

30S ELA Transactional Focus

Course Outline

The transactional focus is divided between 70% pragmatic and 30% aesthetic text. Transactional or pragmatic language is language used to inform, to explain, to persuade, to argue, and to plan. Aesthetic language is expressive language shaped and crafted to capture and represent experience enabling the audience to enter through the imagination.

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We will divide time equally between productive processes (writing, speaking, representing) and receptive processes (reading, listening, viewing).

English Language Arts identifies 56 specific learning outcomes for students. The Manitoba curricula reflects results-based learning, which is concerned with what students know and are able to do, rather than what material is "covered." What does such learning look like?

1. Student learning and attaining the learning outcomes is central, not the texts or materials used to attain the outcomes.
2. Assessment takes place before, during, and after learning experiences. Student performance provides information used to make programming decisions.
3. Planning (what we'll do in class) is ongoing and depends on student need.
4. Students will be given opportunity to practise, reinforce, and refine skills as learning outcomes are addressed in different contexts throughout the course.
5. An outcome will be considered "learned" when students can consistently demonstrate "at level" mastery. (Characteristics of specific outcomes will be identified in various rubrics or checklists).

Possible Units

Journalism (hard news, soft news, columns, feature article)

Personal Journeys (biography, autobiography, memoir)

Thematic Study (e.g., social justice, science and technology, recreation, philosophy, ethics, travelling)

Personal business (formal/informal letters, complaint letters, request letters, proposals, newsletter)

Documentaries

Assessment

Purposes of Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative assessment means collecting information about student learning in order to enhance that learning. Formative assessment is ongoing and continuous, both oral and written, and is used to provide students and parents with feedback and to make programming decisions. Periodically, data regarding students' progress are reported to students, parents, and administrators.

Summative assessment is conducted at the end of each unit and at the end of the semester to determine whether students have successfully achieved the learning outcomes. Achievement will be recorded by learning outcomes.

Different assignments and tasks given throughout the course are designed to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills and strategies, and attitude required to meet the targeted outcomes.

Many of the assignments require scaffolding (a step-by-step building of knowledge, skills and strategies and attitudes). The scaffolding is also built of several learning outcomes and therefore **all required tasks must be done when requested** as this is when the assessment will take place. Tasks include oral discussion and group work and can only be completed in class, so regular attendance is imperative.

Students will be active participants in planning and evaluating their own learning.

Discussion of learning will revolve around specific criteria and not "marks." While learning is not necessarily quantifiable, the current policy requires that learning be reduced to a number out of 100 for report cards. Students not completing assignments when requested will be leveled a mark of "0." See generic rubric below.

Where possible, the learning outcomes will be expressed at the beginning of a unit or lesson. Feedback will be both oral and written reflecting specific criteria and characteristics. For reporting purposes, levels will be converted to approximate percents as follows: 0=0, 1=20-39%, 2=40-59%, 3=60-79%, 4=80-94%, 5=95-100%.

Generic Rubric

Out of Range 0	Approaching Level 1 2	At Level 3 4	Proficient Level 5
targeted outcome <i>possible characteristics:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• response reveals lack of understanding• no oral participation	"somewhat" targeted outcome <i>possible characteristics:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• generalized, superficial, undeveloped, awkward, ineffective, tentative, limited, uncontrolled	targeted outcome <i>possible characteristics:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• clear, appropriate, supported, consistent, controlled, varied, meaningful	targeted outcome <i>possible characteristics:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• effective, precise, artful, distinct, mature, polished, sophisticated, superior, skillful, insightful, perceptive

Students will be able to voluntarily withdraw from the course until April 10, 2009.