

Australian Curriculum: *Grammar*

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<i>Draft Consultation version 1.1.0 (page 5)</i>	<i>Consider</i>
The English curriculum makes explicit the teaching of grammar in all years of schooling.	<i>How</i> will we make the teaching explicit?
In the language strand, students learn about the use of grammar. This provides students with the understanding necessary to investigate how language works and with a shared metalanguage to discuss their understanding. Grammar is applied throughout the literature and literacy strands.	What is the ‘metalanguage’ used in the Australian Curriculum? How is it learned?
Grammar refers both to the language we use and the description of language as a system.	‘the language we use’ (usage of grammar) ‘the description of language’ (note: not prescription)
In describing language, attention is paid to both the structure (syntax) and meaning (semantics) at the level of the word, the sentence and the text.	Grammar at text level: discourse. Traditional grammar: sentence level. Grammar at word level: morphology.
The English Curriculum uses standard grammatical terminology within a contextual framework; that is, how language functions to enable us to interact with others, to express and develop ideas, and to comprehend and create coherent texts.	A position between traditional Latin-based grammar and functional grammar? (the best of both?)
The curriculum defines the minimum grammar content to be taught and focuses on those aspects of grammar that benefit from explicit reflection by students in order for them to develop more complex, subtle, abstract, clear or creative expression.	How will the ‘minimum grammar’ concepts be taught? (The curriculum does NOT specify teaching approach.)
To avoid grammatical items being taught out of context, the curriculum consistently makes reference to how our grammatical choices are influenced by such contextual factors as with whom we are interacting (audience), what we are talking/writing about (subject matter), the role played by language (mode and medium) and our purpose for using language.	Grammar must be taught in context. ✓
Students' ability to use grammar will exceed their ability to explicitly reflect on grammar. Young children, for example, will use complex sentences before they can explain how these are structured.	Use (especially in oral language) before awareness. Must improve their language use first.

The approach to grammar is based on “language in use” (at whole text level, sentence level and word level) and it focuses on meaningful groups of words (noun groups, verb groups, adverbials). Meaning is to be at the core of what we do in grammar.

A summary of some of the ‘content descriptions’ relating to grammar from the Language Strand:

Kinder	<p>Different languages are spoken by family, classmates, community and in the media.</p> <p>Texts are made of words and sentences and sometimes images that have meaning and can take many forms.</p>	<p>Whole text</p> <p>Sentences, Words</p>
Year 1	<p>English is one of many languages spoken in Australia.</p> <p>Words and images represent people, things, actions and details (including place and time)</p> <p>Texts have different formats. Texts are created for different purposes.</p> <p>Recognises morphemes in word families.</p>	<p>People + Things NG Actions VG Details Adv</p> <p>Text level</p> <p>Word level</p>
Year 2	<p>How to interact with different levels of formality in different situations and with different people.</p> <p>Language can be used to represent ‘What’s happening?’ (action verbs); ‘Who or what is doing or receiving the action?’ (noun grps) ‘details about the situation?’ (adverbials)</p> <p>Texts are organised in predictable ways.</p>	<p>Oral language</p> <p>Verb Groups Noun Groups Adverbials</p> <p>Text structure</p>
Year 3	<p>How sentences are made up of maningful sets of words that represent what is happening who or what is involved, and details about the activity.</p> <p>More specific and detailed ideas can be expressed through the careful choice of verbs, a range of adverbials, and the use of lengthier noun phrases.</p> <p>Texts can be divided into paragraphs, each paragraph dealing with a particular aspect of a topic.</p> <p>Language choices change as we move between (sic) social groups.</p>	<p>Yes. Meaningful sets of words. ✓ VG NG Adverbial</p> <p>What does ‘more’ mean? What does ‘lengthier’ mean?</p> <p>Paragraphs are formed for many different reasons.</p> <p>Among social groups (‘between’ refers to two) - morphology!</p>

<p>Year 4</p>	<p>Questions, statements and commands can be positive or negative.</p> <p>The strength of feelings and opinions can be adjusted through the use of intensifiers or choice of vocabulary.</p> <p>The clause represents what is happening, who or what is participating and the surrounding circumstances. A simple sentence contains one clause.</p> <p>Noun phrases represent people, things and ideas (enriched through the use of possessives, intensifiers and classifiers).</p> <p>Verbs represent what people are doing, saying, thinking, and feeling.</p> <p>Adverbials provide details about an activity.</p>	<p>Remember what the research consistently tells us:</p> <p><i>Writing improves our grammar; grammar lessons do NOT improve writing.</i> (Weaver et.al.)</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>Simple connections can be made between ideas by using a compound sentence. Compound sentences consist of two or more independent clauses joined by coordinating conjunctions. Identifying words before the noun in a Noun Group: determiners, quantifiers, adjectives, classifiers, etc. Identifying words after the noun in a Noun Group: modifying (or adjectival) phrases and clauses. Personal pronouns (subjective case and objective case). Object pronouns follow a preposition. Relating verbs. Structure and language features of different text types. Cohesion is created by the use of pronouns, determiners and text connectives.</p>	
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>Language can shape different identities in different contexts. Rhetorical devices can be used to persuade others; devices in advertising, formal speeches, propaganda, debating, ...</p> <p>Modality to alter the degree of certainty or obligation. High modality, low modality.</p> <p>Complex sentences consist of an independent clause and a dependent clause connected by a subordinating conjunction. Dependent clauses of time, purpose, reason, concession, and so on, are referred to as adverbial clauses.</p> <p>Nouns in apposition. Adverbials to provide more information about an activity. Different forms of adverbials. Prepositional phrases.</p> <p>Cohesive devices in text. Sentence openers.</p>	<p>Remember what the draft document says:</p> <p><i>“...students’ ability to use grammar will exceed their ability to explicitly reflect on grammar.”</i> (p. 4)</p>

<p>Year 7</p>	<p>Alternative perspectives Various linguistic resources can be used to introduce an opposing argument or point of view</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowing text connectives such as ‘however’ - using phrases and clauses of concession (‘Despite.....’ ‘Although.....’) <p>- Modality - exploring how modality opens up opportunities for engagement - noting how degrees of possibility are opened up through the use of modal auxiliaries (eg. ‘It may be a solution.’)</p> <p>Verb Groups Verb groups and clauses (sic) represent a variety of processes: action, saying, sensing, relating and existing.</p> <p>Connecting Ideas - coordinating conjunctions; subordinating conjunctions - the relations that such conjunctions establish between ideas</p> <p>Noun phrases - determiners; articles, possessives, demonstratives - opinion and factual adjectives; classifiers - adjectival phrases and clauses - pre-modifiers and post-modifiers</p> <p>Cohesion - reference items; substitution and ellipsis; text connectives</p>	<p>Also in Years 4, 5, 6</p> <p>Also in earlier Year levels.</p> <p>Mixed terminology (‘noun phrase’ and ‘noun group’ are both used interchangeably; why not use only ‘noun group’ to maintain consistency?)</p>
<p>Year 8</p>	<p>Alternative perspectives Language can move from bare assertions to statements that take account of their perspectives and possibilities.</p> <p>Comment Adverbials - attitude markers such as hopefully, unfortunately, ...</p> <p>Connecting Ideas Sentences can consist of a number of independent and dependent clauses. - simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences</p> <p>Clauses: finite and non-finite - a finite clause contains a full verb group - a non-finite clause contains a VG which has no subject, tense or number; can take the ‘-ing’ form (Knowing he had many enemies at home, he fled for England).</p> <p>Tense</p>	<p>It’s worth repeating:</p> <p><i>Writing improves our grammar; grammar lessons do NOT improve writing.</i> (Weaver et.al.)</p>

<p>Year 8 (cont)</p>	<p>Adverbs - full range of adverbials</p> <p>Writing clear sentences - clarity and coherence - restructuring awkward sentences</p>	
<p>Year 9</p>	<p>Clause types - review of clause types - some clauses are embedded within other clauses - one clause can interrupt another - verbless clauses (verb is understood)</p> <p>Nominalisation</p> <p>Extended Verb Groups</p> <p>Abstract Nouns - for summarising previous stretches of text</p> <p>Parallelism Parallel structures contribute to coherence and rhythm of texts.</p>	

NOTE:

On page 4 of the draft document, it says: “The content descriptions have been developed to ensure that learning is appropriately ordered and that unnecessary repetition is avoided.” Is this achieved in the “content descriptions” of the draft document?