

## Using the continuum with the learning outcomes

There are three progression continua in the primary language curriculum: oral language, reading and writing.

Each continuum has eight progression milestones (a-h). These describe, in broad terms, children's language learning and development. They support children of a wide range of abilities in stages 1 and 2 (junior infants to second class). Each milestone has a number of progression steps which map out children's important achievements in language and literacy as they move along the continua towards achieving learning outcomes. Bolded text in these steps shows progression in their learning from one milestone to another. *Steps specific to Irish are shown in italics.*

Print, video and audio examples of children's work, further illustrate and give teachers a sense of what a particular milestone or step looks like.

The progression continua help schools plan their work based on the learning outcomes. These learning outcomes describe children's language learning at the end of a two-year period. Drawing on its particular context, each school can identify where children are in relation to the learning outcomes on each of the three continua:

- at the beginning of each stage (at junior infants and at first class)
- in the case of the school's first and second languages.

In this way, the continua help teachers differentiate and plan for the next steps in all children's language learning in the school's first and second languages.

## Descriptors of progression milestones

**a**

The child enjoys making marks which he/she shares with others. The child explores different implements and materials to make marks. The marks hold some meaning for the child. This meaning is shared with others through conversation and gestures.

**b**

The child enjoys making marks and drawings. He/she uses letter-like forms alongside these marks and drawings. He/she uses different implements and materials to create marks and drawings to share particular ideas, feelings and experiences with others. The child understands that the marks and drawings carry meaning and often tells a story about them in order to share the meaning with others.

**c**

The child uses random strings of letters alongside their marks and drawings. He/she distinguishes between drawings and the letter-like shapes, and between reading and writing. The child talks about personal texts and the meanings carried in them. The child talks about personal texts and the meanings carried in them helping others to read his/her writing.

**d**

The child creates texts based on personal interests and familiar topics. He/she uses some phonetically correct letters to represent individual words and shows an understanding of basic conventions of print. The child includes more detail in texts through drawings and uses a number of words when creating texts with an adult.

**e**

The child creates texts in which he/she shares personal experiences and preferences. The child does this using complete sentences, a growing bank of words, more print conventions and more phonetically correct spellings. He/she begins to select language appropriate for texts for a particular purpose, and works with others during the writing process.

**f**

The child creates texts for different audiences and purposes. He/she writes with increasing independence using a wide bank of vocabulary and basic punctuation. The child gathers information and begins to plan and edit their work. The child uses visual along with phonetic strategies for spelling and spells a range of high-frequency words with accuracy.

**g**

The child creates texts independently for a number of purposes and audiences. He/she thinks about audience and purpose when choosing words, the ideas or information for the texts, and the structure of the texts. The child uses a variety of tenses, connectives and punctuation marks. The child spells accurately using a wide range of strategies.

**h**

The child uses a range of writing genres and writes detailed texts independently for a range of purposes and for different audiences. He/she chooses words, language features and structures to match the text purpose, audience and genre. The child plans texts and uses accurate spelling of high-frequency and difficult words, more correct punctuation and grammar in texts. The child uses literal and implied meanings in texts.

# WRITING: Progression Steps

The child shares his/her ideas, thoughts, feelings and knowledge through collaborative and independent writing. Over time, this writing shows increasing complexity of ideas, sophistication and richness of expression, and accuracy of punctuation, grammar and spelling. The child brings his/her own voice and personality to the writing through word choice, ideas, style and tone. The child uses an increasing range of genres adapting style to suit the audience and the purpose, and comes to understand differences between written words and conversational words. Writing involves the child creating his/her own texts as well as responding to texts by others.

		a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Developing communicative relationships through language	ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>has fun making marks. plays with a variety of implements and materials to make marks. uses sounds and/or gestures to focus attention on their marks.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>makes marks and <b>drawings</b> for enjoyment. has fun making <b>letter-like forms</b> in their writing. plays with a variety of implements and materials to make marks and <b>drawings</b>. shares <b>personal meaning</b> through <b>naming some features</b> in their marks and drawings. shares texts with others.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>explores using a variety of implements and materials to make marks, drawings and <b>letters</b>. shares personal meaning through <b>explaining the main messages</b> in their marks, drawings and <b>letters</b>. <b>chooses texts to publish and display</b> to share with others.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>chooses to create <b>texts based on personal interests, experiences, familiar topics and prior knowledge</b>. with <b>increasing independence, chooses topics to write about and collaboratively with the teacher plans and refines ideas</b> for their text. in <b>collaboration with the teacher</b> explores using a <b>growing range of writing genres</b> for enjoyment and <b>specific purposes</b>. <b>selects appropriate</b> implements to <b>write</b> and draw. shares meaning through <b>reading and discussing their texts</b>. chooses texts to publish and display to share with others.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>chooses to create texts based on personal interests, experiences, familiar topics and prior knowledge. with increasing independence, chooses topics to write about and plans and refines ideas for their text. uses a growing range of writing genres for enjoyment and for specific purposes. chooses texts for display and <b>begins to use a variety of tools and/or presentation formats, to share their writing</b>. expresses <b>personal experiences and preferences</b> in their texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>chooses to create texts based on personal interests, experiences, familiar topics and prior knowledge. with increasing independence, chooses topics to write about and plans and refines ideas for their text. uses a growing range of writing genres for enjoyment and for specific purposes. <b>uses</b> a variety of tools and/or presentation formats, to share their writing. expresses personal experiences, preferences and <b>needs</b> in their texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>chooses to create texts based on personal interests, experiences, familiar topics and prior knowledge. with increasing independence, chooses topics to write about and plans and refines ideas for their text. uses a growing range of writing genres for enjoyment and for specific purposes. chooses <b>appropriate</b> tools and/or presentation formats, to share their writing. expresses personal experiences, preferences, needs and <b>emotions</b> in texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>chooses to create texts based on personal interests, experiences, familiar topics and prior knowledge. with increasing independence, chooses topics to write about and plans and refines ideas for their text. uses a growing range of writing genres for enjoyment and for specific purposes. chooses appropriate tools and/or presentation formats, to share their writing. expresses personal experiences, preferences, needs, emotions and <b>opinions</b> in texts.</p>
	CONVENTIONS OF PRINT AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses marks to communicate.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>makes different <b>shapes in mark-making</b> understands that the <b>marks 'hold' meaning</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>distinguishes <b>between letters and pictures</b>. recognises when <b>reading and writing are taking place</b>. demonstrates an understanding of basic conventions of print: <b>writes left to right, top to bottom, page by page</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>recognises <b>some upper and lower case letters</b> understands <b>one written word equals one read word</b>. shows some understanding of <b>word order when writing</b>. shows some understanding of conventions of print: <b>letters, words, sentences, capital letters, full-stops</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p><b>recognises</b> upper and lower case letters uses <b>correct word order</b> when writing. uses some <b>spaces and full-stops where appropriate</b>. writes <b>using complete sentences</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>maintains correct <b>sentence structure</b>. uses spaces, full-stops, <b>capitals</b> and <b>question marks</b> where appropriate. begins to use <b>the idea of paragraphs</b>. uses <b>different verb tenses</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>maintains correct sentence structure. uses spaces, full-stops, capitals, question marks, <b>quotation marks, commas and exclamation marks</b> where appropriate. uses <b>some paragraphs</b>. uses <b>connectives</b> to join sentences. uses <b>correct</b> verb tenses.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>maintains correct sentence structure. uses spaces, full-stops, capitals, question marks, quotation marks, commas, exclamation marks, <b>possessive apostrophes and apostrophes of contraction</b> where appropriate. uses paragraphs <b>appropriately</b>. uses <b>less common connectives</b> to join sentences. uses <b>compound and complex sentences</b>. uses verb tenses <b>appropriately and at times, creatively</b>.</p>

Text refers to all products of language use including oral, written, visual and digital text.

\*Features of progression which are specific to Irish are shown in italics.

		a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Understanding the content and structure of language	VOCABULARY	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses words, sounds or gestures to share the meaning of their marks.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p><b>talks</b> about their marks and drawings using familiar words to <b>share their meaning</b>.</p> <p>uses <b>everyday language</b> and language from their <b>personal experiences</b> in texts created <b>collaboratively with the teacher</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>talks about their texts (drawings, marks and <b>letters</b>) using familiar words.</p> <p>uses everyday language and language from their personal experiences in texts created collaboratively with the teacher.</p> <p>uses some <b>new vocabulary and phrases</b> from texts read in their own texts created collaboratively with the teacher.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses everyday language and language from their personal experiences in texts.</p> <p>uses <b>short, simple sentences</b> when creating texts.</p> <p>uses some new vocabulary and phrases from texts read and <b>some environmental print</b>, in own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses a <b>growing bank of vocabulary</b> when creating texts in collaboration with others.</p> <p>makes <b>appropriate use</b> of some new vocabulary and phrases from texts read and environmental print, in own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses a <b>wide bank of vocabulary</b> when creating texts.</p> <p>makes appropriate use of a <b>bigger range of new vocabulary</b> and phrases from texts read in own texts.</p> <p>uses <b>some specific words</b> to <b>share an idea in a particular way</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses a <b>more advanced range of vocabulary</b> to create texts.</p> <p><b>chooses vocabulary</b> to create a <b>specific meaning or feeling</b>, or to share an idea in a particular way.</p> <p><b>explores and uses imaginative language</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses a range of <b>vocabulary to extend ideas, add more detail and effect, and share more precise meanings</b> in texts.</p> <p>chooses vocabulary so a text has a <b>particular impact on a reader</b>.</p> <p><b>begins to use figurative language</b>.</p> <p>explores and uses a <b>range of language features</b>.</p>
	SPELLING	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses marks to communicate.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses <b>letter-like forms</b> and/or <b>symbols</b> to represent <b>text</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses <b>random strings of letters</b> and/or other symbols to represent text.</p> <p>begins to <b>copy print</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses <b>some letters which are phonetically correct to represent a word</b>.</p> <p>begins to distinguish between <b>short and long vowel sounds</b>.</p> <p>writes <b>some personal words with accuracy</b>.</p> <p>recognises and uses <b>some common letter patterns</b> (word families).</p> <p>begins to use <b>environmental print for spellings</b>.</p> <p><i>begins to use the séimhiú in familiar words</i></p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses <b>some correct consonants and vowels in spelling</b>.</p> <p><b>writes some words</b> containing short and long vowel sounds.</p> <p>writes some personal and <b>some high-frequency words with accuracy</b>.</p> <p>uses environmental print and <b>personal word banks</b> for spelling words.</p> <p>uses <b>approximate and phonetic spellings</b> of unfamiliar words.</p> <p><i>uses the séimhiú in familiar words</i></p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses consonants, vowels, <b>digraphs and letter strings in spelling</b>.</p> <p>spells a <b>range</b> of high frequency words <b>with accuracy</b>.</p> <p>uses <b>approximate and phonetic spellings</b> of unfamiliar words.</p> <p><i>begins to distinguish between the Irish slender and broad consonant sounds.</i></p> <p>begins to understand that some <b>words have the same sound but different meaning and spelling</b>.</p> <p><i>begins to use the séimhiú independently.</i></p> <p><b>begins to use dictionaries</b> for spellings.</p> <p>begins to understand some <b>words are spelled differently from how they are pronounced</b> (<i>especially in Irish</i>).</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses a <b>range of spelling strategies including visual memory, strings and patterns, and syllabification</b>.</p> <p>spells a range of high frequency words with accuracy and <b>fluency</b>.</p> <p>spells some <b>difficult words accurately</b>.</p> <p><i>writes some familiar words using Irish slender and broad consonant sounds.</i></p> <p><i>uses the séimhiú in the correct place more often.</i></p> <p>uses dictionaries for spelling <b>difficult</b> words.</p> <p><b>spells some words</b> that have the same sound and different meaning, correctly based on context.</p> <p><b>understands</b> some words are spelled differently from how they are pronounced (<i>especially in Irish</i>).</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses a range of spelling strategies including visual memory, strings and patterns, and syllabification.</p> <p>spells a range of high frequency words and <b>some unusual and difficult words</b> with accuracy and fluency.</p> <p><i>writes a range of familiar words using Irish slender and broad consonant sounds.</i></p> <p><i>identifies when to use the séimhiú.</i></p> <p>uses dictionaries for spelling difficult words.</p> <p>spells <b>more</b> words that have the same sound and different meaning, correctly based on context.</p> <p>understands some words are spelled differently from how they are pronounced (<i>especially in Irish</i>).</p>
Exploring and using language	PURPOSE, GENRE AND VOICE	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>shares their marks with others.</p> <p>has fun listening to and repeating rhymes.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>uses marks <b>and drawings</b> to <b>communicate</b>.</p> <p>begins to create a text <b>for a particular purpose and audience</b>.</p> <p>uses language <b>playfully and imaginatively</b> in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>combines some <b>letters</b> with their marks and drawings to communicate.</p> <p><b>creates</b> a text for a particular purpose and audience.</p> <p>uses language playfully and imaginatively in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>creates texts for <b>particular audiences</b>.</p> <p>draws and <b>writes</b> for a particular purpose.</p> <p>uses language playfully and imaginatively in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>creates texts for particular audiences.</p> <p>draws and writes to <b>recount and explain matching language to purpose</b>.</p> <p>uses language playfully and imaginatively in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>creates texts for particular audiences.</p> <p><b>writes to</b> recount, explain, <b>inform, entertain, and give instructions</b> matching language to purpose and genre.</p> <p>uses language playfully and imaginatively in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>creates texts for particular audiences.</p> <p>writes to recount, explain, inform, entertain, give instructions and <b>narrate</b> using appropriate language and <b>structure</b> for purpose and genre.</p> <p>uses language playfully and imaginatively in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shares feelings, thoughts, experiences, opinions and preferences in own texts.</p> <p>creates texts for particular audiences.</p> <p>writes to recount, explain, inform, entertain, give instructions, narrate, <b>persuade and justify opinions</b> using appropriate language and structure for purpose and genre.</p> <p>uses language playfully and imaginatively in rhymes, riddles, and jokes, nonsense words and own texts.</p> <p>recognises and uses <b>emotive language</b> in texts.</p>

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		a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Exploring and using language	WRITING PROCESS	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses personal experiences and interests as main stimulus for texts. explores writing implements while making marks. makes marks intentionally to communicate.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses personal experiences and interests as main stimulus for texts. uses writing implements <b>with some muscle control</b>. makes <b>letter like forms</b>. <b>ascribes some meaning</b> to marks and drawings by <b>talking about them</b>. begins to take part in <b>collaborative writing with an adult</b> as scribe.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses personal experiences and interests as main stimulus for texts. uses writing implements with <b>good muscle control</b>. writes <b>some upper and lower case letters</b>. takes part in collaborative writing with an adult as scribe.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses personal experiences, interests <b>and familiar topics</b> as main stimuli for texts. uses writing implements <b>with ease</b>. writes some upper and lower case letters <b>legibly</b>. creates own texts and takes part in collaborative writing with an adult as scribe.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses personal experiences, interests and familiar topics as main stimuli for texts. writes <b>most</b> upper and lower case letters as <b>separate flowing letters</b>. orally plans, sequences and creates texts <b>collaboratively where they/ other children act as scribe</b>. <b>reads and discusses their writing with an adult to check it makes sense and to improve it</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p><b>independently and with others, plans and creates texts with a beginning, middle and end</b>. writes legibly and <b>fluently</b> using separate flowing letters. begins to <b>organise ideas</b> for writing. <b>draws on prior knowledge and gathers information from a few sources to help create a text</b>. reads and discusses their writing <b>with others in order to edit</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>independently and with others, plans and creates texts with a beginning, middle and end. writes legibly with <b>cursive script</b>. begins to use <b>graphic organisers</b> to plan writing. draws on prior knowledge and gathers information from a <b>wider range</b> of sources to help create texts. <b>composes, proofreads and self-edits to incorporate feedback and check accuracy</b>. composes <b>imaginative texts that describe the setting, main characters, problem and resolution</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>independently and with others, creates texts <b>showing more experimentation with structure</b> of the text. writes legibly and <b>fluently</b> with cursive script. uses graphic organisers <b>independently</b> to plan writing. draws on prior knowledge and gathers information from a <b>wide range</b> of sources to create texts. composes, proofreads and self-edits <b>to improve texts</b>. composes imaginative texts and <b>uses some figurative language</b>. shares <b>different perspectives</b> in texts.</p>
	COMPREHENSION	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>shows some understanding that their marks have personal meaning. uses words, sounds or gestures to respond to texts shown and/or read to them.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>begins to <b>talk</b> about marks and drawings <b>sharing their personal meaning</b>. begins to respond to texts shown and/or read to them <b>through marks and drawings</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses <b>drawings to add detail</b> to a personal text. <b>talks about and shares the meaning of</b> their own texts. responds to texts read through drawings and/or markings to <b>demonstrate understanding</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>uses more <b>elaborate</b> drawings to share detail. identifies <b>simple, explicit pieces of text in response to specific questions</b>. shares a <b>personal interpretation of another person's text</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>demonstrates understanding of a text in their <b>written responses</b> having used context and prior knowledge to <b>aid comprehension</b>. uses <b>literal meanings of text</b> to respond to specific questions. <b>writes a response</b> having used the <b>context</b> of a text to aid understanding. shares <b>personal interpretations</b> through <b>writing</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>demonstrates understanding of a text in their written responses having used context and prior knowledge to <b>aid comprehension</b>. makes <b>inferences</b> when responding to texts read and/or created by them. <b>interprets</b> literal meanings of text. <b>gives more detailed</b> written responses. draws on own experiences to <b>interpret and respond to a written text</b>.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>demonstrates understanding of a text in their written responses having used context and prior knowledge to <b>aid comprehension</b>. uses information from texts to make <b>predictions</b>. interprets and <b>analyses</b> literal meanings of text. provides <b>reasons</b> for their written responses. draws on own experiences <b>and prior knowledge</b> to interpret and respond to a written text.</p>	<p>THE CHILD...</p> <p>demonstrates understanding of a text in their written responses having used context and prior knowledge to aid comprehension. <b>links ideas</b> in texts to makes predictions, to <b>offer opinions and explanations</b>. interprets and analyses literal and <b>implied meanings</b> of text. <b>justifies their interpretations</b> of texts. draws on own experiences and prior knowledge to interpret and respond to a written text.</p>

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