English sample unit: Life Skills

| I have an opinion | Stage 4 |

| **Scope and sequence summary** *(specific subject requirements to appear on scope and sequence)* | **Duration:** 10 weeks |

| **Text selections** | When undertaking this unit, it is important to take into account the individual communication strategies used by students. Students' responses may be communicated through: |

Text selections

This unit provides opportunities for students to respond to and compose a range of texts, including:

- **spoken texts** (class discussions, role-plays, debates)
- **print texts, visual texts** and **media texts** (reviews, media articles, shared class text)
- **multimedia** and **digital texts** (blogs, multimedia presentations, shared class text).

Through the choice of persuasive texts explored and class text shared, students will also experience texts drawn from:

- everyday and workplace texts
- a wide range of cultural, social and gender perspectives, popular and youth cultures
- an appropriate range of digital texts, including film, media and multimedia.

When undertaking this unit, it is important to take into account the individual communication strategies used by students. Students' responses may be communicated through:

- gestures and/or facial expressions
- use of visual aids or symbols, such as a communication board
- assistive or augmentative technology
- varying degrees of verbal or written expression.

The activities presented may need to be adapted to allow students to respond using their individual communication strategies.

| **Unit overview** | **Resources and references** |

Unit overview

In this unit, students develop appropriate interaction skills when communicating their opinions to others. They explore a range of persuasive texts to develop an understanding of how language can be used to persuade. Students learn to present opinions that differ from those of others, and are provided with opportunities to appropriately share their opinions.

Resources and references

The following article is a useful reference for the development of social skills in the classroom:

- Bremer, CD & Smith, J, 2004. 'Teaching social skills', *Assessing Trends and Developments in Secondary Education and Transition*, vol 3, no 5, www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1749.

Talking Mats are a useful resource that can be used for expressing preferences and opinions. The following article provides more information:

- Lyon, K, 2010. 'Everybody's talking about Talking Mats', *Spectronics*.

A variety of available apps can be used within this unit to assist students in developing appropriate social and communication skills. Refer to:

- Apple in Education
- Spectronics – Apps for Special Education.

Outcomes	Assessment overview
ENLS-2A communicates for a variety of purposes, audiences and contexts ENLS-3A selects and uses language to communicate according to purpose, audience and context ENLS-12C responds to texts in ways that are imaginative and interpretive ENLS-13C engages critically with texts using personal experience ENLS-14D explores how the use of language affects personal roles and relationships with others ENLS-15D responds to and composes texts that explore personal, social and world issues	Evidence of student learning can be gathered through: • observation of students' interaction skills, including the use of appropriate conventions when interacting • identifying and using appropriate non-verbal language to communicate • observation of students expressing an opinion/preference • identification of subjective and objective statements • identification and use of persuasive language • identification and use of skills for appropriate negotiation and collaboration • responding to and composing persuasive texts • students' presentation of their opinion in relation to a shared class text.

Content	Teaching, learning and assessment	Resources
ENLS-1A • recognise non-verbal indicators associated with listening, eg eye contact, nodding, smiling, gesturing ⛹ **ENLS-2A** • communicate with peers and adults in an appropriate manner, eg enter and leave conversations, maintain conversations, remain on topic ⛹ • use recognised conventions when communicating in a range of contexts, eg use eye gaze/gesture to select an activity, put hand up in class to answer a question, use appropriate gesture to attract attention ⛹ • use appropriate interaction skills across a range of contexts, eg group work ⛹	**Communicating with others** Engage students in a variety of activities to promote interaction. Activities should focus on skills of interaction, such as personal space, turn-taking, using non-verbal language. Explore appropriate interactions across a variety of contexts. Activities may include: • identifying different contexts for group interaction, eg home, playground, public transport, classroom • exploring how group interaction behaviours may differ according to context • participating in role-plays based on teacher-prepared scenarios • developing social stories to illustrate appropriate group interaction behaviours. As a class, prepare a list of appropriate group interaction behaviours for the classroom.	*Note: This may provide an opportunity to promote school values and/or behaviour management programs and strategies.* .
ENLS-2A • recognise the role and purpose of non-verbal indicators in communication, eg a nod for agreement, a frown for displeasure • indicate a preference, eg for a book or film, choice of partner for an activity, item on a menu • contribute to class discussions using a range of skills, including turn-taking, questioning, rephrasing for clarification ⛹ • identify and communicate key ideas and information from aural texts, eg a presentation by a guest speaker ⛹ **ENLS-13C** • identify persuasive language used in texts, eg bias, opinion	**Expressing an opinion** Introduce and discuss the purpose of the unit – students will learn to communicate a developed opinion or point of view in a variety of contexts. In what sort of situations might we express an opinion? As a class, brainstorm different examples of situations where people express an opinion, eg discussing a TV show watched, communicating about a favourite movie/song/personality/band, deciding which movie to go and see, deciding what to eat or where to go for a meal. Impromptu opinions – have a set of cards representing various objects/people/places/activities that students are familiar with, such as food items, family members, school/home/bedroom, reading, listening to music or playing basketball. Visual images and symbols may be used. Students select or are given one of the items and are asked to immediately share an opinion on that item. Some students may need to select from a set of words/statements to express their opinion. What did students notice about the words used to express opinions?	Mindmap software, such as: • Inspiration • bubbl.us

Content	Teaching, learning and assessment	Resources
	Students make a list of words, eg *I like*, *I think, I believe, my favourite, I prefer*. This can be displayed as a word wall in the classroom. As a class, view an episode of a TV show where people express opinions, such as a talk show, a competition show where contestants are judged, or a show reviewing particular products (eg movies, computer games). Which opinions did they like/agree with? Why or why not? Responses may include: • making gestures and/or facial expressions • indicating symbols to express emotions/preferences • using augmentative and alternative communication systems • responding 'yes' or 'no' to questions about whether they liked the judge's opinion • giving oral and/or written explanations. Identify aspects of body language, including facial expressions, that support the speaker's opinion, eg smiling, laughing, frowning, clapping.	Various TV shows, such as: • *Can of Worms* • *X Factor* • *MasterChef* • *Dancing with the Stars* • *At the Movies* • *X-Play* • *The Loop*
ENLS-12C • explore ways in which ideas, information and perspectives are presented in a range of texts ⚙ • recognise the difference between fact and opinion, reality and fantasy ENLS-13C • identify persuasive language used in texts, eg bias, opinion • use persuasive language to present an opinion or point of view 👥	**Subjective and objective language** Explore subjective (opinion) and objective (fact) language. Model an example of each, eg: • 'I liked the song the contestant sang.' • 'The contestant sang a song by Michael Jackson.' Examples can also be taken from the TV episode viewed previously. Ask students to identify which sentence presents someone's opinion and which does not. How can we tell the difference between subjective (opinion) and objective (fact) statements? Students identify the words in the example of an opinion that indicate that it is an opinion. Draw students' attention to particular language features, eg: • subjective language (opinion) often uses the first person ('I') • subjective language (opinion) uses words that show a person's thoughts or feelings ('I liked …'). Provide students with a range of subjective (opinion) and objective	

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	(fact) statements. Activities could include: • responding with a gesture or facial expression when an opinion statement is read • labelling or colour coding statements that are 'fact' and those that are 'opinion' • matching statements to the headings 'fact' and 'opinion' • playing 'fact/opinion Snap', where a match is made when two students place fact statements or opinion statements on top of each other.	
ENLS-13C • justify a point of view, drawing on personal experience, eg 'I like that character because he's just like my friend' 👥 • compare, discuss and justify different interpretations of texts 👥 ⚙	**Justifying our opinion** Provide students with two examples of opinions, one that does not include a reason or justification and one that does, eg: • 'I enjoy playing basketball.' • 'I enjoy playing basketball because I like the people on my team.' Which statement gives us more information? Students identify the word used in the example to introduce the reason. What are some other words that can be used (eg because, so, since, the reason)? Provide opportunity for guided practice of including reasons for opinions. Activities could include: • matching opinion with reasons and completing the statement by inserting the transition word • completing opinions by adding reasons, eg 'I prefer toast to cereal because _____' • adding opinions to reasons, eg 'I _____ because their songs are catchy', 'I _____ because it makes me feel happy'. Present students with a range of scenarios in which they are required to present and justify an opinion. Scenarios could include: • communicating with a friend about their favourite song/band/movie/book/sport • negotiating an activity with the teacher	

Content	Teaching, learning and assessment	Resources
	• judging contestants on a TV show. Students could respond by: • using gesture/facial expression to indicate an opinion presented on a choice board and repeating this to indicate a reason to match the opinion • selecting from a set of word/symbol cards to represent opinions or reasons • using assistive and augmentative technology • expressing 'yes' or 'no' as a variety of opinions and reasons are presented • oral and/or written explanations.	
ENLS-13C • justify a point of view, drawing on personal experience, eg 'I like that character because he's just like my friend' 👥 • develop critical and evaluative skills, eg identify points of difference in texts, communicate preferences for texts, recognise if texts meet the intended purpose and audience ⚙ **ENLS-14D** • recognise the power of language to communicate feelings ⚙ 👥 • recognise that language affects the development and maintenance of relationships, eg offering words of comfort at a time of distress 👥 • explore how the use of language can be empowering or disempowering, eg encouraging words build self-esteem, inappropriate or disrespectful words cause offence 👥 ⚖ **ENLS-5A** • demonstrate understanding of ethical digital citizenship, eg recognise the internet is a public domain, use social networking sites appropriately, demonstrate responsible use of ICT 🖥 ✦ ⚖	**Differing opinions** What happens when someone has an opinion or point of view that is different from ours? Can students remember any times when they have had an opinion that was different from someone else's? Did they express their opinion? How did it make them feel? Students reflect on the TV episode they watched earlier. How did people express different opinions? Students identify language used, eg 'I disagree …', 'I didn't think …'. Discuss with students whether a person's opinion or point of view can be wrong. How should we respond if someone has an opinion that is different from ours? Provide students with examples of scenarios where people have different opinions. Some scenarios should model appropriate and others inappropriate ways of disagreeing. Students identify which scenarios model appropriate responses and which model inappropriate responses. If possible, students articulate why the responses are inappropriate, eg the person cut the other person off and didn't listen, the person was very aggressive, the person put the other person down. Discuss the importance of being able to express our opinions without hurting others, and not making others feel bad if they have an opinion different from our own. Is it appropriate, for example, to attack someone on social media just because you disagree with them? It may be appropriate for students to undertake some activities around the appropriate use of social media.	[Digital citizenship](#)

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	For each of the inappropriate scenarios presented previously, students express how the people in the scenario would feel. This may be done by selecting from or matching a set of emotion cards or symbols.	
	How can we appropriately present a different opinion and accept other people's opinions? Activities could include:	
	• rewriting inappropriate responses to make them appropriate	
	• role-playing inappropriate responses and then repeating the role-play using more appropriate responses.	
	Introduce students to 'I' statements. This can be an effective way to express an opinion, especially in relation to someone else's actions. By using 'I' statements, students can express a different opinion without judging the person they are disagreeing with. Model some 'I' statements that could be used for different scenarios. Provide opportunities for students to engage in guided practice of developing their own 'I' statements. This could be done through role-play.	Communication and feelings – Using 'I' statements I statements
ENLS-13C • identify persuasive language used in texts, eg bias, opinion • use persuasive language to present an opinion or point of view 👬 ENLS-15D • recognise the ways in which ideas and points of view can be expressed in a range of spoken, written, visual and multimedia texts ⚌ 💻 • recognise how the language of persuasion represents individual and group perspectives, eg bias, argument ⚙ 🍃 • compose texts to reflect a personal belief or point of view, eg a picture to show how they feel about an issue, a text about their opinions on a particular issue 🌐 ⚌ ⚙	**Persuasive texts** If appropriate, explore a range of persuasive texts, such as: • digital and print movie reviews • blogs • media articles • discussions. For the text(s) selected, identify: • structural features • the main opinion/point of view • simple persuasive language. Students could jointly construct one of the persuasive texts explored, focusing on a familiar topic. Appropriate scaffolds/templates will need to be used to guide construction. *Note: Blogs are a good way to model previously learned skills in appropriately expressing different points of view. A class blog can be established and a common topic can be set. Encourage students to enter responses to the blog, expressing their point of view on the topic and responding to the points of view of others. Responses posted by the teacher at various intervals can provide good models for students.*	*At the Movies with Margaret & David* Blog sites, such as Edublogs

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ENLS-13C • draw on personal experiences to communicate points of view in relation to texts, eg 'Everyone likes that character but I don't' 👫 • justify a point of view, drawing on personal experience, eg 'I like that character because he's just like my friend' 👫 • draw on personal experiences to critically respond to ideas, information and perspectives in texts ✿ • appreciate that their own experience shapes responses to texts • compare, discuss and justify different interpretations of texts 👫 ✿ • compose persuasive texts in response to another text, eg exposition/discussion on a theme of a novel, debate on the hero/villain of a story, argument for/against an environmental issue ✿ ⚓ • develop critical and evaluative skills, eg identify points of difference in texts, communicate preferences for texts, recognise if texts meet the intended purpose and audience ✿ **ENLS-15D** • compose a response to an issue presented in a text ✿ • compose texts to reflect a personal belief or point of view, eg a picture to show how they feel about an issue, a text about their opinions on a particular issue 🌐 ✚ ✿	**Presenting your opinion** Select a text that can be shared as a class, such as a film or TV show, short story, novel, song or poem. After reading, viewing and/or listening to the text, explore students' opinions on the characters, events and/or settings. Activities could include: • using gesture/facial expression to indicate preference • selecting a preferred character, event or setting from a list • identifying a preferred character, event, or setting and justifying their choice • creating a visual representation of their preferred character, event or setting and explaining why they have chosen this. Organise students into groups based on their preferences, eg all students who preferred a character in the same group. As a group, students provide a list of reasons why this is their preferred character, event or setting. Groups take turns to present one justification for their preference. Encourage students to use appropriate language when expressing a difference of opinion and to support their reasons with examples. As a class, students can vote for the most persuasive group. *(Alternatively, this could be done as a class debate.)* Students contribute to a class blog and share their opinions on various aspects of the text. Students prepare a presentation to the class to share their overall opinion of the text. This may be done through: • selecting a variety of symbols/images to demonstrate their opinion of the text • creating a multimedia presentation of their opinion of the text • writing a persuasive response and sharing it with the class through an oral reading or podcast (the reading may be done by the student or another nominated person).	Presentation tools, such as: • PowerPoint • Photo Story • Movie Maker • Animoto Audio software, such as: • Audacity • GarageBand Webserver for publishing podcasts, such as Blogger