions of characters in the text. Following one or more visual interpretations, students may wish to revise their written interpretations.

The Renaissance period has produced a significant number of interpretation of the performing and fine arts. Students may wish to explore the work of some of these artists, the themes/issues that they address and the diversity/commonality of their concerns.

It is important the teachers provide radio dramas and songs from the era and facilitate class discussion on various points of views, issues, and themes from the literature.

Students may wish to listen to radio dramas and songs from this period and respond in a variety of ways: journal writing, writing poems and essays, speeches, plays, lyrics, with different forms of dialects which reflect the African diaspora, design artwork, and/or engage in performances such as Readers' Theatre, spoken poetry, hip hop and rap, and reggae.

Students may devise and design visuals that are representative of the literature or a technology project to demonstrate the significance of this period of African heritage for our lives today.

Students may develop a dialogue between characters from a former era with a future character.

Interpretations can be compared through small and large group discussions.

Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- critically evaluate the information they access
- show the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context, and audience
  - note the relationship of specific elements of a particular text to elements of other texts
  - describe, discuss, and evaluate the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres
- respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts
  - examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions
  - examine how media texts construct notions of roles, behaviour, culture, and reality
  - examine how textual features help a reader and viewer to create meaning in the texts

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Students demonstrate their abilities to respond critically when they, for example,

- develop, use, articulate, and reflect on their personal criteria in responding to texts
- tolerate and accommodate a wide range of interpretations of texts
- describe the intended audience for whom various texts are produced
- discuss how well specific authors achieve their purposes (e.g., What makes a piece of persuasive writing, an explanation, a description, etc., effective?)
- demonstrate an understanding that language changes over time
- suggest why a particular writer uses particular words, stylistic devices, or formats
- analyze, compare, and critique different presentations of the same ideas, information, or issues
- critically evaluate media texts for meaning, point of view, aesthetic and commercial considerations, and accuracy and impact
- assess the accuracy and balance of news and information presented in print and other media
- identify the message of a television program and the conventions and techniques (e.g., camera angles, motion sequences, setting, lighting) used to make its message
- develop criteria for evaluating the accuracy and objectivity of information found in a variety of print and electronic sources
- describe potential sources of bias
- explain and evaluate the effectiveness of persuasive strategies and techniques
- value diversity in behaviour and social structures
- recognize the complexities of cultural confines, perspectives, and contexts

- show the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context, and audience
  - note the relationship of specific elements of a particular text to elements of other texts
  - describe, discuss, and evaluate the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres
- explore and reflect on personal connections to a broad range of texts (information, media, visual, and audio), reflective of people of African descent

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

It is important that teachers

- understand and help students to articulate the influence that African heritage had and continues to have on its writers and artists
- provide a range of texts to choose from, with a focus on traditional sources of the following periods: Pre-colonial Africa, Slavery and Reconstruction, Renaissance; as well as, of recent writings connected to Social and Political Change, Portraits of Black Women, African Canadian Writers and Writings, and Visual and Performing Arts.
- support collaborative group examination of texts with the goal of constructing a mosaic that reflects African heritage
- provide appropriate modeling by sharing their own selection of texts, questioning their own interpretation of texts, and articulating the sources of their own biases
- model respect and tolerance when listening to student reflection, analysis, and justification

It is important that students

- explore a range of genres that relate the conditions of the selected period, including drama, prose forms, songs, poems, and stories from folk and oral tradition
- seek and evaluate resources to explore the geographical, historical, social, and cultural contexts of their chosen texts
- focus on a selection of texts, perhaps by the same author or within the same genre or interest area, and examine some of the literary criticism that has been written about these texts
- examine a variety of texts from the global community and consider how a text reflects the culture in which it is constructed
- examine various forms of artistic expression or art as well as print and media texts
- examine the formal properties of text
- examine ways in which certain texts are inclusive or exclusive
- examine issues of racism, sexism, ageism, etc.
- examine the reasons, purpose, and contexts of the consumption of text

Students need to examine their own assumptions and those of others in relation to the text/language/genre by asking questions such as

- What different ideas are among my sources and how have these ideas changed my perspective?
- What different ideas should I include in my responses?
- What elements in the text can clarify my understanding of the historical, social, political, or geographic contexts of the text?
- What is my opinion on this topic or issue? What does the text offer me?
- What are some of the common assumptions of society that exist in the text?

NOTES/VIGNETTES

In considering what texts to introduce to the students for response, teachers might consider the following questions:

- What topics, situations, themes and issues have relevance to students?
- What cultural voices should be brought into the classroom discussion?
- What writers might this student/these students find appealing?
- What works will challenge the students appropriately?
- What do the students want to read?
- What works might help students to better understand their own community? the wider community?
- How can texts be paired selectively to provide for intertextual connections?
- What personal favourites should be shared with students?
- What texts will invite aesthetic response?

Resources

- DuBois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- Worley, D.A., Jesse, Perry, Jr. *African American Literature: An Anthology of Non-fiction, Fiction, Poetry and Drama*
- Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*
- See Appendix for additional resources.
- See Appendix for the Role of Critical Literacy.

Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning and to use their imagination.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on
  - their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues
  - the writing processes and strategies they use
  - their achievements as language users and learners
  - the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes
- make effective choices of language and techniques to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing
- use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge
  - explore the use of photographs, diagrams, storyboards, etc., in documenting experiences

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

The language students use to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning may be rambling, unstructured, and hesitant. Such language is informal and essentially personal both in the nature of its content and through its connections with a student's life and experiences with texts and issues. The main purposes of this kind of writing/representing are to

- capture students' thoughts, feelings, perceptions, reactions, and responses
- explore students' beliefs, principles, values, and biases
- develop and make sense of students' developing ideas and interpretations
- reflect on students' initial responses and attitudes to texts and issues
- attempt to explain students' responses and extend them

Focus

The first audience of these kinds of personal and informal texts is the self. The structure, content, and language of expressive writing, for example, has primarily been to satisfy the writer rather than another reader or listener. It is only when the writing goes public—when it is intended for an audience other than the self—that the standards of convention, precision, and accuracy of language and form should be the focus of assessment.

The primary focus of assessment should therefore be on

- the process, not the product
- the extent to which the students can and do use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning
- the students' effective use of writing and other ways of representing to serve the purposes identified

Appropriate assessment strategies and activities include

- teacher-student conferences and interviews
- performance assessment and teacher observation
- self-assessment
- questions
- brainstorming lists
- brief writes (e.g., ideas that confuse, intrigue, evoke emotion)
- free writes
- marginal notations
- learning logs/journals/work diaries used by students to reflect on themselves as learners and on the complexities of the strategies and processes they are learning/using
- written conversation/dialogues, informal notes, and letters
- logs and journals: reading/viewing/listening response journals/logs, thought books, writers' notebooks, dialogue journals, double-entry journals, group/collective journals, electronic journals
- electronic dialogues
- drawings, sketches, maps, diagrams, charts, graphic organizers, photographs

Forms

- lists, outlines, charts, webs, maps, and graphs
- single-sentence summaries
- marginal notations
- graphic organizers
- drawings, sketches, diagrams, charts, jot notes, collages, and photographs
- 3-D construction models
- audio, video, and electronic forms of computer technology

Focus

The focus of assessment should be on

- the process—how students go about making and using notes
- the students' abilities to select appropriate note-making forms and strategies for different purposes
- the product—how effectively the note-making form selected helps students to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning

- the extent to which students can and do make their own notes
- how effectively students organize and use their notes for specific purposes

Key Understandings

Assess students' understanding

- that making their own notes personalizes information and makes it easier to remember information and use notes
- of what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences of presenting others' ideas without standard documentation are

Appropriate assessment strategies and activities include

- teacher observation
- reviewing the students' use of note-making in teacher-student conferences and interviews
- performance tasks
- self-assessment
- samples of students' notes in portfolio selections
- assessing notes and records as part of a research-project evaluation

Focus

The focus of assessment should be on students'

- personal understanding through the process of writing and other ways of representing
- development of style and use of text structure
- discovery of personal purpose through writing and other ways of representing
- willingness to take risks with language to explore a range of effects
- consideration of audience and purpose in making choices about form, style, or content of writing
- selection of vocabulary and tone according to the audience and purpose

Appropriate assessment strategies and activities include

- teacher observation
- reviewing the students' use of note-making in teacher-student conferences and interviews
- performance tasks
- self-assessment
- samples of students' work notes in portfolio selections
- assessing notes and records as part of a research-project evaluation

Suggestions for Learning and Teaching

Students need opportunities to use expressive writing and other ways of representing to express, sort out and reflect on ideas, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, and responses.

Students need to explore and experiment with the many ways by which they can know, learn about, and understand their world including ways to use drama and visual representing.

Teachers need to

- provide demonstrations and models
- plan learning experiences that enable students to create media and visual texts as well as print texts

It is important for teachers to provide opportunities for students to recognize and celebrate the endurance of a community who must continue to struggle for all achievement.

It is important that students differentiate between voices of hope and voices of despair within the literature, and analyze and identify the voices of strong, positive and hopeful authors as compared to those who voice despair and futility of the struggle.

Appropriate learning experiences include those in which learners, for example,

- articulate how they feel and what they think about a text/issue describe and account for the impact of a text/issue
- note their reactions, confusions, questions, associations, etc., as they read/view/listen
- write personal and critical responses to literature, popular culture, and media texts
- keep response or thought-books for exploring their understandings of the complexities of characters/issues
- explore characters from other characters' perspectives
- explore fantasy writing, ghost stories, science fiction, and folktales
- record passages, extracts, etc., that intrigue them, delight them, or catch their attention in some way and reflect on the impact of these passages/extracts
- write alternative, hypothetical endings
- write letters to friends about the texts they read/view/listen to
- write creative spin-offs exploring some aspect of a text/issue
- relate several facets of a text to their interpretations
- recognize points of commonality between related issues or selections of texts
- use improvisation and storytelling to explore, clarify and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and experiences
- produce stage or video production props, costumes, etc.
- present their ideas in ways that are meaningful and engaging for them and for other audiences
- adopt a stance concerning an interpretation of a text
- select appropriate examples from a text in support of arguing a particular interpretation of that text
- make connections within and among texts and experiences
- demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between generalizations and examples in critical response to text
- value their own responses and respect those of others
- keep some kind of log, diary, or journal to monitor and reflect on their learning
- use figurative, visual, and verbal language to create personal expression
- use interviews to explore and research a topic of interest

- explore the use of photographs, diagrams, storyboards, etc., in documenting experiences

It is important that teachers demonstrate, use, and teach students how to apply a variety of note-making strategies for different purposes.

Appropriate learning experiences include those in which students, for example,

- use notes to generate and record questions, thoughts, connections, memories, impressions, ideas, language, and topics
- use webbing and clustering
- use outlining and highlighting
- use charts and maps to organize information in ways that make sense to them
- use drawings, diagrams, and photographs
- paraphrase and summarize
- use categories, headings, and subheadings and modify them as necessary to make effective notes
- gather information from a wide range of sources to research a topic of personal interest (e.g., consult a recognized authority, extract data from library sources, access electronic databases)
- use interviews to explore and research a topic of interest
- use different note-making strategies to record and organize information effectively for specific purposes, selecting a note-making strategy appropriate to the task and the information source
- use standard abbreviations, acronyms, symbols, and their own system of abbreviations/ shorthand
- use note cards, rearranging them to organize needed information
- use note-taking sheets to record ideas and information from one source at a time or to record ideas from several sources under different headings (using a separate sheet for each heading)
- use research grids to record information from several sources under different categories
- experiment with video and audio techniques to gather information for a research project
- record all necessary bibliographical data about these sources and record page numbers within sources for later reference in conducting research
- use a computer database to record and organize information
- share and compare notes and note-making strategies with other students
- collate individual notes in small-group discussions and write/produce some kind of collective record/report (e.g., group journal)

Appropriate learning experiences include those in which students, for example,

- use media creatively as tools for communicating their own ideas
- explore fantasy writing, ghost stories, and science fiction
- produce stage- or video-production props, costumes, etc.
- present their ideas in ways that are meaningful and engaging for them and for other audiences
- prepare a shooting script for the opening scene of a film based on a short story, including camera sequences, sound effects, and voice-overs

- write a dramatic monologue in prose (e.g., a character recounting the particular circumstances of an incident)
- use their understanding of audio, visual, and print elements to construct their own media productions
- write scripts for a variety of media and communication purposes
- use the aesthetic conventions of audio, visual, and electronic media with competence and originality to effectively express their experiences, ideas, and concerns
- experiment with combining forms of prose and poetry
- use figurative, visual, and verbal language to create personal expression

NOTES/VIGNETTES

It is important that teachers model and encourage students to engage in personal reflection.

Teachers must encourage students to identify and deconstruct stereotypes between their pre-conceived notions of Black people and their social conditions.

In addition to providing a wide range of texts for students to explore, it is important that teachers make available information from articles, films, videos, and the internet.

Students responses to selected texts can be done in a double-entry journal with a two column format. The left side can be used to respond to sections read, while the right side can be used to reflect on their responses.

Students may explore the nature of their reflections and examine the reasons they respond in certain ways to their reading. In these reflections, students may consider the influence of personal and racial content, the multiplicity of messages in the resources, the universality of issues linked to the human condition and how a variety of resources mirror the human condition.

Note-making Guidelines for Students

- experiment with different forms and media
- record the date and topic
- select only relevant information—main ideas, important details
- make a note of perspectives that concur with/differ from their own
- try to make study notes clear and concise
- use abbreviations, symbols, and illustrations
- pause every now and then during discussions/reading/viewing to note important ideas/information
- summarize or paraphrase in their own words
- note direct quotations when information or ideas have been stated particularly well or concisely
- review notes to add to or revise ideas and information
- use circling, underlining, colour coding, and highlighting to identify key points, ideas, and words
-

It is important that teachers

- provide demonstration and models
- plan learning experiences that enable students to create media and visual texts as well as print texts

Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by the increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the construction of texts can create, enhance, or control meaning
  - make critical choices of form, style, and content to address the increasingly complex demands of different purposes and audiences
- evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media productions

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Focus

The focus of assessment could be on

- ideas and content
- organization
- effective expression
- voice and awareness of the audience
- technical competence
- clarity
- coherence
- style
- originality (e.g., of vision and expression)
- insights and the effectiveness with which those insights are communicated to an audience

Students might be assessed on their abilities to

- select forms, subject matter, and language to suit a specific audience and purpose
- work collaboratively
- work independently
- choose language and structures to make the intended meaning as clear as possible in creating information texts
- use personal and external criteria from multiple perspectives in expressing opinions and judgments about issues, ideas, and experiences

Teachers need to

- make judgments about students' achievements over time and across a range of tasks and experiences involving different purposes, audiences, and types of texts
- articulate and assess what they value as readers/viewers of texts created by students

Students are asked to keep journals about their work. They can and should use that journal from time to time to do critiques of their own work. This journal will include a diary of images and written material that acts as a bank for future use. This bank of ideas and images should be examined regularly. This provides a rich means of sharing thoughts about development of techniques, personal growth, historical awareness, etc.

Reflection may lead students to find new ways of expressing ideas, moods and feelings.

- What were the strong points of the resource or composition?
- What are their thoughts and feelings?
- What did they learn?

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Teachers need to

- provide demonstrations and models
- plan learning experiences that enable students to create media and visual texts as well as print texts
- include forms of artistic expression among the range of forms students work with (e.g., aesthetic writing)

Appropriate learning experiences include those in which students, for example,

- explore and apply elements of description and narration
- use different methods of expository development (e.g., example and illustration, cause and effect, process analysis, classification and division, comparison and contrast)
- write a political speech or manifesto
- explore parody and satire
- invent a soliloquy/interior monologue for a character in literature
- use the aesthetic conventions of audio, visual, and electronic media with competence and originality to effectively express their experiences, ideas, and concerns
- transpose a text from one form to another—e.g.,

  script—— story

  radio play——story

  news report——poem or story

  informative article——transcript of an interview

  story——Readers Theatre

  fable——proverb

  letter——diary

  story——series of letters

narrative poem— —play
story— —comic strip
photograph— —poem
story— —photo essay
biography— —autobiography
diary— —memoir
mystery story— —film script

- create a media product for a specific purpose and audience and explain their rationale for selecting that particular medium to achieve that purpose
- write a script regarding an issue of importance to adolescents for various audiences (e.g., their peers, younger students, parents/caregivers, and school administrators)
- research, define, and describe the characteristics of a particular target audience

NOTES/VIGNETTES

A Survivor's Guide to High School

Students research, write, and publish a manual for students entering high school. The teacher acts as editor, with students organized into work groups responsible for a section of the guide. Students generate topics; interview parents/caregivers, teachers, administrators, employers, and other students; and evaluate and synthesize the results into articles that will be important and interesting to students entering high school. Article topics might include

- how to succeed on exams
- getting along with teachers
- avoiding conflicts
- managing time
- a community-services directory
- an index of clubs and teams

Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.

OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to

- apply their knowledge of what strategies are effective for them as creators of various writing and other representations
- use the conventions of written language accurately and consistently in their final products
- use technology effectively to serve their communication purposes
  – design texts that they find aesthetically pleasing and useful
- demonstrate a commitment to the skilful crafting of a range of writing and other representations
- integrate information from many sources to construct and communicate meaning

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Focus

- increasing fluency in broader social contexts
- purpose
- content
- organization
- effectiveness/impact
- control of conventions

Areas assessed could include the students' abilities to, for example,

- create a range of texts to reflect on attitudes, values, and issues in ways that, while not necessarily fresh and original, are interesting and thought provoking
- create imaginative texts, using a persona (e.g., adopt a persona different from themselves in age, cultural background)
- write precise, accurate, clear, and carefully organized task instructions involving a complex sequence of events or a task that is difficult to describe
- substantiate their views on issues and texts in an organized way
- see distinctions between arguments or positions on an issue and between texts that deal with similar events/issues
- revise their work to meet the demands of specific writing tasks and audiences (e.g., check spelling in a job application)
- write relevant introductions to texts such as formal letters and essays, recognizing that readers need to be quickly and efficiently introduced to the purpose of a text

- evaluate the amount and type of information in expository texts and use this information in their own expository texts (e.g., write at sufficient length to clearly convey ideas and information, carefully select information to convey a convincing point of view)
- use a range of stylistic features (e.g., symbolism, imagery, understatement, irony) to enhance the meaning in both expository and imaginative texts
- order their points in an argument to cumulatively build to a convincing conclusion
- review their writing from a reader's perspective to identify gaps/ inadequacies in logic, completeness, etc.
- make decisions regarding which layout options will increase readability/impact
- plan a publicity campaign in a range of media
- make critical choices of tone and style appropriate to different purposes and audiences

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Appropriate learning experiences include those in which students, for example,

- generate several drafts of a piece of writing
- revise drafts for meaning and clarity
- reconsider word choice and apply a variety of techniques for creating effective diction
- experiment with sentence length and construction (e.g., consider expanding or contracting sentence elements such as clause——phrase——word)
- apply a variety of techniques for making sentences forceful
- employ a variety of stylistic features
- create and use checklists for refining their own writing and for responding to others' writing
- create and use editing and proofreading checklists
- edit and proofread written work to eliminate errors in syntax, usage, spelling, and punctuation
- use print and electronic aids when proofreading (e.g., handbooks, dictionaries, spell checkers)
- edit student-created film footage to create, enhance, or change the meaning for appeal to a specific audience (if technology and resources are available)
- use databases and spreadsheets to support an argument or make mathematical projections (This would provide an excellent opportunity for a discussion of the nature of information and the myth of objectivity of information.)
- integrate text data (original and reference) and graphic data (original, reference, and electronic clip art) produced in various computer applications to generate paper-based communications
- use an application such as HyperCard to produce a simple interactive multimedia program that effectively uses this medium to communicate an idea or feeling
- use e-mail as a means to co-write a report in a small group either within the school or within a wider area
- manipulate, incorporate, and file transfer textual documents and graphic and sound files to be incorporated in student-produced communications

- experiment with and create writing that can be presented as an oral or multimedia text
- make a collection of appropriate layouts for formal letters in a range of situations likely to confront them in the future
- present an analysis of a range of television ads, explaining the techniques/tools used to influence viewers

NOTES/VIGNETTES

Using Technology

Students might

- explore communicating with other people on line
- use the World Wide Web to experience the global perspectives and immediacy of communication with people worldwide (This could lead to discussions about global concerns, political and cultural perspectives, the arts, control of information, or the critical reading and viewing of issues.)
- engage in discussions about what human communication is, about technology as a tool to humanize/de-humanize, and about how the attributes of the communication medium impact on the meaning and pleasure of human communication
- experiment with developing a home page (using the HTML language) to become information providers on the Internet
- examine radio broadcasts on the Internet
- create a broadcast/home page for their school

Course Design and Components

Introduction

This section includes

- organizational approaches
- content elements
- the role of media literacy
- the role of drama
- the role of literature
- the role of critical literacy
- the role of visual literacy
- the role of information literacy
- the research process
- integrating technology with English language arts
- speaking/listening
- reading/viewing
- writing and other ways of representing

Course Design

English 12: African Heritage is designed to engage students in a range of experiences and interactions. It is built on the understanding that the language processes are interrelated and can be developed most effectively as interdependent rather than discrete processes.

The course provides choice and flexibility in classroom organization, instructional approaches, resources, and assessment. Teachers can organize and structure teaching and learning in a variety of ways to meet student needs in many different contexts.

Unifying Ideas: English 12: African Heritage

The unifying ideas underlying English 12: African Heritage are those that underlie the entire English language arts curriculum. They centre on the students' purposeful use of the language processes to

- think and learn
- communicate effectively and clearly with a range of audiences for a variety of purposes
- gain, manage, and evaluate information
- explore, respond to, and appreciate the power of language, literature, and other texts as well as the contexts in which language is used

In *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, the term text is defined as "any language event, whether oral, written, or visual. In this sense, a conversation, a poem, a novel, a poster, a music video, a television program, and a multimedia production, for example, are all texts."

Using Language to Think and Learn

Language is a powerful instrument for thinking and learning; students who are encouraged to use language to pursue their own interests and questions are likely to recognize this potential. From this perspective, language enables learners to communicate not only with others but also with themselves. Students need frequent opportunities to think for themselves, to build on their own ideas through communication, and to talk and write about themselves as learners and thinkers.

Students need frequent opportunities to use language for thinking and learning in order to function effectively as learners not only in English 12: African Heritage but also in other curriculum areas. They also need experiences that help them to develop creative and critical-thinking skills. Among the creative and critical-thinking skills that students develop through their experiences in English 12: African Heritage are the abilities to talk, write, and think about language itself. Reflecting on language and its uses in different contexts—social contexts, for example—further enhances students' language awareness and enables them to value varieties of their own and others' language as a means of communication and expression.

Students develop the abilities to use language for learning and thinking through the processes of obtaining information and interpreting and communicating this information to others. In order to see the information they gather as meaningful, students need not only to connect it to their own ideas, experiences, and feelings but also to talk and write about it, using their own language.

Students also need frequent opportunities to articulate what they have learned from their reading or viewing of a text and to share this knowledge with others in order to clarify, assess, and extend their interpretation as well as their appreciation of a text. Such an exchange of ideas and views will lead students to analyze and reflect on issues raised. Student journals, writers' notebooks, and learning logs, as well as small-group discussions, may be especially productive in this regard.

Using Language to Communicate Effectively and Clearly with a Range of Audiences for a Variety of Purposes

Through abundant and varied experiences in creating their own texts by speaking, writing, and visual representation of ideas and information, students learn to attend to the subtleties of language use. These experiences also build their confidence and competence as thinkers, planners, and communicators.

Students become competent at communicating ideas or information to others by learning to be sensitive to the different needs of different audiences and to the ways in which the purpose and nature of the task influence language choices. All of these factors shape the kinds of ideas and information they present and the ways in which they present them. Depending on whether students are describing or explaining something, arguing, persuading, or telling a story, they learn how to vary their organizational and rhetorical strategies. They adapt the level of detail they provide and the language they use according to the context of the communication. Through practice in making subtle (or not-so-subtle) strategic changes in style to fit different circumstances and audiences, students increase the likelihood that the texts they create will be understood and interpreted as they would like them to be.

Effective communication is precise, clear, and engaging—whether it is spoken, written, or visual. The ability to communicate effectively and clearly involves the correct and appropriate use of language conventions and mechanics. To ensure that they can communicate effectively and clearly with a wide range of audiences, all students in grades 12 need to practise their use of the forms of language that are most commonly recognized as standard English. This does not imply that other varieties of English are somehow wrong or invalid; rather, it means that all students need to have standard English in their repertoire of language forms and to know when they should use it.

Teachers should therefore engage their students in discussions of when and where standard English can and should be used in order to expand their knowledge of the audience and context and to extend their understanding of the social significance of different language practices.

The social nature of language and communication is central to the English 12: African Heritage. When they make connections between style and audience, purpose and form, students become more versatile and confident in the choices they make in different contexts and linguistic environments. A major concept underlying the curriculum is that students come to recognize and put into effective practice the crucial connections between language choices and social outcomes. Notions of correctness and clarity are important not as ends in themselves but as links to a wider social world, including global audiences.

Using Language to Gain, Manage, and Evaluate Information

English 12: African Heritage involves students in defining, investigating, and researching a wide range of topics, questions, issues, and problems. The curriculum requires students to locate, understand, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and integrate textual and graphic information from multiple sources, including technological resources.

Similarly, the curriculum engages students in constructing many kinds of texts to organize, synthesize, create, and convey information through speaking, writing, and visual representation.

Because students participate in complex information-based environments, they need to be prepared to use electronic technology effectively to receive and express ideas and information. By using many different kinds of texts and resources to collect and communicate information, students should become aware of the range of possibilities and recognize the many approaches they can use to perform these tasks efficiently and effectively. Building on students' information-gathering and presenting experiences in previous grades, English 12: African Heritage strengthens students' abilities to perform more complex and challenging tasks.

Students at this grade level need to learn creative and multi-faceted approaches to research and investigation. Being able to select, interpret, judge, manage, and use information from among the wealth of general and specialized sources now available are some of the most essential abilities teachers can foster in students to prepare them both to succeed in the emerging information economy and to participate responsibly in our complex information culture.

A crucial aspect of this curriculum is that students examine information texts and evaluate information and its sources. It is important that students have abundant opportunities to draw connections and recognize discrepancies among different texts, experiences, sources, and bodies of information—for example, texts conveying information that reflects different theoretical, ideological, and cultural perspectives.

Using Language to Explore, Respond to, and Appreciate the Power of Language, Literature, and Other Texts as Well as the Contexts in Which Language Is Used

Building on their learning experiences in previous grades, students in grade 12 learn to use and appreciate the power and artistry of language through a variety and balance of texts, including literary, non-literary, transactional, journalistic, and technical forms. This document defines a text as *literary* when it involves the imaginative treatment of a subject, using language and text structure that is inventive and often multi-layered.

Creating or responding to a literary text is an aesthetic act involving complex interactions of emotion and intellect. Experiences centred on interpreting and creating literary texts enable students to participate in other lives and worlds beyond their own. Students reflect on their own identities and on the ways in which social and cultural contexts define and shape those identities. Students' experiences should enhance their understanding and appreciation that virtually any type of text can contain powerful literary expression. Students need opportunities to construct many different types of texts that draw on their imagination and involve the use of literary language.

Creating, interpreting, and responding to literary texts are essential experiences at the centre of English 12: African Heritage. The curriculum focuses on personal and critical responses to texts; organizational and rhetorical strategies; the dynamic relations that exist between reader, author, text, and other contexts—including historical, social, cultural, and economic; and the recognition and examination of multiple points of view.

The curriculum engages students with a range of spoken, written, and visual texts from the past and the present. It enables students to see the variety of ways in which human experience is rendered in and through language and to learn about the influence of a historical, social, and cultural context on texts.

Organizational Approaches

The English 12: African Heritage offers a number of options for organizational approaches that teachers and students may select and combine in planning learning experiences for whole-class, small-group, and independent learning. It is important that essential graduation learnings and curriculum outcomes be used as reference points for planning learning experiences. It is also important that, wherever possible, learning in English 12: African Heritage is connected and applied to learning in other subject areas.

Organizing Student Learning

WHOLE-CLASS LEARNING

Whole-class learning experiences often focus on an individual (teacher or student) or on a specific group. Whole-class learning may be used effectively to present strategies, provide information, or communicate directions. This approach is often used to introduce and support other methods of instruction. For example, instructions and explanations can be given to the whole class before they begin to work in smaller groups. Whole-class learning can also be used when the entire class is involved in a common process (e.g., in sharing group or individual experiences or in planning and making decisions about a class project or another shared learning experience).

Whole-class learning activities include the following:

- questioning and discussions
- demonstrations and presentations
- modelling
- lectures
- mini-lessons
- overviews and outlines
- planning, reflecting on, and evaluating learning

Whole-class learning often involves direct communication between a speaker or speakers and an audience by making statements, giving information and directions, or explaining procedures. The information and directions, presented in a whole-class setting can provide students with necessary support as they progress toward becoming self-directed learners. Demonstrations, for example, provide students with both verbal and non-verbal information.

Reading aloud to the whole class allows students to see and hear others using language powerfully and eloquently. Modelling writing or demonstrating writing procedures provides opportunities for students to examine and draw conclusions about the strategies used by the teacher or by other students in the process of learning and affirms the teacher's commitment to learning as a lifelong process.

Although large amounts of information transmitted by lecture may not always be retained, short periods of whole-class instruction, provided as the need or opportunity arises, can challenge the imagination, stimulate reflection, and develop a sense of inquiry. It can

provide a forum for critical thinking and challenge students to revise and extend their own knowledge base as they encounter the ideas of others and compare those ideas with their own.

SMALL-GROUP LEARNING

It is important that English 12: African Heritage classrooms be organized to accommodate small-group learning. Through a variety of paired and small-group activities, students will have time to practise and develop their language skills. Such group work will also decrease students' dependence on the teacher and increase positive interdependence.

Small-group experiences in grade 12 should be planned to help students learn how to interact effectively and productively as members of a group or team. As groups take on various learning tasks, students will develop and consolidate the skills, abilities, and attitudes involved in group processes. Group processes require students to

- participate, collaborate, co-operate, and negotiate
- consider different ways of going about a task
- discuss, brainstorm, react, and respond
- build on their own ideas and extend the ideas of others
- share their own expertise and employ the expertise of others
- establish group goals
- identify and manage tasks
- identify and solve problems
- make decisions
- pace projects and establish and meet deadlines
- respect varying leadership and learning styles
- be aware of and sensitive to non-verbal communication—their own and others'
- recognize the responsibilities and dynamics of working in groups and make use of their understanding
- assess their own contributions and use feedback from the group to improve their own performance

Small-group learning experiences demonstrate to students how their patterns of learning, experience, and expertise are different from and similar to those of others. As students become more aware of their individual strengths as learners, they will become better equipped to deal with the demands placed on them by independent learning tasks.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Since learning is both personal and individual, English 12: African Heritage allows for differences in the students' backgrounds, interests, and abilities through a curriculum that encourages choice and negotiation. Independent learning is one of many strategies teachers can use to help students learn. Within the confines of the study of language, literature, and other texts, students will make personal choices in selecting topics, issues, and curriculum areas to explore to suit their specific needs and to help them grow toward autonomy.

Classroom time must be given to allow students to conduct their research, confer with their peers and with the teacher, prepare reports and presentations, present the results, and evaluate their progress and achievement in independent learning. Such learning experiences will help students reflect on their own learning strategies and will promote their progress toward becoming independent learners.

Organizing Learning Experiences

Focus	Description	Teacher Roles
Issues	This approach involves active inquiry focusing on diverse perspectives, experiences, and values.	• provide a framework for inquiry and discussion • coach students in gathering/assessing information • coach students through group processes • encourage variety and diversity of opinions
Theme	This approach involves the creation of and response to a range of texts focused on a central idea.	• identify a variety of themes arising from available resources • help students choose a theme to match their interests and concerns • suggest strategies for inquiry and discussion • negotiate a culminating activity and give feedback on its development
Project	This approach focuses on finding information and building knowledge through investigative techniques and processes.	negotiate topics and tasks suggest resources and research strategies give feedback and coach students on strategies for the selection and integration of information coach students on decision making about content and form
Workshop	In this approach, the environment is organized as a working studio or workshop (e.g., drama, readers', viewers', or writing workshops).	• negotiate a group focus and the planning of activities • monitor and coach students on group processes • give feedback on group and individual progress • negotiate tasks and criteria/procedures for evaluation

Focus	Description	Teacher Roles
Concept	In this approach, experiences and investigations focus on a language arts concept or topic (e.g., voice, imagery, satire, symbols, archetypes, or place).	• negotiate focus, task, and evaluation criteria • suggest resources • suggest questions and directions for inquiry • coach students in decision making and reformulation • give feedback to shape the culminating activity
Major Texts	This approach encourages the close exploration of diverse aspects of a major work (e.g., novel, play, or film) with options to extend experiences with and responses to the text).	• negotiate focus, task, and evaluation criteria • suggest resources and issues to explore • coach students in evaluating and selecting information • encourage students to reformulate and redirect their inquiry • give feedback on progress and suggest directions for development • ask questions about form and format decisions
Author Study	Explorations and investigations of specific authors may include historical-background information texts and cultural contexts in which the works were created or set.	• identify a range of authors for which resources are available • negotiate focus, strategies, and tasks • coach students on strategies for the selection and integration of information • coach students on decision making about content and form • encourage students to reformulate and redirect their inquiry in response to information and emerging ideas
Historical/Geographic/Cultural Exploration	This approach centres on a range of works representing particular times, places, and cultures.	• identify a range of topics for which resources are readily available • negotiate focus, strategies, and tasks • ask questions and suggest directions to extend the inquiry • give feedback on ideas, information, and directions • suggest areas and issues for further development

Content Elements

To challenge all students to develop their language abilities and knowledge base, a broad range of content is essential in English 12: African Heritage. The following elements of the knowledge base for English language arts are all essential to the development of students' competencies in English language arts and to their achievement of curriculum outcomes.

Knowledge of and Experience with a Broad Range of Texts—Spoken and Visual as Well as Written

Although it is important that students study some texts in detail, it is essential that they have opportunities to understand and enjoy texts and to explore diverse works independently. Students also need opportunities to compare the ways in which ideas and information are presented in different media. These include

- techniques of production
- interpretations
- social and cultural embeddedness and effects

Knowledge about Language Strategies

Students need to build the repertoire of strategies they use in speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing. Activities and experiences focus on helping students to develop, select, and apply appropriate strategies in interpreting and creating various types of texts. Rather than learning a single way of approaching a language task, students need to acquire a range of strategies and to know how to choose, apply, and reflect on those that best fit the language task or situation at hand.

As students build their repertoire of strategies, they will gain confidence and facility in responding to recognizable contexts, situations, or demands. This repertoire includes

- speaking strategies such as tailoring information or tone of voice to a listener's reaction
- listening strategies such as screening out irrelevant information
- reading strategies such as scanning information texts for selected topics and looking for keys and symbols when reading a diagram
- viewing strategies such as making predictions about plot in film and television productions
- strategies such as note-taking, webbing, and outlining to explore, record, and organize ideas and information
- writing strategies such as deleting or adding words to clarify meaning and rearranging sections of text to improve the organization of ideas
- strategies for spelling unknown words such as using knowledge of word parts and derivations
- strategies to assist small-group discussions such as inviting other group members to contribute, asking questions to help clarify others' viewpoints, and volunteering relevant ideas and information
- research strategies such as using subject/key word/author/title searches to identify and locate resources

Knowledge about the Features and Purposes of Various Types of Texts

It is essential that students have opportunities to examine and critique the properties and purposes of different texts and their social and cultural contexts and traditions. Students also need to know how to use this information as they engage in various language endeavours.

Areas of inquiry will include

- purpose: to plan, inform, explain, entertain, express attitude/emotion, compare and contrast, persuade, describe, experience imaginatively, and formulate hypotheses
- genre: novels, novellas, poetry, plays, short stories, myths, essays, biographies, fables, legends, comics, documentaries, and films
- form: encyclopedia entries, instruction manuals, news reporting, advertising copy, feature articles, appeals, campaign brochures, memos, résumés, tributes, eulogies, obituaries, political speeches, and debates
- structure: approaches to organizing texts; particular structural patterns; and how specific genres and forms are shaped and crafted, what characteristics and conventions they share, and wherein lies their uniqueness

Knowledge about the Underlying Systems and Structures of Texts

In grade 12, students should extend their understanding of the processes, history, forms, and functions of language itself and of the visual and linguistic systems out of which texts are created. Aspects of study will include

- vocabulary
- grammar and usage
- spelling and punctuation
- rhetorical techniques
- stylistic devices

The Language Processes

Integrating the Language Processes

Speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing are interrelated and complementary processes. It is important that teachers plan learning experiences that integrate all of the language processes, building on and extending prior experiences.

Drama, or publishing a school newspaper, for example, allows learners to work toward all of the general curriculum outcomes by

- making connections among areas of knowledge and experience—both within English language arts and other curriculum areas
- making critical and aesthetic decisions and choices as thinkers, speakers, listeners, readers, viewers, writers, and presenters
- developing skills and confidence in creative self-expression
- applying and communicating information and ideas in a purposeful way
- exploring and clarifying their own ideas and responses
- clarifying issues, including those that are emotional or controversial, by exploring the feelings, attitudes, understanding, and beliefs of others
- developing skills and confidence in working independently
- developing skills and confidence in working with others in a variety of social roles and structures

Speaking and Listening

English 12: African Heritage is based on the principle that language learning is active and social. Central to this learning process is the importance of talk (speaking and listening). Talk is the starting point and a major means of learning in the classroom. Through talk, students can express, adjust, rethink, reshape, validate, or reject ideas and information. Opportunities for talk will allow students to refine their thinking through the exploration, clarification, and resolution of issues.

English 12: African Heritage will involve students in informal and formalized talk, including public forums. Building on the cornerstone of talk, English 12: African Heritage will increase students' language awareness and facility. Students will have opportunities to formulate and articulate oral responses to various language experiences and to enrich their oral language through reading and listening to a variety of engaging and effective texts.

Speaking and listening are the main communication modes in everyday life. Speaking and listening are essential for relating to others and for effective participation in society. Furthermore, as students develop their speaking and listening abilities, they will become more proficient in writing and reading. The interdependence of these language processes

has been demonstrated both in research and practice. Both teachers and students should recognize that speaking and listening are just as important as reading and writing and that these skills are of particular importance in English 12: African Heritage.

The term **talk** integrates speaking and listening.

- Talk is the flexible interchange of ideas, feelings, and experiences created by the individuals participating in any talk event.
- Talk is the creation of verbal and non-verbal language in a social context.
- Talk includes exploration, questioning, the giving of information, and the building of relationships.
- Through talk, ideas are constructed and adapted.
- Talk is an immediate vehicle for mediation and the resolution of conflict.
- The structures of talk are defined by the speaker's communicative ability to respond meaningfully in the context of a social event.
- Talk is one of the most powerful tools in determining and developing individual and collective relationships as well as our social positions in the world.

Talking is more than communication. We need to talk in order to express ourselves, to reveal ourselves, and to identify ourselves.

Exploratory talk is important for questioning, suggesting solutions, reflecting on experience, and sorting ideas into a meaningful order. Learning experiences will include

- whole-class discussions
- co-operative groups
- one-to-one discussions
- student reports
- creating audiotape programs
- creating video-cassette programs
- performing drama
- interviewing
- storytelling
- debating

Learning experiences in English 12: African Heritage involve students in exploring the power and the resources of spoken English. In a supportive environment, in which listening to others is expected and tolerance for others' views is encouraged, students should make use of oral language for exploration, co-operation, and communication. In such an environment, in which risk taking is safe, individuals should grow more confident in their abilities, the group more supportive and tolerant of diversity. Gradually, all students should become clearer and more effective speakers as well as efficient and judicious listeners.

An overview of informal and formal talk is found in Appendix 7, pages 186–189.

An Overview of Speaking and Listening: Grade 12

The structure of the speaking and listening component of the English language arts curriculum in grade 12 will be developmental in nature, progressing from talk for the individual to the individual as participant in the conversation of the world in a meaningful context.

The focus in grade 12 is on talk in the global context and the power of speech in formal contexts. Students will have opportunities to

- examine the message and the intent of formal speech
- examine and analyze how the most formal of speeches, such as parliamentary debates, oratories, and press releases/conferences, create forms for persuasion
- research and formulate an academic presentation
- participate in debates on complex global issues
- analyze, synthesize, refine, and produce speeches
- lead a discussion in social contexts
- become familiar with great speeches and orators and investigate the writing of speeches

For an example of what this might look like in the classroom, see Appendix 6, page 183.

Reading and Viewing

Reading

Literature continues to play an important role in the curriculum, alongside a variety of other texts that contribute to the development of literacy and critical thinking in our multimedia culture. English 12: African Heritage will engage students in reading poetry, drama, and many varieties of prose. Literature selected for study should offer students a rich range of language models and demonstrate the power of language and the possibilities it offers for communicating ideas and experiences with eloquence and conviction. Such literature will also provide a source for vocabulary, idioms, images, and ideas for the students' own writing.

In a student-centred classroom, approaches to the study of literature should focus on response-centred learning. The response-to-literature strategies suggested in English 12: African Heritage will help students learn to read like a writer and to understand the relationships among the reader, author, text, and context. Students will be encouraged to respond personally and critically to what they read and to build upon the responses of others. In this way, learning is drawn naturally out of the students as they help one another move toward deeper awareness and insight, with judicious assistance and guidance, as needed, from the teacher.

Reading is essentially a problem-solving process in which the reader interprets or constructs meaning from a text by applying language knowledge and meaning-making strategies as well as personal experience. English 12: African Heritage requires students to read often and to read a range of texts in order to develop their ability to read increasingly

complex and varied materials. English 12: African Heritage should help students develop increasingly sophisticated skills in understanding, appreciating, and evaluating what they read.

Learning experiences should help students develop a repertoire of strategies that enable them to negotiate an ever growing array of genres, forms, and purposes. Instruction should focus on helping students to develop appropriate reading strategies for fiction and information texts and to make appropriate cross-curricular connections. For all students, the understanding and appreciation of texts are priorities over text analysis.

For students with all degrees of reading expertise, time must be made available for both intensive and extensive reading. Students should read a rich variety of texts, including narrative genres and information and persuasive texts written by traditional and contemporary authors who represent a range of cultural traditions. Students should be allowed considerable freedom of choice in reading matter and be encouraged to develop and widen their own tastes in reading.

It is important that students have opportunities for tentative, exploratory reading. Reading should sometimes be an end in itself, while at other times it will lead to other activities such as discussion, writing, and drama. Students must have opportunities to reflect on their reading individually (in response journals or logs, for example) and in small-group situations in which they share insights, exchange opinions, and use dialogue and deliberation to express and discover meaning.

Viewing

The primary purpose of including viewing experiences is to increase the visual literacy of students so that they will become critical and discriminating viewers who are able to understand, interpret, and evaluate visual messages. Visual images pervade the world, and students need opportunities to study their impact and relevance in context.

Personal and critical responses to visual texts and the continued development of a sense of appreciation for visual communication are important components of English 12: African Heritage. Texts will include still images (such as photographs, advertising, posters, and cartoons), moving images (such as film and television), and other technological and symbolic displays. As with literature, students should have opportunities to appreciate masterpieces of visual communication.

Learning experiences will involve students in examining the roles and influence of mass media and other visual arts in their life. Students' viewing experiences should help them to develop a repertoire of strategies that will enable them to negotiate meaning from an ever growing array of mass media. Students will investigate how various mass media and visual arts have characteristic ways of conveying ideas and will examine the complex relationships between audiences and media messages. Students will also examine the nature and value of ideas presented through mass media and visual arts. Students will interpret, analyze, and evaluate visual information and apply it to new situations.

Reading and viewing are meaning-making processes. They include making sense of a range of representations, including print, film, television, technological, and other texts. Reading print texts has always been an essential component of the English language arts curriculum and of other disciplines and is becoming increasingly important in a complex, global, information-based, technical society.

Graphic and visual messages also exert a powerful influence in an increasingly high-tech society, and students need to learn how the form, style, and language of visual texts communicate and shape ideas and information. For this reason, English 12: African Heritage includes experiences that help students to interpret visual texts such as illustrations, charts, graphs, electronic displays, photographs, narrative and documentary films, and videos.

The Reading Process

Reading is a dynamic interactive process of constructing meaning by combining the reader's prior knowledge with information in the text and within the context of the reading situation.

Comprehension is determined by two main sources of meaning: what the reader brings to the text and what the text brings to the reader. This is true for any reading situation, from functional to aesthetic. Comprehension of what is read can be developed only when the information to be conveyed is already partially known to the reader. In other words, the reader must possess language, information, and experience that can be applied to the matter read and utilized to construct meaning.

Learning experiences should be planned to help students

- recognize and use any prior knowledge that is pertinent to the reading task at hand
- see reading as a conversation with texts
- realize the importance of their own ideas, perspectives, and purposes in reading, as in any communication situation
- activate their relevant prior knowledge and bring it to bear on the reading task, constantly predicting and reading to confirm, modify, or discard predications
- think and talk about how they construct meaning as they read, paying close attention to the strategies they use to do so
- apply appropriate reading strategies to different situations, varying their approach according to the nature of the text, their purpose for reading it, and their own knowledge and experiences
- articulate their interpretations and relate them to other experiences

Strategies

It is important that teachers provide focused instruction and explicit demonstration of reading and viewing strategies and ways to apply those strategies to various texts and learning tasks in other subject areas. The reading strategies students need to develop and use include the following:

- reading and viewing with a purpose
- generating their own questions before, during, and after reading and viewing
- using and integrating a number of sources of information to construct meaning
- visualizing and imaging during reading
- drawing upon their prior knowledge, connecting new items to items in their store of prior knowledge, and reconsidering and organizing new information in relation to their own prior knowledge

- drawing upon their interactions with other readers and viewers
- drawing upon their knowledge of word meanings and ways to construct and identify words
- drawing upon their knowledge of other texts and their understanding of textual features such as sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphics
- predicting, adjusting predictions during reading and viewing, and evaluating predictions after reading and viewing
- effectively sampling visual information
- adjusting their reading rate and approach, depending on the purpose
- monitoring their comprehension, focusing on meaning and checking themselves to see if they are understanding
- resolving a lack of understanding
- reflecting on the meaning of print and visual texts from their own perspectives
- considering information and ideas from alternative perspectives
- identifying important concepts and recording important information about those concepts
- reviewing and retaining needed information and concepts
- applying appropriate strategies to a wide range of texts, including print and electronic texts characterized by complexities of structure and ideas

Instruction in Reading Processes and Strategies

How teachers help students explore what might actually engage them as readers is a multi-faceted task. Providing a wide range of texts is part of it; allowing for varied response is another aspect; and there is still another facet that is more fundamental. Teachers must be knowledgeable about the reading process and must be able to articulate information about how readers read to students who are not accessing print in constructive ways.

Not all readers think, on a conscious level, about how they construct meaning from print. English teachers should help students to become aware of the strategies they already use and demonstrate other strategies that they need to apply to help them grow as readers. These strategies will be most useful if teachers have first reflected on a conscious level about how they themselves operate as readers.

Most people who feel alienated from reading feel that way because they are too focused on the words in the text. Efficient readers hear and/or see the characters and visualize the setting while struggling readers simply see the words.

Students should be made aware of the following strategies in order to create their own repertoire of strategies that work for them:

VISUALIZING/IMAGING

Good readers take for granted that everyone creates pictures in his/her mind as he/she reads. Many disengaged readers are completely unaware that this is something readers do and that good readers do it fairly automatically. Students can be encouraged and walked through a process of making movies in their mind. There is no one prescription

on how to teach this strategy. The more shared experiences of reading there are, the more opportunities there will be for students to hear descriptions of the images their peers are creating. Teachers need to prompt students as they share by modelling the types of questions that elicit vivid visualizations. Visualizing forces readers to make meaning from the words on a page. When students are cued to make movies in their head, they are led into becoming meaning makers. This is an important strategy to emphasize and reinforce.

SELF-MONITORING

Students need to recognize when they become lost—to be aware of when their reading stops making sense. Self-monitoring can be explained in the simplest terms to students as learning to trust their *huh?* reaction, at which time they must stop their reading and reread so that it makes sense.

Strategies include rereading from the point at which comprehension broke down, paraphrasing all the way along to make the text their own, hearing their own voice in their head, jotting notes in their own style, and illustrating their own understanding.

Teachers should speak very directly to students about what reading is and is not. It is not reading page after page and chapter upon chapter of an information text, expecting something to be absorbed. Nor is it reading a novel, expecting technicolour inspiration and relevance to be built in. Reading demands engagement. Disengaged readers often assume that their presence is all that is required; they view reading as a passive activity. It is this lack of understanding of what makes the process work that keeps them alienated from reading. Many weaker readers are puzzled by the fact that they read pages of words fluently and yet do not understand the concepts and do not remember the ideas.

Reading is an active process at all stages. It is what happens between the reader and the text when a reader is actively involved. Meaning is constructed within the individual from the interplay between the words or images on the page/screen and what is in the reader's mind. A reader makes connections, interprets, and visualizes—all in his/her own unique way, based on prior knowledge and experiences. Classroom talk, modelling, and a range of shared reading experiences assist disengaged readers to reassess their prior assumptions about their own role in the process. With new knowledge of the process and a relevant text in their hands, their likelihood of engagement is heightened. There is a maturity quotient working as well with new readers at the secondary level; some seem ready to read for the very first time. These students require significant support both within and beyond the regular English language arts classroom.

PREDICTING

Class and/or small-group discussions expose the disengaged reader to the inner dialogue of readers who are engaged. As avid readers share their involvement in books, as they think aloud, predict, and wonder about what they are reading, their more reluctant peers often pick up on what others do in their head. Teachers may choose to structure assignments for and/or direct questions to those students who are not thinking beyond what is given in print.

THINK-ALOUDS

Teachers should demonstrate through think-alouds what they do as they read passages from particular novels or information texts. The teacher chooses a relatively short text with some challenging parts within it. As he/she reads the excerpt aloud, the students follow along. The teacher interrupts his/her reading to make predictions, describe the pictures he/she is forming, share analogies/links to prior knowledge, verbalize confusing points, and demonstrate the strategies he/she uses to correct comprehension difficulties.

Students are asked to add their thoughts to the teacher's meaning-making process. After several experiences with the teacher modelling the process, students are asked to practise their own think alouds with partners. Finally, students are asked to continue the process independently, using their own school materials of various types and lengths.

MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT WORDS

Students who experience difficulty reading often rely on a single strategy rather than choosing from a repertoire of strategies. They need to be shown that in different instances efficient readers choose one strategy over another. It is important that teachers model for students the decision-making process that readers go through at the word/sentence level.

Students need to see that there are times when it is appropriate to leave words out, to substitute words, to guess at words and self-correct those guesses, and to look words up in the dictionary or ask someone. They need to be shown why and when one strategy works better than another. This strategy can best be taught through one-to-one shared oral-reading experiences.

Supporting Students' Development as Readers

To make students enthusiastic, lifelong readers, it is not enough to equip them with an arsenal of reading strategies. Teachers must create opportunities for students to select texts they want to read and to share their learning and enjoyment with others. Modelling desired behaviour and attitudes, the teacher should read with the students, occasionally reading aloud to them so that they can enjoy the beauty and the power of language.

Teachers need to assess the degree and kind of support necessary to help learners build and broaden their knowledge base for comprehending and interpreting written and visual texts. A high level of interest in the subject matter can make difficult texts accessible to eager readers and viewers; many students, however, will need help in coping with complex and sophisticated texts and tasks.

Students should realize that even the skilled reader experiences difficulty from time to time—whether because of limited prior knowledge, unfamiliarity with helpful strategies, or poorly written texts. Through informal questioning or the use of analytical techniques such as the

cloze procedure and miscue analysis, the teacher can help the student identify a specific difficulty at hand. Reading difficulties should never be treated as evidence of a shameful deficiency. Recognition of the nature of the problem is the first step toward its solution.

Students must be helped to feel secure when reading: They must feel safe enough to hazard a guess, to make mistakes, and to correct themselves without fear of failure or ridicule. Readers who have been made to feel anxious and insecure in their reading are greatly hindered in their progress. Since a student's self-concept and reading ability are closely related, reading activities must be designed to establish and reinforce in the student a positive self-concept—one marked by self-respect and openness.

Value Reading

When students find that text is stimulating and inspiring, they have compelling reasons to read—to satisfy their curiosity, to answer their own questions, to fire their imagination. It is important that students engage in activities that emphasize the joy as well as the usefulness of reading—to read for the lived-through experience as well as for information.

Students' lifelong concepts of the function and value of reading are shaped by the reading they do in school. Thus students need to learn not only how to read (in the traditional sense of skills and strategies) but also why they should read. Students bring to their learning diverse experiences, interests, ideas, problems, worries, and attitudes—all of which preoccupy them. If the text touches on some of their preoccupations, then students have a reason to read: They will read because they are interested in themselves.

It is crucial that teachers provide students with opportunities to read widely for a variety of purposes in a variety of contexts, demonstrate what it means to be a reader, share their own responses to reading experiences, and consistently display the attitudes and values of reflective readers.

Responding to Texts

Because the fluent reader constructs meaning by interacting with the text in a personal and individual way, a response-based approach is more compatible with the nature of the reading experience than is the answering of teacher-made or textbook questions. Articulating his/her response to the text increases the reader's understanding of the text.

Personal response fuses talking, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing in an integrated and interactive process. By talking and writing and in response to texts, students become engaged in the underlying processes of composing and comprehending. The use of reading conferences, response journals, dialogue journals, listening logs, and booktalks guides students to wider reading and more reflective writing. Personal responses to texts should include dramatic interpretations as well as expressive and exploratory talking and writing.

Critical responses help students see themselves as free to agree with the text, to accept only parts of the text, or to actively disagree with it. Thinking critically about a text will help students to recognize and evaluate human experience as well as the text in which those

experiences are represented. Learning experiences should provide opportunities for students to think about and question their own and others' perspectives and to assume a critical stance toward events, circumstances, and issues.

Encouraging Responses

The teacher's role with all students in a response-based classroom is to elicit the fullest responses from students that they are able to give. The teacher must have high expectations for all students. Some students may need more support than others and may be drawn deeper into discussions through requests to explain more, to elaborate, and to share more fully. Teachers should provide positive feedback to even very brief responses if the content reveals genuine effort and thoughtfulness. There may be one thread attesting to personal interpretation and understanding, and from there the student can be encouraged to expand his/her insight.

Providing students with choices about ways in which to respond brings forth better efforts than limiting their mode of response. Impressing upon students that they may choose the way in which to express their best efforts (their personal best) allows them to see that the teacher has confidence in their individual style. Similarly, providing students with multiple opportunities to revise expressed thoughts—whether they are oral or written—minimizes the fear of failure. Students should continually be in the process of creating, evaluating, and revising their own responses through reflection on their own and others' responses.

Teachers and students should recognize that silence may be a valid form of initial response—reflection takes time. Possible ways to respond include the following:

- dramatization
- drawing or illustrating
- writing a poem, a song, or a script
- finding other related pieces on a theme/topic
- writing an entry in a response journal
- researching background information

Strategies for providing support include the following:

- pausing during read-alouds to invite responses
- inviting students to retell/dramatize a story that others may not have understood so that all can then be on the same ground for discussion
- making posters of terms used to talk about texts (e.g., metaphor, symbol, plot, irony, voice, and point of view)
- providing opportunities for small groups of students to create maps/outlines/sets of questions to be used as tools to construct meaning from texts
- providing students with words that might trigger responses (e.g., boredom, laughter, longing, horror, hope, fear, despair, tension, imagination, affirmation)

Students need to be rewarded for their efforts and participation because response is risk taking for them. The teacher's role is to help students feel secure in their own responses and interpretations by validating their responses and communicating to the class that people differ in experiences, in their concepts of things, and in their attitudes and interests. In this way, all responses become equal contributions.

Writing and Other Ways of Representing

Writing

Writing and other ways of representing ideas and information can take many forms. With the ever increasing integration of electronic media, clear divisions between the processes of representing and writing are becoming difficult to define. With access to quality visual texts provided by electronic technology, the ability to create in multimedia has become an important element in the development of literacy.

Students participating in a meaningful English language arts curriculum need to have exposure to numerous models of writing and representing. They also need a range of experiences in creating products for a variety of purposes in different forms of expression.

Writing is a complex process that involves the processes of thinking and composing, the consideration of audience and purpose, the use of standard written forms, and the use of the conventions of written language. The writing process as a learning strategy will be fundamental to the students' learning in all aspects of English 12: African Heritage. Students will have many opportunities to use writing as a tool for learning (e.g., as a means for gaining insight, developing ideas, and solving problems).

Learning activities should build on writing experiences gained in prior grades. It is important that students have opportunities to write in many modes with genuine and varied purposes for real audiences—sometimes only for themselves.

Although the process of writing is discursive rather than linear, it has general identifiable stages: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing. In planning learning experiences, teachers should recognize that the ways in which individual students

work in and with these stages will vary. Instructional time must be made available for students, with the help of the teacher and their peers, to take at least some pieces of writing through all stages of the process.

In crafting their work, students must have structured opportunities to seek responses and assistance in conferences with the teacher and their peers. Focused discussion in such conferences is one of the most important parts of the writing process in helping students to adjust, clarify, and extend their thinking on specific aspects of writing.

Expressive, Transactional, and Poetic Writing

Students need to have opportunities to write not only to be read by an audience but also to be presented orally to an audience (e.g., in the form of monologues, speeches, plays, or seminars). Students need to become increasingly aware of how the competence, style, intent, or interpretation of the speaker can enhance, diminish, or change the meaning of a written text.

Instruction on the conventions of written language should provide students with sufficient knowledge to revise and edit their writing for clarity, precision, and correctness. Instruction will also focus on how to manipulate conventions to achieve a particular effect or impact. Learning experiences will help students to understand how to match language and style to the purpose, audience, and situation and to identify and meet the different demands of speech and writing.

As students move toward full membership in the community of writers, they will become less dependent upon the teacher: They will feel a sense of achievement in their work, be able to reflect on their writing more knowledgeably, and be able to take responsibility for their own personal growth as writers.

Students should keep individual writing folders, tracking their own progress as they become more mature and competent writers. Assessment must be ongoing throughout the writing stages—not only to provide a guide to the students as they progress but also to confirm the importance of each stage in developing a final product of quality. Students will be required to select from their writing folders representative pieces to include in a writing portfolio for assessment purposes.

Essential Experiences

The English 12: African Heritage curriculum provides writing experiences in which learners

- use expressive, transactional, and poetic writing
- have regular opportunities to write for reasons stemming from their own interests and needs-on topics that they find meaningful, such as their own concerns and experiences
- make decisions about the form the writing will take, what information they will include, and the readers and listeners with whom they will share their writing
- make decisions about the pieces of writing they will put aside and those they will shape through several drafts
- have frequent opportunities to write in the first person
- write in role to explore others' perspectives and voices

- develop an explicit knowledge of their own writing process for particular tasks
- develop an understanding of the conventions of written language and the appropriateness of their use
- make use of a range of conventions in creating texts for different audiences and purposes
- make a collection over time, of various pieces of writing and talk about their writing goals, progress, and achievements

Writing may emerge naturally and purposefully from any starting point (e.g., in reaction to a point argued in class; in response to music, drama, or poetry; in imitation of a model piece of writing).

What is often productive use of good ideas and interesting prose is to invite students to rewrite the ending of a short story, remaining true to the characterization, action, and/or style of the original pieces. The teacher reads all but the last few paragraphs of this story, and the students, independently and in pairs, write their versions of the ending. Later the class will look at the alternative endings, including the original, trying to decide which one is the most effective and why. Not only does this assignment require careful listening to the reading of the original story but it also gives the student a solid base on which to construct an ending (complete freedom can be paralysing to student writers) and will call on the critical judgment of classmates as they argue the relative merits of proposed endings.

Expressive, Transactional, and Poetic Writing

Expressive writing explores one's own experiences through experimenting with forms and words, catching a thought before it is crowded out by others and recording events important to oneself. In the classroom setting, sustained silent writing and journal writing are opportunities for expressive writing. Writing for oneself is exactly that: It is not to be shared without permission, corrected by others, or held up for scrutiny.

Writing helps learners not only to explore and express their feelings and ideas but to rethink, reassess, and restructure them. Using writing to learn, as a thinking tool, is an important component of an English language arts program and of other disciplines. It is important that teachers provide abundant opportunities for students to use expressive writing.

Transactional writing is impersonal and structured. The writing is intended to accomplish a specific task for an intended audience. Transactional writing includes directions for games, recipes, or activities; recording and reporting on science and social studies; general narratives; letters of inquiry; rules; petitions; editorials; and arguments.

Poetic writing is writing that is a carefully patterned arrangement of the author's feelings and ideas. Poetic writing includes stories, poetry, songs, and play scripts. The writing can stand alone as a work of art.

Students should be given many opportunities to engage in expressive and poetic writing as well as in transactional writing to ensure a well-rounded program.

The Writing Process

Writing is a process through which writers constantly hypothesize, rethink, and revise. In the beginning, writers may have only a general idea of the purpose for a particular piece

of writing. As they write, ideas are gradually refined and such factors as form, audience, and conventions are taken into consideration. Writers constantly write, revise, and rewrite. Teachers can encourage and support writers throughout the process.

Students follow individual routes in their pursuit of writing competence. This competence is developed principally through the purposeful use of writing—not through exercises divorced from the context. Competence is developed through writing that originates from a personal purpose rather than through exercises based on technical concerns.

Writing, reading, talking, and planning are essential for generating ideas and building upon prior knowledge. Teachers should encourage writers to discuss their initial ideas, to read or explore resources, and to develop a tentative plan for implementing their ideas.

Revising and editing are opportunities for further thought and clarification—not merely rituals of recopying the text and correcting mechanical errors. An understanding and appreciation of paragraphing, variety in sentence structures, syntax, spelling, punctuation, and word order and usage lead to the improvement of an individual style. Students should use the simplest words appropriate to the meaning; construct clear, easily understood paragraphs; enhance accurate, factual information with vigorous, effective writing; and avoid obscuring meaning by breaches of spelling and language conventions.

When proofreading and polishing pieces of writing are important to their purpose and audience, students should review writing line by line, often reading aloud, to make sure that each word, each mark of punctuation, and each space between words contributes to the effectiveness of the piece of writing.

As problems arise in their writing, students will need guidance in specific areas. At any point in the process of writing, students may need to confer with the teacher or with peers or need to consult reference works.

Characteristics of an Effective Writing Program

It is important that teachers write frequently with their classes, demonstrating the processes involved; discussing the specific purpose, form, and intended audience for the writing; and reinforcing students' understanding that writing is not a linear process but a recursive one. Understanding the stages involved in developing various pieces of writing helps students to become independent writers and to transfer this knowledge to different kinds of writing. Teachers should structure frequent opportunities for pre-writing, drafting/redrafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. The amount of time spent on each activity should be determined by the kind and purpose of the writing task as well as by the students' maturity and experiences.

Students will be expected to demonstrate increasingly complex levels of thought and imagination as well as increasing fluency and competence. While the creation, exploration, and communication of ideas are paramount, teachers should plan learning experiences that promote students' growth as capable and confident writers who recognize the need for legibility, precision, and clarity of expression and who can manipulate the language, forms, structures, and conventions of writing to suit various writing tasks.

Supporting Students' Development as Writers

Learners need frequent opportunities to select their own topics to write for real audiences; to make decisions about content, style, and form; and to use writing for purposes that are real and important to them. When writers write in a context that has personal significance, they reach for the necessary skills to explore both content and form.

Learners need to write in a positive, supportive environment so that they feel free to explore and experiment with a variety of forms and structures. They need to talk about and discuss their work, to share ideas in the initial exploratory stage of writing, to share their work-in-progress, to get feedback and revise accordingly, and to take responsibility for editing and proofreading. Good writing occurs in the completion of real tasks—in the pursuit of real goals. Writing for an audience with whom the writer genuinely wishes or needs to communicate tends to improve motivation, performance, and quality.

Responding to students' first-draft writing provides opportunities for teachers to focus on meaning, content, and ideas; to encourage risk taking with structures and techniques; and to model questions and comments that help writers to clarify their ideas, consider their options, and move ahead with their writing.

Whatever the technical proficiency of a student's writing, the teacher's primary response should be to meaning; response only to the surface features of writing implies that meaning is less important than mechanics. The conventions of written language are important, but they should not eclipse meaning as the focus of writing.

Teachers should provide students with focused instruction in specific skills, strategies, and techniques appropriate to the needs of the individual. Instruction focused on the conventions of written language (including usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation) should occur in appropriate contexts of meaningful activities, including the editing and proofreading phases of formal writing, related mini-lessons, and the analysis of engaging literature and language models.

Other Ways of Representing

English 12: African Heritage recognizes the importance of giving students options that allow them to approach their learning and knowing in ways that will enable them to unlock their full potential. The course offers students a range of ways in which to create meaning. The forms and processes of representation that students use to explore and communicate their understanding include, in addition to spoken and written language, visual representation, drama, music, movement, and multimedia and technological productions.

Drama is an important component of English 12: African Heritage. Learning experiences will focus on the examination, development, and articulation of students' thinking on a range of issues and will include role-playing and skill building. Language and literature can be approached through drama. Students should also have opportunities to develop their skills in using language to accompany music and movement. Experiences may integrate drama with other media in the writing and crafting of productions (e.g., the scripting of a dramatic production specifically for videotaping).

Creating Multimedia and Visual Texts

When students are exposed to a variety of forms of expression, they have the opportunity to select ways other than print texts in which to express themselves and their thinking. Students need to be exposed to numerous media and visual texts. Through the examination of different forms of media, students can refine their thinking about the intent of the maker and the medium and the construction and genres or forms of media expression. Media texts can be viewed in the context of meaning, technical construction, issue, or historical perspective.

Students need opportunities to create meaningful expression in visual, media, and multimedia texts. These texts may take a variety of forms, including

- videos or films: television or film dramas, television documentaries, storyboards, animation frame charts
- sound/voice presentations: radio interviews, news items, documentaries, plays
- photography: audio visuals, photo essays, photo narratives
- illustrated texts: figurative and literal interpretations
- paintings, sculptures, collages, drawings: independent of written texts

Students also need opportunities to

- reflect on their experiences with media texts—independently or collaboratively in small-group discussions immediately after they view a model
- reflect on their own processes of creating media texts—both during and after the construction of their product—so that reflection becomes a natural and integral part of the process of creating
- document their creative processes
- document developments in the construction of texts
- experiment with different forms of documentation such as sketchbooks, journals, videos, audiotapes, and computer products

It is essential that students have opportunities to work collaboratively as well as independently in planning, constructing, and reflecting on their representation of ideas. The construction of a multimedia product or event is particularly well suited to the collaborative development of ideas, visions, and products.

Static visual text merging with word text has always been an important component in the development of texts. In literature, visual text has been used to support the written text. In other forms of texts—such as pictorial histories, books on art, photography, and manuals—the words support the static visuals. Readers adjust their reading pace as they move between words and images. Students who are familiar with numerous forms of texts can understand and construct those that integrate static visual and written texts in order to communicate.

In the making of non-static or moving texts—e.g., videos, films, television—the writing of the spoken or written text plays a supportive role to the visual imagery. In drama, the text is spoken or sung, but another element is added—two-dimensional, moving visual text. As in the writing of a print text, the visual construction of film has rules of convention, genres, and limitation of construction.

Through multimedia construction, students can become aware of the qualities and conventions of the non-static text of computers, television, and film. By making a product

in multimedia text, the student becomes an author in a medium other than print. Through this process, students broaden their understanding of the manipulative qualities and the limitations of a particular text.

Many of the conventions of television and film have their roots in traditional drama and storytelling. It is important that students explore and construct a range of texts—teledrama, comedy, and newscasts, for example—to make connections among them and to discover what conventions apply specifically to the particular medium.

The layering of audio, visual, and print texts is becoming increasingly important in the production of forms of communication. The curriculum should include experiences in which students interpret, examine, and construct such texts and evaluate the effectiveness of layering audio, visual, and print texts.

The Role of Literature

Rationale

Literature plays a vital role in the English 12: African Heritage curriculum. Literature shapes our conceptions of the world and is an unlimited resource for insights into what it is to be human.

- The primary value of reading literature is the aesthetic experience itself—the satisfaction of the lived-through experience; the sense of pleasure in the medium of language; and the complex interaction of emotion and intellect as the reader responds to the images, ideas, and interpretations evoked by the text.
- Literature provides a unique means of exploring the spectrum of human experience. It offers students the opportunity to experience vicariously times, places, cultures, situations, and values vastly different from their own. The reader takes on other roles and discovers other voices. Absorbed in a compelling book, students may, for a while, rise above immediate concerns, losing themselves in other identities, living through strange adventures, wandering roads long vanished, and entering worlds that never were. Transcending the limitations of personal life experiences, they can try on new personalities and philosophies.
- In literature students can see reflections of themselves: their times, their country, their age, their concerns. Literature helps students to give shape to their own life and to tell their own stories as they participate in the stories of literature and in conversations about those stories. Such conversations help students to discover, for example, how their own ideas—of friendship, love, hate, revenge, envy, loyalty, generosity, identity, ethnicity, otherness, alienation, brotherhood, sisterhood, honesty, dishonesty, hope, despair—are similar to or different from those of others. Identifying and assessing the ideas and values inherent in contemporary, adolescent, regional, national, and world literature helps students to explore, clarify, and defend their own ideas and values.
- Wide reading of literature provides exemplary models for students' writing as they internalize the structures and conventions of particular genres, get ideas for themes and

topics, and notice interesting techniques they can try out in their own writing. Reading literature helps students to develop a sense of the importance of the craft and an awareness of audience in their own writing.

Key Concepts

In this curriculum, literature is offered as a live tradition that students can enter into and renew, rather than as a fixed body of information about specific texts, authors, and terminology. Literature is experience—not information—and students must be invited to participate in it—not simply to observe it from the outside. Students should be encouraged to experience literature, allowing it to stimulate images, associations, feelings, and thoughts, so that it becomes personally significant to them.

While it is important that learners study some works in detail, a key aspect of the curriculum is that students select and explore diverse works independently.

Students need opportunities to reflect on the great issues of literature—which are likely the great issues of life—both to give them pleasure and to extend their understanding. Small-group discussions can foster students' insights into varied readings and perspectives, deepen their capacity to respond to literature, and sharpen their powers of analysis. Students should be encouraged to talk to one another about their readings and to analyze them together.

Knowledge of literary terminology and techniques is never an end in itself—to identify figures of speech and label literary forms is pointless unless it serves a larger purpose. Knowledge about the features of various types of texts can enable students to evaluate the effectiveness of the use of a particular technique in a specific circumstance, to appreciate the richness of the resources of language, and to grow increasingly confident in their abilities to make valid critical and aesthetic judgments. The focus should be on investigating technical elements in order to deepen students' understanding as they think and talk about their interactions with texts.

Meaning is central to literature study. Knowledge of genres, for example, develops from and supports the search for meaning. In exploring the features of various genres, teachers should keep in mind that their purpose is not to teach the technicalities of genre analysis but to bring students and texts together in intellectually and emotionally productive ways.

Selecting Literature

This curriculum offers students many and varied opportunities to experience and respond to a wide range of literature, enabling them to

- construct and elaborate on their own interpretations
- understand that the world of the text and the world of the reader intersect in complex ways
- increase their awareness of form and technique
- appreciate the range and power of language
- speculate on the nature and the use of language as a medium of artistic expression
- extend their personal, aesthetic, and cultural awareness
- develop as critical readers, writers, and thinkers
- develop a lifelong habit of reading as a rewarding leisure-time pursuit

The broad range of literature read and studied in English 12: African Heritage encompasses classic and contemporary texts in a variety of genres including poetry, plays, novels, short stories, essays, biographies, and autobiographies. This range should

- include texts that deal with issues and ideas related to the students' experiences and their evolving understanding of themselves and the world—texts that students perceive as relevant to their own life such as adolescent literature
- balance traditional works with more contemporary ones, including works that bring new or previously neglected voices into the classroom
- allow students to explore their own and others' cultural and literary heritage
- offer perspectives that contrast and conflict with students' own experiences and invite them to reflect critically on alternative ways of knowing and being
- include works that can be paired to provide for intertextual connections

Learning Experiences

Students need learning experiences that emphasize

- developing their own strategies for and approaches to the reading of literature
- discussions that begin by engaging each student in an extended exploration of his/her own ideas, developing those ideas by comparing them with the views of others
- their abilities to develop and defend their interpretations of literary selections
- the juxtaposition and comparison of texts that have some elements in common (e.g., the same author, from the same period, on the same theme, in the same genre)

Learning experiences should help students to

- connect the way in which they read to the way in which they write
- learn about the concerns and issues that cause people to read
- learn about the concerns and issues that cause people to write
- respond to literature and ponder their own and others' understanding
- explore the cultures of the community of readers in the classroom

- *read the writer* in a cultural context and understand themselves as culturally situated readers

The ways in which students are asked to respond to literature in school influence their development as readers, writers, and thinkers as well as their enjoyment of reading. In their responses to literature, students can develop their abilities to think imaginatively, analytically, and critically.

The response approach to literature invites students to explore

- themselves
- the content of the work
- the culture of the writer
- the ways in which the writer has shaped and refined language in order to make the reader respond

English 12: African Heritage requires both personal and critical responses to literature and offers students choice in both the modes of response and the selection of texts. These elements of choice and decision making are important in fostering both creative and critical thinking.

Personal responses, including spoken, written, and dramatic interpretations, are important components of literature study. Personal responses focus on the students' perspectives on the text and on the reading experience.

Critical response is the other half of the reader-text transaction, developing students' understanding of what the author brings to the reading experience. Critical response focuses students' attention on the text, requiring analytical and critical thinking about the writer's craft and ideas. Critical response requires students to evaluate the text. Learning experiences involve students in

- thinking about how texts are constructed and how texts position them
- interrogating their own experiences
- questioning the validity of the text from the perspective of their own realities and experiences
- exploring issues underlying texts

The Role of Drama

Rationale

Drama can be a powerful medium for language and personal growth and is an integral part of the interactive English 12: African Heritage curriculum.

- Drama is an art. In drama, students draw upon their expertise in all modes of communication and use dramatic skills and the power of metaphors to enter the world of the imagination to create, entertain, and enlighten. Drama is a form of artistic expression, deeply embedded in the oral tradition of every culture. It leads students to a deeper appreciation for the arts and helps them to understand how they construct and are constructed by their culture.
- Drama provides opportunities for personal growth. Students can choose from a range of forms of dramatic representation to clarify their feelings, attitudes, and understanding. With opportunities to develop and express their ideas and insights through drama, students grow in confidence and self-awareness.
- Drama is a social process in which all students can work together to share ideas, solve problems, and create meaning. Students extend their experiences with a variety of social interactions, which continue to be part of their daily life, by practising the skills of collaborative interaction and by recognizing and valuing the feelings and ideas of others as well as their own. Students come to recognize how reactions and relationships are dynamic rather than static.
- Drama is a process for learning. It engages all learners by building on the uniqueness and diversity of the experiences of individuals. Students have opportunities to acquire and synthesize learning in all curriculum areas. Learning experiences in drama illustrate a powerful application of what is known about how we learn and how we can best teach.

Drama vs. Theatre	The essential distinction is that in theatre the dramatic representation is intended to be viewed by an audience and is, therefore, characterized by the need to communicate with others and a consideration of their responses. In drama the purpose may be to explore, clarify, or develop ideas, issues, or emotions.
Role vs. Characterization	Being in role means representing the attitude or point of view of someone else in all aspects of thought, emotion, memory, speech, and action. A characterization focuses on representing the significant aspects of a character.
Text	In drama, the range of language events can be much more than words (including their tone and inflection) and should be taken to include gestures, facial expressions, and body language.

Key Concepts

Learning in drama is not sequential; this statement has two implications for curriculum planning: First, students of all ages can engage in similar drama activities and, second, the skills are interrelated and interdependent. In English 12: African Heritage, the drama processes with which students are involved include

- improvisation
- role and character development
- movement
- voice
- presenting and staging
- script writing and responding to scripts
- the analysis and application of key elements of dramatic narrative, including, for example, purpose, imagery, motif, motivation,
- mood, place, tension, and pace

Learning Experiences

At each grade level, drama experiences should be extensions of previous experiences. While these may vary, they have some common elements. Students need to

- work co-operatively
- assume roles
- make creative use of personal experience
- offer and accept feedback
- shape and refine their work

Learning experiences are organized into three groups:

- role-playing
- skill building
- performing and working with scripts

While experiences in all three groups can be used in grades 10, 11, and 12, role-playing is a focus for grade 10, skill building for grade 11, and performing and working with scripts for grade 12.

A list of learning experiences appropriate for each grade level can be found in Appendix 9, pages 195–197.

Overview of Drama Experiences

GRADE 12

Students will use drama activities to work toward all of the outcomes, especially reading and writing.

Drama activities will focus on responses to texts, considering the purposes, ideas, images, and strategies. Drama activities will also provide opportunities for students to develop and apply insights and skills in creating texts and dramatic events.

Many strategies will be based on working with scripts.

Appropriate experiences include

- collective creation
- production meetings
- scripts
- response journals
- the moment before
- before-beside-beyond
- anthologies
- artifacts
- actors'/directors' books
- design
- video or radio theatre

A Note on the Role of Information, Media, and Visual Texts

Today's students live in an information-and-entertainment culture that is dominated by images—both moving and static. Information and visual and media literacy are critical elements of English 12: African Heritage. They have significant roles to play in helping students to select, assimilate, evaluate, and control the immense amount of information and the diverse messages produced every day in a complex information-and-entertainment culture.

Information Literacy	the abilities to access, interpret, evaluate, organize, select, produce, and communicate information in and through a variety of media technologies and contexts to meet diverse learning needs and purposes
Media Literacy	the ability to understand how mass media such as television, films, radio, and magazines—work, produce meanings, and are organized and used wisely
Visual Literacy	the ability to understand and interpret the representation and symbolism of a static or moving visual image—how the image is organized and constructed to create meaning and to have an impact on viewers

The Role of Media Literacy

Rationale

Media study is relevant to students. Media literacy deals with the culture and lifestyle of students. Students enjoy thinking and talking about media productions. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity to have students examine how they are influencing and being influenced by popular culture.

Media are major sources of information. Young people are increasingly getting their information from mass-media sources such as magazines, television, and websites. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity to examine the reliability, accuracy, and motives of these sources.

Media study allows students to investigate issues of power and control. Mass-media information, more and more, is being consolidated into the hands of a few people. There are relatively few decision makers, or *gatekeepers*, to decide what and who gets heard. Local information is often overlooked because it is expensive to produce compared to buying a prepared article, broadcast, program, or newsgroup. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity for students to investigate issues on a local level in relation to the wider world.

Mass media are usually produced somewhere else for general consumption. They rarely reflect the culture of smaller groups of people. This is especially true in Canada due to the geographic proximity to the United States and its huge media-production capacity. It is necessary for young people to *see themselves* and *hear their own voice* in order to validate their culture and place in the world. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity to encourage young people to find ways into the discourse and decision making that are affecting the world in which they will live. A major part of this is producing their own media and finding ways to get these creations to an audience. Mass media can then become pathways from the local level and a means of personal influence in the wider world.

All forms of media have format and structures that are identifiable and open to critique. When media products are well produced, they can contribute to students' aesthetic awareness. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity for students to understand and recognize quality in media productions and thus become an informed and demanding consumer of media.

Key Concepts

The key concepts provide the framework for designing activities for a media-literacy curriculum. These concepts are often organized or stated in different ways, but the intent is similar. For example, there may be some confusion about the interchangeable use of the terms media studies, media education, and media literacy. For the purposes of this document, the term media literacy will be used. It is wise to note, however, that media literacy is a cross-curricular area of study.

- Media are produced by people who are following a format for a purpose.

- Media present a construction of reality.
- Media consist of narrative with identifiable texts.
- Audiences interpret the meaning of media texts individually.
- Media have commercial implications.
- Media contain the ideological and social messages of the dominant culture.
- Media both influence and are influenced by the social/political structure in which they operate.
- The codes, conventions, and characteristics of media influence the content that they produce.
- Media have an aesthetic quality and style that can be critiqued.

Media literacy is a form of critical thinking that is applied to the messages being sent by the mass media. Therefore, media literacy is more about good questions than correct answers. Media-literate people become self-filterers of the messages of the media. Here are key questions for discussion in promoting media literacy:

- What is the message?
- Who is sending the message?
- Why is it being sent?
- How is the message being sent?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Who benefits from the message?
- Who or what is left out of the message?
- Can I respond to the message?
- Does my opinion matter?
- Do I need the information?

Learning Experiences

Teachers need to plan learning experiences in which students

- develop and apply strategies for accessing information
- access and interpret data, information, and ideas from a variety of information sources
- select information from numerous texts from a critical perspective
- evaluate the reliability of information
- develop a range of transferable skills and strategies that they can apply to their learning in other areas of the curriculum

Experiences in English 12: African Heritage should balance student involvement in both personal and critical responses to media texts and the production of their own texts in a range of media. It is important that teachers plan learning experiences that

- relate language and literacy development to the media-intensive environment in which most students participate
- integrate visual media with other dimensions of the curriculum
- include hands-on activities involving the creation of media products

Experiences in English 12: African Heritage should give students access to a wide range of visual images and provide them with opportunities to respond to the visual imagery of numerous texts in a variety of media. It is important that teachers plan learning experiences that

- integrate visual imagery with other elements of the curriculum
- involve students in the critical examination of the symbolism of visual images
- encourage students to question the validity of the purpose of visual imagery in the texts they read and view

Many teachers are intimidated by the scope of media literacy and media education. It is not necessary to have a complete curriculum before starting. Indeed, most media-literacy teachers have started with one small activity and gradually expanded it. Students should be encouraged to develop their own ideas and do their own investigating and producing of media products. Because of the pace of change in an expanding communication industry, teachers will have difficulty assuming an expert role; it is important that teachers not be intimidated by the technology. The media world is one in which most students are very comfortable; this can be an advantage if the teacher encourages the reflection and examination of media without being negative or critical. Some media productions may be hard to experience—even shocking—and these issues can and should be debated and critiqued in class by students. Teachers should try to lead the process rather than impose their own values. Teacher expertise and knowledge of students' beliefs and values as well as those of the larger community will help to determine what issues are appropriate.

A list of media-literacy activities may be found in Appendix 8, page 192–194.

A Caution about Copyright

Currently, it is an offence to use most materials from the mass media in the classroom without the permission of the publisher or distributor. A new copyright law has just been passed in Parliament. Teachers should familiarize themselves with this law as it applies to the educational use of mass media in schools. There are some avenues that educators can pursue regarding the classroom use of media materials. Cable in the Classroom contains a listing of copyright-cleared television programming available through local cable companies. This magazine lists the times of programs and includes lesson plans to accompany some of them. It is available from the cable companies for a fee. Some movie distributors offer copyright-cleared packages of movies for a yearly fee. Many newspapers offer excellent teaching packages along with copies of the newspaper for a small fee. Some television programming for young people has already been copyright cleared for teachers, such as *Street Sense* and *YTV News* (which also comes with an excellent teacher's guide and lesson plans). Most computer programs and sites available in schools have already been copyright cleared. Teachers can also assign activities to be done at home by the students and brought to school. It is also possible for teachers to write directly to television stations and ask for personal copyright clearance.

The Role of Critical Literacy

Rationale

Critical literacy is the awareness of language as an integral part of social relations. It is a way of thinking that involves questioning assumptions; investigating how forms of language construct and are constructed by particular social, historical, cultural, political, and economic contexts; and examining power relations embedded in language and communication. Critical literacy is based on an awareness of the diversity of values, behaviours, social structures, and their forms of representation in the world.

Our students live in a world of intense social and cultural change. Language is a powerful medium through which learners develop social awareness and cultural understanding, empowering them as citizens and members of society. Critical literacy equips students with the capacities and understanding that are preconditions for effective citizenship in a pluralistic and democratic society. Critical literacy can be a tool for addressing issues of social justice and equity and for critiquing society and attempting to effect positive change.

Key Concepts

- Language is constructed, used, and manipulated in powerful ways to influence others.
- Power is not shared equally in society, and this is reflected in language and in texts.
- Expression and interpretation are never simply personal; rather, they are embedded in a network of social relationships based on gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, culture, perceived ability, and other characteristics through which the individual's position in society is defined.
- Texts are crafted objects with specific intents.
- There is no one way to read texts—readers have multiple points of view, and texts have a multiplicity of readings.
- Meaning is constructed. It can be deconstructed and then reconstructed differently.

Learning Experiences

Learning experiences should be planned to help students think critically about a wide range of written, oral, and visual texts, including literature, media images, speeches, non-verbal communication, and objects or artifacts that have social or cultural meanings (such as toys, clothes, CDs). Learning experiences should help students to recognize that ideas, concepts, opinions, and interpretations come from particular perspectives and take shape from the assumptions and values inherent in those perspectives.

To develop as critical thinkers, students need to recognize that all speakers, writers, and producers of visual texts are situated in particular contexts with significant personal, social, and cultural aspects. Learning experiences should invite students to

- reflect on the different social assumptions that different people bring to text construction and interpretation

- investigate language use and change it in different social contexts
- recognize how language positions them in different social situations
- explore ways in which language and texts construct personal, social, and cultural identities
- recognize language as an integral part of social relations and practices
- examine the role of language in the political, economic, social, and cultural forces that impinge upon their life
- examine the choices that are made in the construction of texts and the implicit values and beliefs that are found in texts
- examine the ways in which texts work to produce ideologies and identities
- examine issues of power, privilege, social justice, and equity both within the learning community and beyond
- reflect on their identities to examine those that give them membership in a dominant group and those that make them feel disempowered
- use language to empower themselves and others
- critically analyze and evaluate language, including their own

To develop as critical readers and viewers, students need to become aware of the ways in which texts work to construct their life and realities. A critical reading of a text challenges the taken-for-granted assumptions found in the linguistic choices. Students need to become aware that texts can be adopted (they may agree with the text), resisted (they may actively disagree with the text and provide alternative readings), or adapted (they may accept parts of the text but modify the way in which it positions them as readers or viewers). Learning experiences should offer students opportunities to

- question and analyze the text
- read resistantly
- rewrite texts in ways that are socially just
- write oppositional texts or texts representing the views of disadvantaged groups
- identify the point of view in a text and consider what views are missing
- examine the processes and contexts of text production and text interpretation

As readers and viewers reflect critically on texts, they need to ask questions such as the following:

- Who constructed this text? Consider age, gender, race, and nationality.
- What are the writer's/producer's views/beliefs?
- For whom is the text constructed? To whom is it addressed?
- Where did it appear?
- For what purpose could the text be used?
- What does the text tell us that we already know?
- What does the text tell us that we don't already know?
- What is the topic?
- How is the topic presented? (What themes and discourses are being used?)
- What are other ways in which this topic could be presented?
- What has been included and what has been omitted?
- Whose voices and positions are being expressed?

- Whose voices and positions are not being expressed?
- What is the text trying to do to the reader/listener/viewer? How does it do this?
- What other ways are there to convey this message?
- Should the message be contested or resisted?

The Role of Information Literacy

Information can be used to examine critically knowledge and understanding. Through the research process of critically questioning ideas, points of view, and cultural perspectives, students can revise their understanding, perceive weaknesses in information, and make better sense of the world.

Teachers provide curricular opportunities and experiences through which students can define, investigate, and develop solutions to problems and can learn to make informed, wise decisions as they assume responsibility for their learning and their life. Students' questions are pursued through original research and investigation and by questioning and using information in a range of media. With direction and support, students are able to define reasonable research expectations in the context of the curriculum program and their personal interests. Through personally meaningful curricular assignments, students develop effective ways in which to pursue their curiosities about stimulating curricular topics and to develop effective information-processing skills and strategies.

The skills and strategies required to effectively process and use the information available in a range of media and information technologies should be developed within a systematic framework or process for learning. Topics selected by students for research that are relevant to their interests and to the curriculum cause learners to examine the assumption of arguments, values, and ideas.

Information technologies allow teachers and students to create and employ novel and alternative ways of reaching learning goals. For some students, information technologies provide access to the curriculum that they previously could not access. Changes in pedagogy and student and teacher access to a rich range of information resources in media provide all learners with sophisticated and cross-curricular learning opportunities. Information technologies include basic media such as audio and video recordings and broadcasts, still images and projections, computer-based media, data and information systems, interactive telecommunications systems, curriculum software, and, of course, print publications.

Students, supported by teachers and library professionals, can identify problems; define their research and information needs; create, gather, and make decisions about information; discover, apply, and make sense of patterns and relationships; and reach original, realistic decisions faster and better than ever before. The body of knowledge they can access continues to grow exponentially. For these reasons, the development of students' higher-order decision-making and problem-solving skills is essential if the interconnections among ideas and areas of learning are to be understood, and the volume of information is not to overwhelm learners. The use of information technologies within well-designed learning activities supports students' search for extensive information on an idea under study, provides students with satisfying tools with which to solve some types of

problems, and provides them with opportunities to identify more readily and understand the complexity of relationships among individual pieces of information. The results include a richer knowledge base for the student, the development of critical thinking, a more subtle and affective understanding of the implications of information and decision possibilities, and the recognition of the importance of making wise learning decisions.

When students use technologies within the learning program, the teacher acts as facilitator, mentor, coach, and guide in a mediated learning environment rich in exploration, information, communications, and decision-making possibilities. Teachers support learning and performances in students that involve the evaluation and application of knowledge to define and to solve problems rather than to facilitate a simpler factual recall of information. Students engage with diverse, complex information sources and human expertise beyond the traditional classroom. Teachers can develop and use more flexible and demanding forms of learning assessment to measure students' progress. Learning-assessment practices can incorporate the use of technologies and experiences that genuinely reflect students' understanding and performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

As students develop technological competence, an essential graduation learning, they will be able to

- use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems
- locate, evaluate, adapt, create, and share information, using a variety of sources and technologies
- demonstrate an understanding of and use existing and developing technologies
- demonstrate an understanding of the impact of technology on society
- demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues related to the uses of technology in both local and global contexts

The Research Process

The research process involves many different skills and strategies grouped within phases or stages. Each part of the process builds on a previous part, laying the groundwork for the next stage. The phases or stages are commonly identified as

- Planning (or Pre-research)
- Gathering Information (or Information Retrieval)
- Interacting with Information
- Organizing Information
- Creating New Information
- Sharing and Presenting Information
- Evaluation

Students' use of the information process is not linear or purely sequential. A new piece of information may either lead a student to revise a question under consideration or help him/her to determine a perspective or point of view from which to examine critically the information available to come to a conclusion different from that of the author.

Planning

During this introductory stage of the research process, students are usually involved in a classroom theme, unit of study, or personal interest.

- Topics are identified for further inquiry. These often arise from the discussion that surrounds a purposeful activity. Students and teachers decide on a general topic or problem that requires information to be further explored or possibly even answered. The topic or problem is then clarified or narrowed to make it more manageable and personal for students.
- Questions are developed, and students use individual or group questions to guide information processing. As they begin to ask questions, students also develop a growing sense of ownership for the problem or topic.
- Sources of information that can be used by students are considered.
- Methods for recording information, data, or notes are demonstrated or reviewed; strategies for keeping track of the materials used are gradually introduced.

Gathering Information

At this stage, students access appropriate learning resources (e.g., print, non-print, information technology, human, community). The actual resource is located, and the information is found within the resource. Students will need to learn and practise several important skills:

- searching (with direction) a card catalogue, electronic catalogue, or the World Wide Web to identify potential information resources in a range of media such as books, journals, videos, audios, electronic files, or databases
- locating resources (e.g., World Wide Web sites) and determining appropriate ways of gaining access to them
- selecting appropriate resources in a range of media, using criteria such as the currency of the information and the appropriateness of the medium of the resource
- using organizational tools and features within a resource (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary, captions, menu prompts, knowledge tree for searching electronically, VCR counter to identify video clips of specific relevance)
- Skimming, scanning, viewing, and listening to information to determine the point of view or perspective from which the content is organized/told
  - whether the content is relevant to the topic questions
  - whether the information can be effectively shaped and communicated in the medium the student will use to create a product

Teachers need to help students realize that fewer appropriate resources are better than a multitude of inappropriate resources.

Interacting with Information

Students continue to evaluate the information they find to determine if it will be useful in answering their questions. Students will practise specific reading/viewing/listening skills:

- questioning, skimming, and reading (QSR)
- using text features such as key words, bold headings, and captions
- using navigation features of software
- using pause points, scene changes, or topic shift points in video
- reading and interpreting simple charts, graphs, maps, and pictures
- listening for relevant information
- comparing and evaluating content from multiple sources and media

They will also record the information they need to explore their topic, attempting to answer their guiding questions. Simple point-form notes (e.g., facts, key words, phrases) should be written or recorded symbolically (e.g., pictures, numerical data) in an appropriate format such as a website, matrix sheet, chart, computer database or spreadsheet, or concept map.

Students will cite sources of information accurately and obtain appropriate copyright clearance for images, data, sounds, and text they reference or include in their work.

Organizing Information

Students use a variety of strategies to organize the information they have collected while exploring their topic and answering their guiding questions:

- numbering
- sequencing
- colouring, highlighting notes according to questions or subtopics/categories
- establishing directories of files
- creating a webpage of annotated links to relevant Internet resources
- archiving e-mail collaborations, using subject lines and correspondents' names
- creating a database of images and sound files, using software such as ClarisWorks

Students will also review their information, with regard to their guiding questions and the stated requirements of the activity, to determine whether they need additional information, further clarification before creating their product, or to reframe the assignment in light of information now known.

Some activities or projects do not require a product beyond this point in the process—just as some writing does not proceed to publishing. Spontaneous information problem-solving activities often result in students simply sharing what they have processed and organized up to this point.

Creating New Information

Students will need assistance to decide how best to convey their understanding as a result of the research process for a particular audience. Is the idea they wish to communicate visual? Would sound assist the audience in understanding their message? When would a written report be appropriate? Would a storyboard, HyperCard stack, interactive webpage, brochure, flyer, poster, video, audio cassette, or quicktime movie be appropriate and why?

Sharing and Presenting Information

Students should have many opportunities to share what they have learned, discovered, and created with a variety of audiences and to examine carefully the responses of those audiences to their work.

Students will develop graphic, design, text, sound-editing, and visual-editing skills as they develop multimedia and other resources, using technological productivity tools to communicate their understanding to defined audiences.

Evaluation

Students should reflect on the skills and learning strategies they are using throughout their activity. They should be able to examine and discuss their learning processes.

Teachers and library professionals can help students with evaluation by

- providing time and encouragement for reflection and metacognition to occur (e.g., What did we/you learn about gathering information?)
- creating a climate of trust for self-assessment and peer assessment of processes and products (Students tend to be realistic and have high expectations for their own work.)
- asking questions, making observations, and guiding discussions throughout the process
  - conferencing
  - tracking (e.g., checkpoints for completed skills at key stages)
  - anecdotal comments (e.g., demonstrated ability to organize notes)
- involving them in creating portfolios that contain samples of their use of skills and strategies, as well as their product, as evidence of developing information literacy

The Role of Visual Literacy

Visual literacy is the ability to respond to a visual image based on aesthetic, emotive, and affective qualities. Since response is a personal expression, it will vary from student to student. A climate of trust and respect for the opinions of all students must be established to ensure that everyone feels free to express his/her own personal point of view. The unique perspectives of many different student voices will enhance the understanding of all and will help students to appreciate the importance of non-verbal communication.

If the viewing of a visual image is to be a meaningful experience, it should consist of more than merely eliciting a quick reaction. Teachers can help students by guiding them through the viewing experience. In a visual-response activity, students can engage in dialogue about elements of design and colour, for example, and discuss how the artist/illustrator uses these effectively to convey a message. They can also discuss the feelings that a visual image evokes in them or associations that come to mind when they view a visual image.

Visual literacy also encompasses the ability to respond visually to a text. Students may be asked, for example, to create their own interpretation of a poem through doing a visual-arts activity (e.g., drawing a picture, making a collage, creating their own multimedia production).

The intent in focusing on visual literacy in the English language arts program is threefold:

- to assist students in analyzing visual images to understand the creator's technique and intent
- to enable students to achieve a considered response to a visual image
- to enable students to achieve a considered response to a text through creating a visual image

Integrating Technology with English Language Arts

As information technology shifts the ways in which society accesses, communicates, and transfers information and ideas, it inevitably changes the ways in which students learn.

Students must be prepared to deal with the growing access to and exponential growth of information, expanding perceptions of time and space in a global context, new ways to interact and interconnect with others, and a technologically oriented environment characterized by continuous, rapid change.

Because the technology of the information age is constantly and rapidly evolving, it is important to make careful decisions about its application—and always in relation to the extent to which it helps students to achieve the outcomes of the English language arts curriculum.

Technology can support learning in English language arts for the following specific purposes:

Inquiry

THEORY BUILDING

- Students can develop ideas, plan projects, track the results of changes in their thinking and planning, and develop dynamic, detailed outlines, using software designed for simulation, representation, integration, and planning.

DATA ACCESS

- Students can access documents integrating print texts, images, graphs, videos, and sounds, using hypertext and hypermedia software, commercial CD-ROMs, and World Wide Web sites.
- Students can access information and ideas through texts (including music, voice, images, graphics, videos, tables, graphs, and print texts) and citations of texts through Internet library access, digital libraries, and databases on the World Wide Web or on commercial CD-ROMs.

DATA COLLECTION

- Students can create, collect, and organize information, images, and ideas, using videos and sound-recording-and-editing technologies, databases, survey-making/administering software, scanners, and robot web searchers.

DATA ANALYSIS

- Students can organize, analyze, transform, and synthesize information, using spreadsheets, exploratory and statistical-analysis software, software for the creation of graphs and tables, and image-processing technology and software.

Communication

DOCUMENT PREPARATION

- Students can create, edit, and publish documents (e.g., articles, letters, brochures, broadsheets, magazines, newspapers, presentations, and presentation aids), using word-processing, desktop-publishing, and website development software.

INTERACTION/COLLABORATION

- Students can share information, ideas, interests, and concerns with others through e-mail, Internet audio- and video-conferencing software, Internet relay chat servers and groups, information listservs, newsgroups, student-created hypertext and hypermedia environments, and shared-document-preparation software.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Students can acquire, refine, and communicate ideas, information, and skills, using computers and other communication-tutoring systems, instructional simulations, drill and practice systems, and telementoring systems and software.

EXPRESSION

- Students can shape the creative expression of their ideas, feelings, insights, and understanding, using drawing/painting software, music-making/composing/editing technology, interactive videos and hypermedia, animation software, multimedia-composition technology, sound-and-light control systems and software, and video and audio recorders/editors.

Assessing and Evaluating Student Learning

Using a Variety of Assessment Strategies

The learning that is assessed and evaluated, how it is assessed and evaluated, and how results are communicated send clear messages to students and others about what is really valued—what is worth learning, how it should be learned, and what elements or qualities are considered important. For example, if teachers value risk taking in learning, then it is important to reward risk taking as part of determining marks or grades.

Assessment *is the systematic process of gathering information on student learning.*

Assessment involves gathering information on the full range of student learning in a variety of ways so that a clear and valid picture emerges of what students know and are able to do in English language arts. This assessment process should provide a rich collection of information that reflects students' progress in working toward the achievement of learning outcomes and thereby guide future instruction.

Evaluation *is the process of analyzing, reflecting on, and summarizing assessment information and making judgments or decisions based upon the information gathered.*

Teachers are encouraged to use assessment and evaluation practices that are consistent with student-centred instructional practices; for example,

- designing assessment tasks that help students make judgments about their own learning and performance
- designing assessment tasks that incorporate varying learning styles
- individualizing assessment tasks as appropriate to accommodate students' particular learning needs
- negotiating and making explicit the criteria by which performance will be evaluated
- providing feedback on student learning and performance on a regular basis

Assessment activities, tasks, and strategies include but are not limited to the following:

- anecdotal records
- artifacts
- audiotapes
- checklists
- conferences
- demonstrations
- examinations
- exhibitions
- holistic scales
- interviews (structured and informal)
- inventories

- investigations
- learning logs/journals
- media products
- observation (formal and informal)
- peer assessments
- performance tasks
- portfolios
- projects
- questioning
- questionnaires
- reviews of performance
- scoring guides (rubrics)
- self-assessments
- seminar presentations
- surveys
- tests
- videotapes
- work samples
- written assignments

Involving Students in the Assessment Process

When students are aware of the outcomes they are responsible for and the criteria by which their work will be assessed, they can make informed choices about the most effective ways to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

It is important that students participate actively in the assessment of their own learning, developing their own criteria and learning to judge different qualities in their work. To get an idea of possible criteria, students may benefit from examining various scoring standards, rubrics, and sample pieces of work.

To become lifelong learners, students need to wean themselves from external motivators such as grades or marks. They are more likely to perceive learning as its own reward when they are empowered to assess their own progress. Rather than asking teachers, What do you want? students should be asking themselves questions such as What have I learned? What can I do now that I couldn't do before? and What do I need to learn next? Assessment must provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress, evaluate their learning, and set goals for future learning.

Diverse Learners

Assessment practices should accommodate students' linguistic and cultural diversity. Teachers should consider patterns of social interaction, diverse learning styles, and the ways in which people use oral and written language across different cultures. Student performance on any assessment task is not only task dependent but also culture dependent.

It is crucial that assessment practices be fair and equitable, as free as possible of bias, recognizing that no assessment practice can shore up the differences in educational experiences that arise from unequal opportunities to learn.

Teachers are encouraged to be flexible in assessing the learning success of all students and to seek diverse ways in which students might demonstrate their personal best. In inclusive classrooms, students with special needs are expected to demonstrate success in their own way. They are not expected to do the same things in the same way and in the same amount of time as their peers; indeed, their assessment criteria and methods of achieving success may be significantly different from those of their classmates.

Assessing Speaking and Listening

Valid assessment of speaking and listening involves recognizing the complexities of these processes. Informal assessment, (e.g., the use of observation and checklists by both the teacher and the students) can be used to measure the achievement of many of the speaking and listening outcomes. Students can use checklists and journal entries to explore and reflect on their own and others' perceptions of themselves as speakers and listeners. Scales or rubrics may also be helpful for teachers and students to use in scoring individual- or group-assessment tasks. When students are to be evaluated on their performance in formal speaking situations, most of them will need opportunities in a small-group situation to rehearse, receive feedback, and revise their presentation.

Reflections on discussion and performance, listener and observer responses, and peer assessments and self-assessments of speaking and listening can be included in the student's portfolio. Teachers might also consider the inclusion of audiotapes and videotapes in a student's portfolio to document his/her growth and achievements.

Assessing Responses to Texts

A major function of the English language arts curriculum is to help students develop preferences or habits of mind in reading and viewing texts. In devising ways to assess students' interactions with texts and responses to their reading and viewing experiences, teachers might consider asking them the following questions:

- Did you enjoy reading/viewing the text? Can you identify why you did or did not?
- Did the text offer any new insight or point of view? If so, did it lead you to a change in your own thinking? If not, did it confirm thoughts or opinions you already held?
- Did the discussion reveal anything about the text, about other readers/viewers, or about you?

These questions encourage students to evaluate their own interactions with texts and with other readers/viewers rather than focusing only on the details of the texts.

In analyzing students' comments on texts over time, both written and oral, teachers might consider the following questions to determine how the students are progressing:

- Do they seem willing to express responses to a text?
- Do they ever change their mind about aspects of a text?
- Do they participate in discussions, listening to others, considering their ideas, and presenting their own thoughts?
- Do they distinguish between the thoughts and feelings they bring to a text and those that can reasonably be attributed to the text?
- Are they able to distinguish between fact, inference, and opinion in the reading/viewing of a text?
- Are they able to relate the text to other human experiences, especially their own? Are they able to generalize and abstract?
- Do they accept responsibility for making meaning out of a text and discussion on the text?
- Do they perceive differences and similarities in the visions offered by different texts? Are they aware of the subtleties?
- Do they understand that each text (including their responses to a reading or viewing experience) reflects a particular viewpoint and set of values that are shaped by its social, cultural, or historical context?

In developing criteria for evaluating responses (e.g., through the examination of students' response logs or journals) teachers and students might consider evidence of students' abilities to

- generate, articulate, and elaborate on responses and perceptions
- describe difficulties in understanding a text
- define connections or relationships among various log/journal entries
- reflect on the nature or types of responses
- reflect on the range of voices or styles they use in their responses
- reflect on the meaning of their responses to texts or reading/viewing experiences, inferring the larger significance of those responses

In developing criteria for evaluating peer dialogue journals, teachers and students might consider

- the extent to which students invite their partners to respond and to which they acknowledge and build on those responses
- the extent to which students demonstrate respect for one another's ideas, attitudes, and beliefs
- the abilities of the students to collaboratively explore issues or ideas

Assessing Reading

In the preliminary assessment of reading ability, teachers can use informal assessment to discover students' specific reading strengths and needs and to plan appropriate learning experiences. For example, the teacher might ask the student to read orally a short selection (perhaps a section from two or three texts of varying difficulty). While listening to the reading, the teacher makes observations to determine whether the student is reading for meaning or simply decoding words and then notes what strategies the student employs to construct meaning. Through the student's story making, conversations, or writing, the teacher gathers information about his/her interests, reading background, strengths, needs, and learning goals in English language arts.

Such assessment practices

- build a rapport between the teacher and the students
- reassure students who are experiencing difficulties that whatever their individual starting point, progress will build from there
- assure students that the teacher will be supportive in recommending or approving appropriate reading materials and in negotiating assignments that will permit them to demonstrate their personal best
- set the tone and the expectation for individual conferencing on an as-needed basis

Assessing and Evaluating Student Writing

In the preliminary assessment of writing abilities, teachers might ask students to provide writing samples on topics of their own choice or in response to a selection of short articles on controversial issues. As well as valuing what the writing communicates to the reader, teachers can use a student's writing samples to identify strengths and weaknesses, analyze errors, and detect the patterns of errors. Such an analysis provides a wealth of information about an individual student. Similarly, what is not written can tell as much about the student as what has been included. The following is a list of the kinds of information the teacher should address:

- limited vocabulary
- literal interpretation (only a surface response)
- spelling patterns revealing a lack of basic word knowledge
- non-conventional grammatical patterns
- the inconsistent use of tense
- the absence of creative detail, description, and figurative language
- the length of a piece and the overall effort in light of the time provided to complete the assignment

In responding to the student, the teacher should speak about what the writing reveals. The emphasis should be on helping the student to recognize and build on writing strengths and to set goals for improvement. The students should

- record these goals
- use these goals as focal points in building an assessment portfolio
- update goals on an ongoing basis
- use these goals as reference points during teacher-student writing conferences

Rather than assigning marks or grades to an individual piece of writing, some teachers prefer to evaluate a student's overall progress as seen in a portfolio, specifying areas in which improvement is evident or needed.

Students benefit from the opportunity to participate in the creation of criteria for the evaluation of written work and to practise scoring pieces of writing, comparing the scores they assign for each criterion. Such experiences help students to find a commonality of language for talking about their own and others' writing.

Portfolios

A major feature of assessment and evaluation in English language arts is the use of portfolios. Portfolios include a purposeful selection of student work that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress, and achievements.

Portfolios engage students in the assessment process and allow them some control in the evaluation of their learning. Portfolios are most effective when they encourage students to become more reflective about and involved in their own learning. Students should participate in decision making regarding the contents of their portfolios and in developing the criteria by which their portfolios will be evaluated. Portfolios should include

- the guidelines for selection
- the criteria for judging merit
- evidence of student reflection

Portfolio assessment is especially valuable for the student who needs significant support. Teachers should place notes and work samples from informal assessments in the student's portfolio and conference with the student about his/her individual starting point, strengths, and needs. Students, in consultation with the teacher, set goals and then select pieces that reflect progress toward their goals.

Students who have difficulties in English language arts also need to see samples of work done by their peers—not to create competition but to challenge them as learners. They need to see exemplars in order to understand and explore more complex and sophisticated ways of expressing their own thoughts and ideas.

Multiple revisions of assignments saved altogether in the students' portfolios allow them to examine how they have progressed to more complex levels of thought.

Tests and Examinations

Traditional tests and examinations are by themselves inadequate instruments with which to measure the learning required by this curriculum. Evaluation must be consistent with the philosophy articulated in this English language arts curriculum guide and in *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*. Some teachers have designed tests and examinations that reflect key aspects of the curriculum, such as collaborative small-group work, the process approach to writing, and response-based approaches to texts. Creating opportunities for students to collaborate on a test or an examination can be a legitimate practice and a useful strategy in an interactive classroom.

For example, in constructing a co-operative response to an exam question, students might work in pairs or small groups to negotiate meanings and achieve a consensus in their responses. An essay test based on the reading of a novel or play might consist of several questions from which students select one to write about over a two- or three-day period, using the text to find quotes or examples as evidence to support their answers. Students may be given opportunities to discuss their ideas with classmates and to seek responses to their draft writing.

Alternatively, students might be given three to five essay questions a few days before the test or examination. They would then use the class time before the test or examination to rehearse possible responses to each question with their classmates. On examination day they would be given one of these questions on which to write.

Process-based examinations allow students time to apply a range of skills and strategies for pre-writing (brainstorming and free writing, for example), drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading. The examination might comprise a single comprehensive question requiring the production, through the stages of the writing process, of a polished essay, making reference to several of the texts studied during the year. Alternatively, teachers might design a range of questions or invite students to submit questions from which the teacher will make the final selection.

Some process-based examinations involve class periods over several days. Students might be permitted to make free use of texts, including dictionaries and other reference tools, during the examination but have to pass in all notes and drafts produced during these class periods to be filed and retained by the teacher each day. The teacher could structure particular activities for each day. On day one, for example, students might read and select questions, brainstorm, discuss in small groups, make rough outlines or notes, and begin their first draft. On the next day, students might complete the first draft and revise it in peer conferences. Day three might involve further revision, peer editing and self-editing. On the last day, students might use notes and drafts from days one to three to produce and proofread the final piece. Points could be awarded for notes and early drafts as well as for the final draft.

Effective Assessment and Evaluation Practices

Effective assessment improves the quality of learning and teaching. It can help students to become more self-reflective and feel in control of their own learning, and it can help teachers to monitor and focus the effectiveness of their instructional programs.

Assessment and evaluation of student learning should recognize the complexity of learning and reflect the complexity of the curriculum. Evaluation should be based on the range of learning outcomes addressed in the reporting period and focus on general patterns of achievement rather than on single instances in order for judgments to be balanced.

Some aspects of English language arts are easier to assess than others (e.g., the ability to spell and to apply the principles of punctuation). As useful as these skills are, they are less significant than the abilities to create, to imagine, to relate one idea to another, to organize information, and to discern the subtleties of fine prose or poetry. Response, reasoning, and reflection are significant areas of learning in English language arts but do not lend themselves readily to traditional assessment methods such as tests.

In reflecting on the effectiveness of their assessment program, teachers should consider to what extent their assessment practices

- are fair in terms of the student's background or circumstances
- are integrated with instruction as a component in the curriculum rather than an interruption of it
- require students to engage in authentic language use
- emphasize what students can do rather than what they cannot do
- allow them to provide relevant, supportive feedback that helps students move ahead
- reflect where the students are in terms of learning a process or strategy and help to determine what kind of support or instruction will follow
- support risk taking
- provide specific information about the processes and strategies students are using
- provide students with diverse and multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they are capable of
- provide evidence of achievement in which the student can genuinely take pride
- recognize positive attitudes and values as important learning outcomes
- encourage students to reflect on their learning in productive ways and to set learning goals
- aid decision making regarding appropriate teaching strategies, learning experiences and environments, groupings, and learning materials
- accommodate multiple responses and different types of texts and tasks
- involve students in the development, interpretation, and reporting of assessment
- enable them to respond constructively to parents/caregivers and student inquiries about learning in English language arts

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample Assessment Criteria for Writing Tasks

Report	Narrative Writing	Persuasive Writing
• develops a controlling idea • conveys a perspective on the topic/issue • creates an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context • includes appropriate facts and details • excludes extraneous and inappropriate information • uses a range of appropriate strategies • provides facts and details • describes or analyzes the subject • narrates a relevant anecdote • compares and contrasts • explains the benefits or limitations • demonstrates or provides a scenario to illustrate claims or assertions	• establishes a context • creates a persona • sustains reader interest • creates a point of view • establishes a situation, plot, setting, and conflict • establishes the significance of events and of conclusions that can be drawn from those events • creates an organizing structure • includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character • excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies • develops complex characters • uses details to develop focus/meaning • uses a range of appropriate strategies such as • dialogue • tension or suspense • pacing	• develops a clear controlling idea • advances a knowledgeable judgment • creates an organizing structure that is appropriate to the needs, values, and interests of a specified audience and arranges details, reasons, examples, and anecdotes effectively and persuasively • includes appropriate information and arguments and excludes information and arguments that are irrelevant • anticipates and addresses reader concerns and counter-arguments • supports arguments with detailed evidence and cites sources of information as appropriate • uses a range of strategies to elaborate and persuade such as definitions, descriptions, illustrations, examples from evidence, and anecdotes
Elements of Personal Response	**Functional**	**Procedure**
• develops reader interest • establishes a context and creates a persona • advances a judgment that is interpretive, analytic, evaluative, or reflective • supports a judgment by referring to the text, other works, other authors, or non-print media • supports a judgment by referring to personal knowledge • suggests an interpretation • recognizes possible ambiguities, nuances, and complexities	• reports, organizes, and conveys information and ideas accurately • includes relevant narrative details such as scenarios, definitions, and examples • anticipates the reader's problems, mistakes, and misunderstandings • uses a variety of formatting techniques, including headings, subordinate terms, hierarchical structures, graphics, colour, and placement into the foreground • establishes a persona that is consistent with the document's purpose • employs word choices that are consistent with the persona and appropriate for the intended audience	• anticipates the reader's needs • creates expectations through predictable structures such as headings • provides a smooth transition between steps • makes use of appropriate writing strategies • creates a visual hierarchy • uses white space and graphics where appropriate • includes relevant information • excludes extraneous information • anticipates problems, mistakes, and misunderstandings from the reader's point of view

Appendix 2: Writing: Some Forms to Explore

acknowledgement
advertisement
agenda
announcement
article
autobiography
ballad
biography
blurb (e.g., for a book)
broadsheet
brochure
caption
cartoon
catalogue
certificate
charter
confession
constitution
critique
crossword
curriculum
curriculum vitae (résumé)
definition
dialogue
diary
direction
directory
edict
editorial
epitaph
essay
eulogy
feature article
forecast
form
glossary
greeting card
guide
headline
horoscope
instruction
inventory
invitation
journal
label
legal brief
letter
libel
list
log
lyric
magazine
manifesto
manual
memo
menu
minutes
monologue
news
note
notice
novel
obituary
pamphlet
paraphrase
parody
pastiche
petition
placard
play
poem
postcard
poster
prayer
précis
proclamation
prospectus
questionnaire
recipe
record
reference
regulation
report
résumé (curriculum vitae)
review
rule
schedule

script
sermon
sketch
slogan
song
sonnet
spelling
statement
story
summary
syllabus
synopsis
testimonial
testimony
travelogue
weather forecast
will

Appendix 3: Writing and Representing Purposes

Purposes for Writing and Other Ways of Representing	Purposes for Letters	Possible Audiences
advertise analyze announce argue challenge comment compare congratulate contrast defend describe discuss dramatize entertain evaluate evoke explain express attitude/emotion express opinion hypothesize inform instruct narrate negotiate persuade plan present research question reach a conclusion record regulate speculate suggest summarize warn	acknowledgement advice apology application complaint congratulations to the editor entertain farewell illustrate inform inquiry invitation news order pen pal poison-pen protest recommendation request resignation suggest support sympathy thanks warning	• younger self, older self • trusted friend: same sex, opposite sex • peer: younger student, older student, writing buddy • imaginary reader: other time, other place • character in fiction, films, television dramas, commercials • self as an expert to a less informed reader • unknown peer: pen pal • parent/caregiver, grandparent; relative • trusted adult: current teacher, previous teacher, parent/caregiver of a friend, leader of the club/association to which the student belongs • advice columnist • school personnel • known adult, supportive reader/ listener, viewer • assemblies • media personality or other celebrity: talk-show host, pop star, sports star • author, media producer • community group: seniors, special-interest • media: television, newspapers, publishers • company, business, agency • judge of a writing contest • marker in an assessment context • adult in authority: school-board member, principal, member of the school advisory council, MLA, MP • unknown public readership—past, present, future, extraterrestrial, deity, bulletin board (school, community, electronic) • hostile readership • high-status adults: Premier, Prime Minister, Lieutenant Governor, Governor General, Queen

Appendix 4: Journalism

Categories for Journalism	Journalism Terms
• advice column • business news • cartoons • classified advertising • comics • contest/competition • court report • crime news • editorial • entertainment guide • events • feature article on an issue • feature on a special interest (e.g., fashion, cars) • financial/investment advice • gossip column • headlines • historical feature • horoscope • human-interest story • informative feature • international news • interview • investigative report • lead article • leads • letters to the editor • local/provincial/regional news • notice of events • obituary • opinion • personality profile/story • political news • review (e.g., music, theatre, film) • special-audience column (e.g., children) • special-interest column • sports news • trade advertising • travel section • weather forecast/report	• *Advertorial*: a combination of advertisements and editorials (sometimes advertising copy disguised as news reporting) • *Angle*: a particular perspective, way of approaching a subject, slant • *Banner*: a one-line header extending across the whole page • *By-line*: a credit line with the writer's name • *Caption*: a comment or description under an illustration or photograph • *Cropping*: cutting a photograph to eliminate parts of it to create a particular effect or suit a particular purpose • *Deck*: a second, smaller headline inserted between main headline and the story • *Dummy*: a diagram to show the page layout • *Editorializing*: injecting personal opinion/bias into a report/news story • *Feature*: a story that appeals to the audience because of its human-interest content • *Gatekeeper*: the person who decides which news to print and which to hold back • *Grabber*: an attention-getting lead • *Inverted pyramid structure*: an organizational structure with the most important/interesting information in the lead and the remaining information presented in an order of decreasing importance/interest • *Jump*: to continue a story on another page • *Jump line*: a line printed at the bottom of a story to direct the reader to the page where it is continued • *Jumphead*: a headline over the jumped part of a story • *Kicker*: a smaller-emphasis headline above a larger headline • *Masthead*: an identification statement containing nameplate, policy statement, etc. • *Media event*: a reported event that appears to be news but that is actually staged by a group/business (perhaps for free advertising) • *Visual coding*: the use of photographs to suggest meaning by association

Appendix 5: Information Texts: Technical Communication

Outcomes	Suggestions for Teaching	Audience
Given the high volume of technical information being generated and the increasing demand for technical-communication skills in every area of life, learning experiences involving technical communication are essential in the English 10–12 curriculum. As a result of these cumulative experiences, students should be able to • identify the intended audience • identify the purpose of the communication • access and provide information in a variety of contexts/situations • differentiate between tell and sell messages • determine whether they are writing/producing a tell or sell communication • identify the primary information they have to convey • focus the reader's/ viewer's/ listener's attention on primary information (attention-getting opening statements) • differentiate between primary and secondary information • differentiate between need to know and nice to know information • organize information into a coherent sequence • use the pyramid approach to structure information about a situation, process, product, concept, or service	*Focus* • technical-communication forms and purposes • exploring how the content, situation, audience, and purpose interact with language and style to determine specific forms of communication Students should become increasingly adept at • predicting the requirements of the communication context • selecting the appropriate language and form of presentation • anticipating audience reaction and needs *Sample Unit* • introduce/review the tell-sell concept – tell: facts/events (tangibles), direct, definite, economical (e.g., reports) – sell: ideas/concepts (intangibles), persuasive, convincing, eloquent (e.g., requests, proposals) • have the students write a sample letter to use for future reference • review the climactic/narrative method, and introduce/review the immediate/pyramid method • model opening sentences/main message/summary statements • model the development of supporting details to answer the reader's/viewer's/listener's questions – establish information relevance – organize the details • have the students apply a model by writing a letter of request and a letter of complaint	Audiences could include • peers, teachers, school administration, school-board members, community members • co-workers, supervisors, managers, bosses, employers • customers, clients • media, politicians, business people, other professionals • self, friends, peers, parents/ caregivers Knowing the intended audience determines the • content and organization of communication • choice of form • degree of detail provided • choice of language • style, tone, and format of communication Purpose The purpose might be to • acknowledge, accept, refuse, inquire, apply, or complain • inform, advise, persuade, suggest, request, negotiate, initiate, instruct, or entertain • question, propose, or justify • record, document, or report • advocate, promote, or sell

Forms	Style, Tone, and Format	Situation
Students will use and convey information in various forms. Technical-information forms include • correspondence: letters (e.g., requests, complaints), memos, faxes, electronic mail • agendas, minutes, and outlines • definitions and descriptions (e.g., equipment, mechanisms), explanations (e.g., processes, procedures), and instructions • requests, requisitions, briefings, and directives • surveys and questionnaires • informal reports (e.g., incident—summary, background, details/facts/events, outcome/action; progress; inspection; field trip) • semiformal reports (e.g., investigation or evaluation reports) • research reports • proposals, recommendations • summaries, comparisons, analyzes, evaluations, and transcriptions • executive summaries (e.g., as a cover letter drawing the reader's attention to management, financial, political, or other factors inherent in a report's findings, conclusions, or recommendations) • oral briefings and speeches • illustrations and graphics (e.g., graphs, charts, diagrams, tables, photographs, other visuals) • hypermedia, desktop presentations, videos	Students will present information in a style, tone, and format appropriate to the context and form. Depending on the context variables, effective presentation of technical information may be characterized by • precision, conciseness, brevity, and succinctness • directness, efficiency, and specificity • accuracy, relevancy, and objectivity • clarity and lucidity • logical organization • discriminating word choice • the control/correct use of syntax, grammar, usage, and mechanics • the use of the active voice • effective titles and headings • effective design/layout • effective illustrations and graphics • the required documentation	Technical-communication contexts may involve • working and interacting with others at school, at work, and in the community • obtaining and giving information by telephone • listening effectively • obtaining information through interviews • accessing and downloading information by computer, using sources such as the Internet, CD-ROMs, databases • excluding/eliminating information from different texts Independent Learning Students will generate and process information individually. For individual work, students will • plan • access and gather information through observation, asking questions, surveys, and research • sort, interpret, screen, compare, summarize, and synthesize data from various sources • record, organize, and evaluate information • select vehicles and forms • design layouts • draft, revise, edit, and proofread written communications • rehearse and make presentations (delivering the information orally and representing the information visually)

Appendix 6: Speaking and Listening: English 12 Scenario

Students in grade 12 are learning about language in the global context, relating to the power of the audience, the power of the speech, and the power of the speaker. During the study of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, students become aware of the power, evils, and obsessive nature of revenge. The moral and social implications of revenge were of interest to the Elizabethan audience and continue to intrigue individuals in the twenty-first century.

In groups of four or five, students examine the issues around the revenge in the play and the outcome of Hamlet's quest for revenge. Specific roles could be assigned, including facilitator, recorder, encourager, challenger, and questioner. In their groups, students continue to examine the issue of revenge in the context of current times. They could examine

- relevant articles in print media such as newspapers and magazines
- the passion of revenge portrayed in modern literature such as Robertson Davies' *Deptford Trilogy*
- acts and victims of revenge in a political context such as Salman Rushdie
- acts and victims of personal revenge portrayed in local media

The experiences to this point involve informal talk.

Following these initial discussions, new focus groups are organized to centre on specific issues related to revenge:

- the nature of the destructive power of revenge
- how revenge is manifested in different cultures
- revenge as a gender issue
- the effects of revenge on family relationships and the effects of family relationships on revenge

These focus groups are established according to interest. Students research their issues through various media and study their issues outside of classroom time to prepare for reflective, thoughtful in-class discussions. By preparing for the discussions in this way, students examine the issue in detail, reflect on it, and understand that they are expected to participate in a meaningful discussion on their chosen issue. These discussions provide the background for students to pursue a formal speech event related to the chosen issue.

The focus and form of the formal speech event is negotiated by students and the teacher. This event may be an individual or group event in the form of a debate, an oration, a panel discussion, a documentary, or a presentation in another medium. As this is a formal speech event, it is expected that the presentation will adhere to the structures of formal speech presentation yet will not so rigidly conform to these structures that creative expression and manipulation of the form are inhibited.

Appendix 6: Speaking and Listening: Ideas for Activities

Students select a character from a play / short story / novel / television drama / movie. They prepare a two- or three-minute monologue that that character might deliver, basing it on an event in the text or on personality traits revealed about the character.

Students discuss the techniques they would use in telling a story to a child/group of young children (e.g., emphasizing concrete descriptions, using effective dialogue, and presenting the story in a relaxed and informal atmosphere). Students prepare and relate a story to a child /group of young children and then evaluate the success of their experiences.

After prior discussions concerning content, delivery, and listeners' roles, students compose and read announcements/messages to the class or to the school body (e.g., using the public-address system). Listeners should try to determine how well they attended to and comprehended the announcement. Announcements can be critiqued according to predetermined criteria.

Students role-play giving and taking telephone messages such as those related to a career/ business activity. Students consider

- who is calling
- for whom the message is intended
- the relative importance of the message
- the accuracy and clarity of the information
- keeping a record of the time/date if necessary
- the standard of courtesy for callers and respondents

Students attend a presentation/public speech event. They

- prepare questions on the topic before the presentation
- listen carefully throughout
- formulate new questions as the presentation progresses
- delete questions that have already been answered during the presentation or raised by other questioners
- select a question and ask for an answer
- assess their own attentiveness as a listener

Students watch a panel discussion, interview, or debate presented on television, in class, or in a public venue. Following the presentation, students discuss and elaborate on the involvement of the various participants—for example, those who

- dominated
- posed unanswerable questions
- dodged questions
- clashed on grounds other than issues
- contributed to / detracted from the program's success in meeting its objectives

Students invite a guest speaker to present a demonstration of alternative communication devices (e.g., artificial larynx, electronic communication devices).

Students prepare charts as guides to aspects of the parliamentary procedure such as

- the order of business
- keeping minutes and what to include in them
- preparing a treasurer's report
- making, amending, and voting on motions
- common procedural terms such as quorum

Students discuss the usefulness of the parliamentary procedure:

- its relationship to the concept of democracy
- its relationship to minority rights

Students prepare news broadcasts about an aspect of their class work (in English or in another area of the curriculum). They may

- omit one or two significant details
- present broadcasts to the class
- ask listeners to identify what details were omitted and why those details are significant

Students listen to a lengthy piece of text. Only half of the group takes notes. Students compare the performance of note-takers and non-note-takers when responding to questions on the selection and then discuss the advantages of note-making while listening.

Students explain and simultaneously demonstrate a process that group/class members can perform as the directions are being given. Students discuss the points at which they have difficulty in following the directions, analyzing the difficulty to determine if the problem lies in the presentation of directions or in the listening skills/habits of the students.

Students identify idioms that portray disabilities and people with disabilities in a negative manner and discuss how the use of these idioms contributes to misinformation and negative attitudes toward such people.

Students view a videotape or film clip of a scene run without sound and

- discuss what they believe is taking place in the scene
- discuss the general nature of the conversation
- view the scene again, this time with sound
- compare their conjectures to what actually takes place in the scene
- identify details that led them to their conclusions

Appendix 7: Overview: Informal Talk

Types of Informal Talk	Purposes
Disputational Talk Speakers challenge other speakers' views to obtain information and to force them to clarify their position. *Exploratory Talk* Speakers propose and justify their ideas, accumulating relevant information. *Cumulative Talk* Speakers contribute to discussions by referring to and continuing with previous speakers' comments. *Co-operative Talk* Speakers are respectful of others' points of view and compromise and work toward a consensus. *Communicative Talk* Speakers have an awareness of the audience and are able to present information and accept feedback.	• to examine language within the social context of spoken language • to encourage students to take risks and to accept challenges • to enable students to grow more confident in their abilities • to enable students to develop a tolerance of diverse points of view • to enable students to develop clarity in their conversations • to enable students to articulate their own ideas and define, test, and contextualize the dialogue

Structures	Modelling	Assessment
Informal-talk structures are • determined by the negotiations of the participants • determined by the participants' interests, expertise, and linguistic styles as well as the individual or group organizational functions, which are imposed, agreed upon, or perceived • dependent upon the awareness of the situation and the relationship among the individuals involved • dependent upon the willingness of the participants to share and/or create, analyze, and conceptualize ideas • determined by the diverse and complex structures within both class and cultural contexts • dependent upon and determined by the students' equal and willing participation in the clarification and modification of ideas • socially variable (when informal talk is conversational)	Teachers need to create opportunities to • demonstrate conversation and discussion for other students to observe the dynamics of talk • create roles in order to understand the posture and position on a point of view • reflect on what they have been doing • provide a catalyst (e.g., issue, medium) • analyze and synthesize ideas • reason through discourse and verbal exchange Teachers need to provide the following experiences: • conversation • dialogue • communication • consensus • constructive disagreement	Effective assessment informs both the students and the teacher of what has been accomplished. Student participation in assessment is crucial. Assessment needs to be • an inclusive picture of each student's accomplishments • multi-faceted and varied • built on students' attempts Assessment practices must • include the processes of learning • provide constant, careful, and consistent feedback in a supportive atmosphere • be ongoing and flexible • include an assessment of the fluency of language

Appendix 7: Overview: Formal Talk

Types of Formal Talk	Purposes
Public Forums Public forums include all of the speaking and listening contexts in which formal social conventions apply in the form of predetermined, agreed-upon rules. These include • panel discussions • seminars • presentations • public speeches • documentaries • news broadcasts *Formal Debates* Parliamentary, cross-examination, and academic-style debates all require speakers to research, articulate, and defend an issue within a spectrum of rules. *Orations* Orations are powerful, prepared interactions among a solitary speaker, an audience, and a message. The conventions of prepared orations may include • a special occasion • a rhetorical style • an awareness of the audience's position • an expertise in dramatic conventions, including appropriate enunciation, timing, projection, etc. Prepared orations include • tributes • eulogies • inspirational speeches • political speeches • trial speeches • farewell speeches *Impromptu Orations* All of the conventions of prepared orations apply to impromptu orations, with the exception of prepared text. The added dimension here is that the oration is impromptu.	• to develop an appreciation for and an understanding of the power of language • to develop the ability to participate in formal venues • to develop the ability to cultivate the language processes in powerful ways • to differentiate among the style, intent, message, and moment of the situation's context • to understand and develop the skills of persuasion • to research, synthesize, and present all pertinent aspects of a topic for an intended audience

Structures	Modelling	Assessment
Formal-talk structures are • predetermined • determined by the knowledge of cultural structures, social contexts, and social conventions determined by the technical expertise of the speaker • dependent upon the conduct and purpose within a profession, official ceremony, etiquette, etc. • dependent upon understanding the oral societal conventions • dependent upon the speaker's awareness of the relationship among his/her audience and the needs of the audience	Teachers need to create opportunities to examine • various forms • various styles • the purpose of differentiating between style and form Teachers need to provide the following experiences: • samples of effective formal talk through a variety of media • samples of formal talk so that students can understand different structures	Effective assessment informs both the students and the teacher of what has been accomplished. Student participation in assessment is crucial. Assessment needs to be • an inclusive picture of each student's accomplishments • multi-faceted and varied • built on students' attempts Assessment practices must • include the processes of learning • provide constant, careful, and consistent feedback in a supportive atmosphere • be ongoing and flexible • include an assessment of the fluency of language When assessing formal talk, consider the student's • expression within the structure • manipulation of this expression within the structure • clarity of understanding of the structure Within the formal structure of *sameness*, there needs to be creativity and freshness.

Appendix 7: Overview: Listening

Effective listening relies on the basic skills of putting messages into code and being able to convert and articulate them.

Types of Listening	Purposes
Abstract This type of listening involves attending to the input appropriate in a number of contexts without necessarily filtering what is heard. Synthesis of information may take place as part of the natural function of communication. *Focused* This listening actively engages the listener in a focused search for knowledge, enjoyment, etc. It involves predicting, questioning, analyzing, synthesizing, and reflecting. *Critical* In this type of focused listening, the listener carefully evaluates and judges the message, its intent, and the nuances of its presentation.	• to understand messages conveyed by others • to determine one's place in the social context • to examine the relationships of language to the social context of spoken language • to develop an appreciation of the power of language • to differentiate among the style, intent, message, and moment of the situation's context

Structures	Modelling	Assessment
Listening structures are • determined by the non-verbal behaviour of the participants • determined by the conventions of listening within the social context • determined by the classroom organization: individual/ small-group/large-group involvement • determined by how the listener decodes and interprets the incoming message and constructs meaning based upon his/her background, experiences, and ability to process the message	Teachers need to create opportunities to observe active listening through • non-verbal behaviour • questioning techniques • predicting outcomes, using active listening • preparing for the event: illustrating physical/ intellectual readiness • the effective use of time (Oral communication creates thinking time.) When a person is listening, his/ her thought processes move much more quickly than the messages that are received. This thinking time is used to synthesize messages, accept/reject ideas and opinions, and adapt/modify thoughts. • In their feedback, teachers should request clarification in the form of an inquiry rather than as a challenge. (Good listening is determined by the clarity of the feedback given by the listener.) Teachers need to provide the following experiences: • opportunities for students to analyze and reflect on the process of listening in relation to the conventions of spoken language • demonstrations of the various roles played by an active, critical listener (Through the arrangement of groups and activities, these techniques can be modelled.)	Teachers need to observe a student's • non-verbal behaviour • questioning • synthesis • readiness to participate as a listener in a speech event • self-correction and modification of speech The expectation is that students • organize their listening in relation to the conventions or the expected structures • develop an understanding that the original and clever manipulation of the structure of the speech triggers thinking and challenges them to listen, question, and extend their own thinking

Appendix 8: Media-Literacy Activities

Print

- Compare the print version of a story to the film version.
- Compare a print poem to the sung ballad.
- Compare mythological heroes to popular-culture heroes.
- Examine the production techniques of newspapers and magazines.
- Write an article for a magazine.
- Write a letter to the editor.
- Produce a class broadsheet of poems, prose, or areas of interest.
- Produce a pamphlet on an issue.
- Critique a newspaper article.
- Edit an article from 500 words down to 250 words.
- Expand an article from 250 words up to 500 words.
- Compare news reports on a topic from several print media.
- Interview a media personality.
- Write a script for a five-minute play.
- Write a product advertising pitch to a fictional company.
- Write a pro article and a con article on the same issue.
- Examine editing codes and conventions.
- Write an article on a real sports event.
- List descriptors used in the print advertising of various magazines.
- Investigate alternative newspapers and magazines, especially locally produced ones.

Sound

- Write in prose the narrative for a popular song.
- Examine the demographics and target markets of local radio stations.
- Examine stereotyping and sexism in popular music.
- Produce a radio ad.
- Produce a radio play with sound effects.
- Investigate short-wave radio and the social and political implications of Radio Canada International, etc.
- Investigate the use of violence in music to sell a product.
- Produce announcements for the school public-address system.
- Learn how to set up and operate the school sound systems.
- Start a school radio station.
- Investigate community radio stations.
- Compare public and private radio.
- Examine the codes and conventions of radio broadcasting.
- Tour a radio station.

- Investigate the impact of Canadian content regulations on the Canadian music industry.
- Investigate world music.
- Investigate alternative music, especially that of locally produced artists.
- Investigate the impact of radio in political struggles.
- Compare controlled radio vs. Channel 2 in Serbia.

Image

- Compare ad images to the product being sold.
- Examine sexism in advertising images.
- Create a billboard.
- Write the print captions for a variety of images.
- Investigate the computer enhancement of images, particularly in the fashion industry.
- Examine the use of images in newspapers—What makes the front page and why?
- Make a collection of aesthetically appealing images.
- Write a narrative for an image.
- Examine the codes and conventions of still photography.
- Invite a professional photographer to class.
- Take a picture that tells a story.
- Make a collection of images that illicit a variety of feelings, and identify the feelings.
- Examine the codes and conventions of television.
- Investigate and practise the terminology of video (e.g., close-up, medium shot, long shot, point of view, pan, zoom, dissolve, shoot, slo-mo, montage, storyboard, cut, edit, scene, tilt, dolly in/out)
- Tour a television station.
- Examine the use of images in rock videos.
- Make a storyboard video to accompany a popular song.
- Critique a music video.
- Compare various visual technologies such as computers, television, film, faxes, photocopying, satellites, and IMAX

Extended Projects

- Some longer-term projects that combine the skills investigated above include
- making a career plan for a new musical group
- following a real issue over a period of time, examining the news coverage in various forms of media
- creating a multimedia presentation (not necessarily with the computer)
- producing a short film
- creating an animated film
- preparing presentations for various forms of media (e.g., alternative newspapers and magazines such as Adbusters, community radio and television)

Appendix 9: Learning Experiences Appropriate for Grade 12

Performing and Working With Scripts: Grade 12 Focus	
Scripts Scripts are meant to be performed—not just read. Traditionally, scripts have been treated as a literacy form to be experienced in the same way as novels, stories, or poems. If they are not performed, the experience is incomplete, as it is when we merely read recipe books or sheet music. When we read a script, we get an idea of the writer's intent but only a hint of the power of the words or the impact of the play's images, emotions, and ideas. This is not to say that all scripts must be performed to be appreciated (although some of the strengths and weaknesses of the playwright's work will never become clear until the script is performed). Rather, the script must be approached, to some degree, as though one were preparing to stage it. When working toward a performance, students have opportunities to • respond personally • respond critically by deconstructing the text • create the event and their own scripts • hear and speak what is intended by the playwright's written word • give place, gesture, rhythm, and tone to the language, imagery, and metaphor • discover the character, tension, and mood	*Experiences* The *moment before*: students developing, through a response journal or by writing/improvising a scene, a detailed understanding of what must have happened to or between the characters prior to the scene they are about to play (This technique can be used to encourage lateral thinking and to explore literature, issues, and human relationships. For a graphic and powerful example, view *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* as part of an exploration of *Hamlet*.) *Before-beside-beyond*: extends *the moment before* technique to include the exploration of events that may have occurred before, after, or collaterally with the action of the script or of any other text *Anthology*: students researching an issue or theme to collect text (e.g., poetry, prose, dialogue, music, photos, video) and arranging the material for performance, linking it with their own text *Collective creation*: students working through research, discussion, and improvisation to develop a script based on a shared issue/concern/ experience *Response journal*: an effective actor's tool for recording the progress in a role, processing ideas and insights, and working toward the resolution of problems of interpretation *Artifacts*: students recreating objects described or referred to in a text *Actor's, director's, or stage manager's book*: a page-by-page annotation of a text, including points of interpretation, notes, and sketches for production *Production meeting*: students planning the production of a dramatic presentation in the various roles of a theatre production company

Performing and Working With Scripts: Grade 12 Focus	
Strategies that lead students to understand the playwright's plan include • annotating the text for understanding—both literal meaning and the subtext • researching historical, cultural, and technical detail • annotating the text for production (e.g., an actor's or director's book) • rewriting or re-enacting the text • a casted reading of the text • a staged reading of the text, including some action • reading with pantomime, dance, or music • reading accompanied by slides, tapes, or videos • a dramatized reading, including action and some properties and settings • a full production of a selected scene • a full production of the entire text	*Video theatre*: students designing, scripting, producing, and screening a video based on text they are studying or on an original individual or collective idea *Radio theatre*: as with video theatre but using sound-recording technology *Design*: students focusing on an aspect of play production to produce a design based on research and a detailed study of the script (e.g., props, costumes, set, lighting, sound, promotion)