English sample unit: Let's talk!   **Stage 1**

Focus: Language and communication	Duration: 5 weeks
Explanation of unit/overview In this unit students will learn about language and communication, including: • languages spoken in Australia and in their community • different forms of communication, including assistive technology • levels of formality in language according to audience and purpose • use of nonverbal communication. They will be provided with opportunities to engage with language in a variety of ways and to develop their skills in communicating verbally and nonverbally in different situations. The unit does not attempt to cover all aspects of literacy learning, and should be supplemented with teaching and learning experiences that further develop skills and strategies in viewing and responding to texts.	**Links to other KLAs** History – students will consider *present and past family life* as they share their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Science – students will learn about different *information technologies* as they consider assistive communication systems. Creative Arts – students will be provided with opportunities to engage in role-play and dramatic representation.

Outcomes	Assessment overview
EN1-1A communicates with a range of people in informal and guided activities demonstrating interaction skills and considers how own communication is adjusted in different situations EN1-4A draws on an increasing range of skills and strategies to fluently read, view and comprehend a range of texts on less familiar topics in different media and technologies EN1-6B recognises a range of purposes and audiences for spoken language and recognises organisational patterns and features of predictable spoken texts EN1-7B identifies how language use in their own writing differs according to their purpose, audience and subject matter EN1-8B recognises that there are different kinds of texts when reading and viewing and shows an awareness of purpose, audience and subject matter	• Students engage in a variety of observable learning experiences. Anecdotal notes and observational mechanisms (eg charts, video recordings) should be used to evaluate student progress throughout the unit. • Additionally, student understanding may be assessed through analysis of contributions to class discussions. • Students produce a summative assessment task. This should be assessed to determine the student's level of achievement and understanding.

Content	Teaching, learning and assessment

EN1-6B
 	
• make connections between different methods of communication, eg Standard Australian English, Aboriginal English, home language, sign language and body language
	Communication games
	
	• Engage in a variety of activities and games that use different types or aspects of communication, eg:
	  – charades (using body and facial language)
	  – coded messages (translating language into a number system)
	  – blindfold walking (using verbal instructions to guide a blindfolded peer)
	  – telephone whispers (meaning is lost with inaccurate repetition).
	
	How we talk at home
	
	• Pose a question: 'What are five different ways that I could tell Mum that I love her?' Have students act out their responses, eg:
	  – verbally tell her in person or over the phone
	  – write a letter or email
	  – use sign or body language
	  – have Mum 'lip read'
	  – use another language or code to tell her.
	• Discuss the nature of communication (sending and receiving messages) and the different ways people can communicate.
	• Students share their use of language at home, eg:
	  – use of one, two or multiple languages
	  – use of Aboriginal English
	  – use of sign and body language, Braille, assistive communication technology.
	
	Guest speaker
	
	• Invite a member of the local community to visit the class and share their cultural and language background and experiences, eg a person:
	  – from a non-English speaking background
	  – who uses sign language or assistive communication technology
	  – of Aboriginal heritage, who speaks a community language and/or Aboriginal English
	  – who is involved in translation services.

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EN1-6B
 	
• understand that people use different systems of communication to cater to different needs and purposes and that many people may use sign systems to communicate with others (ACELA1443)
 	
• develop an understanding of different forms of communication technologies available for hearing and visually impaired people and people with other disabilities
 	
EN1-8B
 	
• recognise a range of purposes and audiences for imaginative, informative and persuasive print and visual texts
 	
EN1-7B
 	
• identify the audience of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts (ACELY1668)
 	
• discuss some of the different purposes for written and visual texts
 	
• understand that different types of texts have identifiable text structures and language features that help the text serve its purpose (ACELA1447, ACELA1463)
	Read
	
	• *A Button in Her Ear* by Ada Bassett Litchfield. Read a review at www.listen-up.org/h_books/kids.htm.
	
	Brainstorm
	
	• As a class, discuss communication difficulties that people may experience, eg hearing or vision impairment, speech impairment, complex health issues (such as autoimmune disease, stroke), language difficulties.
	
	• Think, pair, share: what could be done to help people experiencing communication difficulties to express and understand messages?
	
	Braille
	
	• Watch a DVD or online media presentation about people using Braille to communicate and discuss the nature, benefits and challenges of using Braille.
	
	Sign language
	
	• Using an online visual or audiovisual guide, learn to communicate simple ideas and messages using AUSLAN.
	
	• Discuss different types of sign language and explore the reasons for this and difficulties it may present.
	
	Digital technology
	
	• Discuss digital communication programs, eg text-to-speech applications, Skype, FaceTime, videoconferencing.
	
	• Students experiment with text-to-speech technology (eg using free online text-to-speech software, or software integrated into the operating system), relating this to the use of assistive technology.
	
	• Students experiment with speech control (voice commands) of software and operating systems such as Windows or MAC.
	
	Informative text
	
	• Jointly read and deconstruct two or more informative texts on Braille (or a form of assistive technology).
	
	• Discuss:
	  – possible audience and purpose
	  – organisational patterns and features, eg heading, subheadings, use of paragraphs, progression from general to specific information, use of images
	  – key ideas (record as a class).
	
	• Jointly construct an informative text on Braille (or a form of assistive technology) using information gained from reading, giving consideration to audience and purpose, and organisational patterns and features.
	
	Community engagement
	
	• Encourage students to engage with people who use alternative communication approaches, eg:
	  – organise a class visit to a local nursing home

Content	Teaching, learning and assessment
	– read a blog or website about the experience of a person with communication difficulties and jointly compose communication to the author – facilitate a class fundraiser to support the work of an organisation that assists in the development and/or delivery of assistive technology, eg Vision Australia, the Cochlear Institute, TAD at www.tadnsw.org.au/.
EN1-6B • understand the use of vocabulary in everyday contexts as well as a growing number of school contexts, including appropriate use of formal and informal terms of address in different contexts (ACELA1454) **EN1-1A** • understand that language varies when people take on different roles in social and classroom interactions and how the use of key interpersonal language resources varies depending on context (ACELA1461)	**Language and context** • Begin the lesson by addressing the students using a highly formalised manner of speech, eg 'Kind sirs and misses, please commence this learning experience by becoming seated on the floor'. • Develop a discussion out of student responses, leading to a definition of formal and informal language. • Discuss terms of address by having students share the names they use for different people in their lives, eg parents, grandparents, friends of the family, other relatives, school friends, teachers. **Name labels** • Provide each student with a pro forma for a name label. • Students write their name on the label. • Students add other names by which they may be called, eg nicknames, Mr/Miss Surname, names that indicate group membership ('boys and girls', 'children', 'Year Two'), informal terms of address ('mate', 'love', 'hey you', 'buddy'). • Share responses and jointly construct a two-column table indicating formal and informal terms of address. Discuss the contexts in which different levels of formality are appropriate, eg: <table><thead><tr><th>Formal</th><th>Informal</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Annabelle Singh Mr Wilson Doctor Morris</td><td>Jonno Jonesy champ buddy darling</td></tr></tbody></table> • Discuss how the level of formality used in terms of address affects interactions, eg at home and at school. • Discuss different levels of formality (in language and terms of address) required at home and at school, and consider reasons for the difference.

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EN1-1A
 	
• use role-play and drama to represent familiar events and characters in texts
 	
• explore different ways of expressing emotions, including verbal, visual, body language and facial expressions (ACELA1787)
 	
• engage in conversations and discussions, using active listening behaviours, showing interest, and contributing ideas, information and questions (ACELY1656)
 	
EN1-4A
 	
• use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures (ACELY1660, ACELY1670)
	Expressing emotions
	
	• View and discuss a chart that depicts faces showing a variety of emotions (eg 'Feeling Faces Poster' available at www.feelingfacescards.com/.
	
	• In pairs, one student selects an emotion and expresses it without words (eg using facial expression and body language), while the other student must guess which emotion they are showing.
	
	• Select a variety of pieces that convey a variety of moods, eg from a compilation CD such as 'Classic Kids' (ABC). Play an excerpt from each of the selected pieces and have students express the emotion that they feel in response to the music, through body movements and facial expressions. Discuss the emotion evoked by each piece, the ways in which students expressed that emotion, and alternative ways of expressing that emotion.
	
	Three Little Pigs
	
	• Read a version of 'The Three Little Pigs' and watch an online digital media representation of the story, eg www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5hI9U19-M0/.
	
	• Discuss the use of vocabulary, including the degree of formality and terms of address.
	
	• Discuss the motives and emotions of different characters in the text, and how different characters may view the events of the story. Ask questions such as:
	  – What happened in the story?
	  – Do you think the wolf was mean or just hungry?
	  – Why else may he have visited the pigs?
	  – Why do you think he was asking to be let in to the pigs' houses?
	  – Do we have all of the information about the story, or are there details that we may not know?
	  – Do you think the pigs are honest or have they tricked us all?
	  – Are the pigs trying to hurt the wolf?
	
	• The class forms groups based on their convictions about the characters' motives and actions, eg 'People who think the wolf was misunderstood', 'People who think the pigs were deliberately lying to harm the wolf'.
	
	• Each group devises a short play to communicate a chosen character's 'true' feelings, motivations and their perspective of events. Particular attention should be paid to communicating emotion through nonverbal means.
	
	• Groups perform their play for the class and discuss how they depicted emotions and how clearly these emotions were displayed.

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	Storyteller visit
	• Invite a local storyteller to visit and present a dramatic 'telling' of a text (eg an Aboriginal elder to present a traditional oral story, a professional storyteller could recount a tale from a particular cultural background). Alternatively, Skype/FaceTime/video conference with a storyteller.
	• After the visit, engage in a class discussion, considering questions such as:
	  – How did the storyteller keep us interested as an audience?
	  – What type of language did they use? Was it formal? Was it informal? Did they use words from another language?
	  – How did their body language and facial expressions add to the story?
	  – What special effects did they use to keep the audience engaged (eg audience participation, props, costumes)?
	  – Is there anything they could have done differently to communicate more effectively?
	Summative assessment
	• Students draw pictures and add text to communicate the various things they have learned about language, seeking to include as much detail as possible.

Resources
Print resources *A Button in Her Ear* by Ada Bassett Litchfield 'The Three Little Pigs' Informative texts on Braille (or another form of assistive technology) Let's Talk! worksheet **Digital resources** DVD or online media presentation about people using Braille Online visual or audiovisual guide to teach AUSLAN Text-to-speech technology (eg free online text-to-speech software) Existing software in most common computer operating systems for text-to-speech and voice command software The 'Three Little Pigs' animation – www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5hI9U19-m0/ **Community resources** Guest speakers Visiting storyteller