

The Early level Literacy & Gàidhlig

agus cò ris a tha e coltach?

So what does early level Literacy and Gàidhlig look like?



- o Throughout this exemplar it should be noted that the children are not first language Gaelic speakers but are children in a multi-composite Gaelic Medium immersion setting.

Reading- A' leughadh A' sgrìobhadh -Writing

It is primarily through listening and talking that a child in Gaelic Medium Education acquires new language skills. Building on this, the skills of reading and writing are scaffolded by the models of language developed orally. Literacy activities particularly at the early level cover a range of Experiences and Outcomes across all the aspects of language. By considering the *significant aspects of learning* it is perhaps easier to identify developments and link them to these experiences and outcomes.

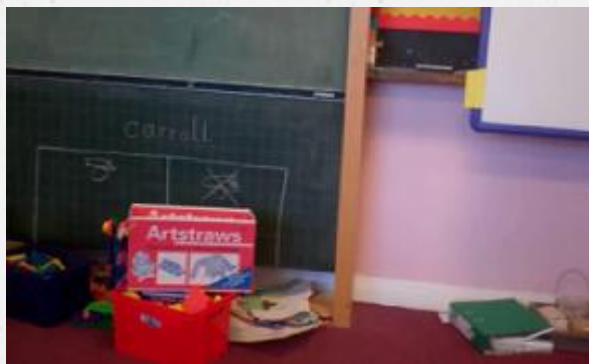
Significant aspects of learning

- o The significant aspects of learning encompass all the literacy organisers: listening and talking, reading, and writing. They can be thought of as the structure in which children demonstrate
 1. *Familiarity of language*
 2. *Range of vocabulary*
 3. *Complexity of sentences*
 4. *Understanding and use of spoken language*
 5. *Increased complexity of conversations*
 6. *Understanding and using texts*
 7. *Range of reading strategies*
 8. *Producing written language with increasing complexity and accuracy.*

The examples of work throughout make reference both to the Experiences and Outcomes at early level and to these aspects of learning.

A' Leughadh- reading at Early Level

Patterns and sounds developing *Familiarity of Language*



At early level pupils are beginning to use the building blocks of language increasingly independently, developing *Familiarity of language*. With a growing phonological awareness and a range of Gaelic sounds they are beginning to decode the spoken and written language around them.

The children are using their knowledge of phonics to identify the sounds, match them to their letters and put them together to form words by sounding out. This skill enables the early level child to develop word attack skills which they can transfer into their reading. At the end of early level children are also engaged in a fun activity which allows them to work together to explore the sound patterns, refining their understanding and awareness of the Gaelic sounds.

Developing *Strategies in reading*

Learners at the early level are starting to use transferable reading skills developed through play into reading a variety of text. Skills such as sounding out, using context cues and a range of sight vocabulary enable pupils to engage with and understand simple text.



- o The pictures above demonstrate a range of developing *reading strategies* by the early years learner. The learners are able to demonstrate a growing understanding of phonics by sounding out the words in the Fuaimean Game, whilst first sight vocabulary is reinforced and developed through activities such as Kim's Game.

Understanding and using texts

The children are able to transfer a *range of reading skills* into a variety of text and contexts. Language familiar to the children through talking and listening is mirrored in reading pieces to provide the children with a context to support their understanding. Questioning provides evidence of understanding with a range of questions being used.



Lucie has been given a new text. By discussing the title and front cover, Lucie is able to demonstrate her understanding of the new word *cnamh* and also *cuilean*. Lucie has a range of sight vocabulary which she uses in the first pages as well as an understanding of the patterns of question answer in *Am faod?... Faodaidh* which she uses. Lucie is also able with support to use sounding strategies when reading unfamiliar words.

By the end of early level the children will have some sight vocabulary, a range of familiar words. This, along with a growing understanding of the patterns of speech in Gaelic, allows them to use context clues when reading. As demonstrated in the extract, the phonics skills also allow children to decode unfamiliar words. Questioning the text and the pictures helps to support understanding at this level. The children should be developing a range of strategies in their reading.

Demonstrating a range of skills through reading

Reading activities often provide a range of assessment opportunities across literacy. Listening for information, following instructions, answering questions and knowledge of language are all intrinsic to these types of activities.



Children engaging in a text through a sequencing activity. They initially put the pictures in order and discuss what is happening in them. They are then able to engage with the text of the story adding it to the sequences of pictures, thereby demonstrating their understanding of the text and not only their ability to decode it. Through activities such as these children can demonstrate *understanding and use of text* even with quite simple writing at early level.

The learners were able to use their growing awareness of Gaelic to identify the two characters. They were able to make a prediction about the plot of the story using the pictures to predict. They were able to sequence the story with support to create a picture story. The children were then given the text from the story which they were able to match with the correct character to demonstrate understanding of the vocabulary's meaning.

A' sgrìobhadh

Building on many of the skills developed through talking and listening and reading, children at early level are able to *produce written language of increasing complexity and accuracy.*

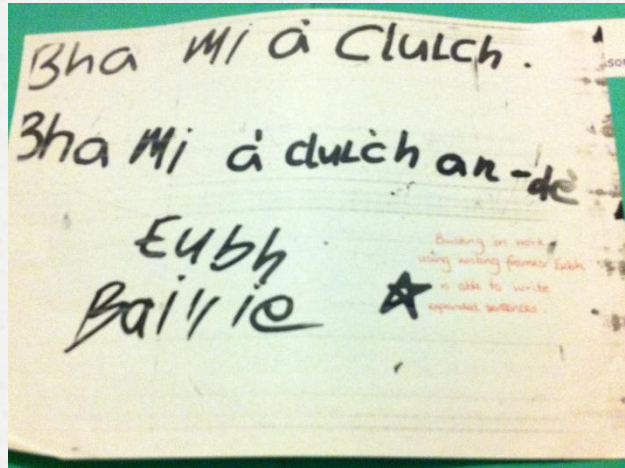


Within writing there are many skills which come together at the end of early level. The ability to form letters, to link them to their sounds and then to create words are all required if the learner is going to create meaningful writing. Also within the Gaelic Medium Class it is vital that the child is able to construct the sentence orally before beginning to write it to support *complexity of sentences* and develop a *familiarity of the language.*

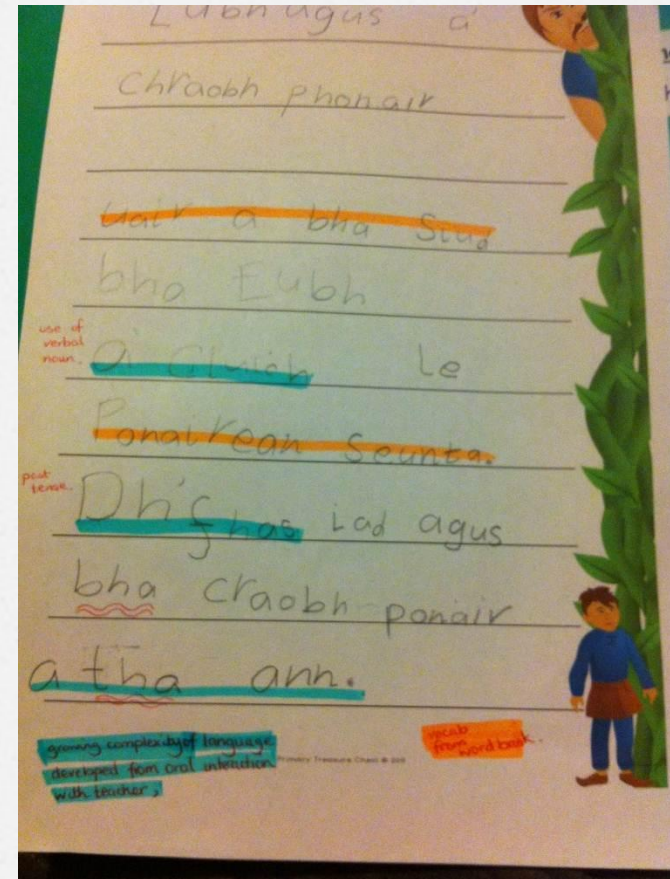
The picture shows Lucie using a sentence making frame to construct simple sentences using verbal nouns. This is the most common sentence construct given independently by children at this early level. Lucie is able to select and write her sentence and then read it out independently.

The development in writing

The two pieces below demonstrate progression in writing at early level developing from a familiarity of the language through listening and talking which leads to a complexity of sentence



In the first piece Eubh has independently constructed a simple past tense sentence using the verbal noun. This was built on work from writing frames. In the second piece Eubh has used words and phrases from a word bank but has also attempted more complex sentence structures. She uses the *trath caithte* with *Dh'fhas* but required support with spelling. She has also attempted to use 'S e and although not correct has made a good attempt at the form.



Breadth of writing

By engaging children in a wide range of writing experiences we can ensure not only breadth but also provide opportunities for them to demonstrate significant learning in terms of the complexity of sentences, range of vocabulary and *Familiarity of language* and *Complexity of sentences* in terms of idiom and patterns of grammar.



In this piece of writing the children were exploring adjectives by creating a simple simile. Eubh was able to insert a meaningful adjective and noun to describe her Giant.

In this piece of work Lucie was able to create a simple dialogue between two characters, using speech bubbles. Initially Lucie had added in *thuir...* within the bubble but she had self-corrected and removed this, demonstrating an understanding of the speech bubble device.

