



**Australian Government**

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**Department of Education, Employment  
and Workplace Relations**

# **Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide**

**Practice example**

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**Using an authentic resource**

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#### Disclaimer

The views expressed in the publication do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

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## Introduction to examples

Collected here are examples of teachers' work. These are drawn from teacher practice and are included here to exemplify aspects of teaching, learning and assessing languages, as discussed in the *Guide*. Teachers were invited to share their planning and programming documents and members of the project team worked with them to further develop aspects of their work.

### Programs

The collection of programs includes primary, middle and senior secondary long and short-term programs. These contain annotations designed to point out specific points of interest for you to consider in your reading of them. At the end of each program you will find a commentary that describes how the program exemplifies selected sections of the *Guide*.

### A selection of teachers' work

This is a selection of programs and parts of programs, plans for classroom teaching, planned assessment tasks, descriptions of the teaching and learning contexts, investigations and evaluations of practice, and reflections on current practices. It shows teachers engaged in professional thinking, planning, reassessing, and evaluating what they teach, how they teach and who they teach.

### About the examples

- These examples of teachers' planning, practice and reflection are provided for you to examine, consider and perhaps use in expanding your own understanding of language teaching and learning. We know that teachers learn best from other teachers and so we encourage you to look across the set of examples in all languages rather than just the language(s) you teach.
- The examples of teachers' work included here belong to individual teachers and are taught in a particular context which means that you will not find models that you can instantly adopt and teach. Rather, you will find ideas about teaching and learning that you can use by adapting and reworking them to produce programs, classroom teaching, learning and assessment practices that you can use in your own context.
- The examples of teachers' work are not included here because they constitute 'best practice' or are exemplars of definitive programs for languages teaching and learning. You will find some outstanding approaches to planning and teaching that advance our understanding of how to make languages teaching and learning a rich and effective learning experience for students. You will also find teachers' honest reflections and evaluations of their pedagogies, questioning what they do and rethinking what they will do.
- The examples of teachers' work may include some pedagogies of which you may be critical. However, you will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work with students, language teaching and language learning.

<b>Example</b>	Using resources: authentic documents
<b>Language</b>	Chinese
<b>Level</b>	Secondary
<b>Teacher</b>	Andrew Scrimgeour (SA) The following is an example of an authentic text resource being used for a series of classroom interactions and tasks.

<p><b>Resourcing and materials</b>  Selecting resources  The purposes of resources  Adapting resources  Using resources critically  Relating resources to each other  Contemporary resources  Learners as resources  Developing a resource bank</p>	<p>The text included here provides a rich source of contemporary linguistic and cultural input, and the opportunity to stimulate discussion about and responses to issues relating to values and ideals in diverse communities and how they are represented in texts. In terms of level of language, this text may be seen as particularly demanding in a Chinese classroom, even at senior secondary level. The module outline included highlights how learners understanding of the context of the text, and its content can be scaffolded through classroom interactions and the provision of additional language support through glossaries, character lists or other tools that make the textual meanings more accessible. At a conceptual level, the demands on learners and the opportunities for intercultural learning are considerable; the language content (core values) and format (poetic rhyming phrases) are unfamiliar; the context (government propaganda) and medium (street blackboard) are unusual, but the text raises many issues of language, culture and their relationship, and promotes opportunities for deep reflection on our values, how these are understood and how the government promotes community values and harmony, as is the case in this text.</p>
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The teacher uses a picture of a notice promoting values, written by hand on a community blackboard, to develop a series of interactions leading to a culminating task and reflection.

**Chinese: Secondary**

Community values: The Harmony Campaign



### Context and content

This community blackboard, displayed in a small street in a residential area, is written in a text type unfamiliar to students – in terms of its context and its content. Its images and format could lead to many interpretations. It is evidently chalk on blackboard and may be placed in a school context. The consistent format of two four-character phrases per line may suggest a poem; but much of the character content and information contained would be unfamiliar in the first instance.

It is a statement of community values, probably released by the Chinese national government and is presented as a rhyming poem in which each line or pair of lines encourages people to support positive values and resist negative habits. Examples may be: upholding the law, resisting the black and yellow (corruption and pornography), resisting

drugs, supporting science over superstition, protecting the environment and respecting the one child policy and so on.

The images also reflect a natural but developed urban environment, all drawn freehand by a local community official. The text provides a rich opportunity for language and culture exploration. For example, it enables a comparison of Chinese community values with Australian community values based on students' prior knowledge of those values typically expressed in advertisements and campaigns run by state and federal governments in Australia, and their own experience.

### **Teaching/learning outline**

The text task is designed around a sequence of interactions including:

- Problem setting - encouraging learners to think about the issues in community values and encouraging a process of enquiry and problem solving as the focus of the unit.
- Goal setting - establishing a reflective exploration and interpretation of the text as the goal of the learning experience.
- First impressions - noticing text features and considering the likely context of use.
- Explicit teaching - of relevant vocabulary and grammatical features that learners require to understand the linguistic and cultural content of the text, so that they can understand the context and purpose of the text specifically.
- Making comparisons - bringing their prior knowledge and experience of community campaigns (i.e. anti-smoking, global warming, neighbourhood watch, etc.) in their own culture, as well as their knowledge of political and social issues in the target culture.
- Exploring - students examine the nature of government/community advertising across languages and cultures, and consider what this text tells us about the target language and culture.
- Reflecting - on the text context and impact of this text on their understanding of life in China and in Australia.

Main task and reflection: *Write a summary of the text in English, outlining its content, purpose, and features that had an impression on you. Discuss some of the textual features that are particularly Chinese and how the text content reflects issues in contemporary Chinese society. Consider how the content and images of the text may differ if it were produced for an Australian or local audience.*

## Details of planned interactions and questions

- Problem setting - encouraging learners to think about issues of community values and encouraging a process of inquiry and problem solving as the focus of the unit.  
*What are the important and generally accepted values in our community (think of health and safety, crime prevention, energy conservation, and national pride campaigns). How do we learn of these values? How do our different levels of government reinforce these values through advertising and public awareness campaigns? What media do they use to get these messages across? Why do they use these media? What do we know of community values and government campaigns in China?*
- Goal setting – establishing a reflective exploration and interpretation of the text as the goal of the learning experience  
*We are going to explore a text that reflects how community campaigns are conducted in China, then reflect on what this tells us about life in China; how the government in China conducts community campaigns, including how language is used for this purpose, and how it compares to our own. As a result, you will write about what you learn from this text and what it tells you about your own community, as well as community life in China.*
- First impressions: noticing text features and considering the likely context of use  
*Look at this text. What are your immediate impressions of the text content and format? What type of text is it, where is it, what is it written on? Why might this be so? Is there anything similar in our community? Why/why not? What questions does it raise for you about China?*
- Explicit teaching of relevant vocabulary and grammatical features that learners require in order to understand the linguistic and cultural content of the text and understand the specific context and purpose of the text
- comparing the text with their prior knowledge and experience of community campaigns (e.g. anti-smoking, global warming, neighbourhood watch etc) in own culture, and knowledge of national and community priorities in the target culture.  
*Consider how specific community campaigns are conducted in our community, what texts are used, how are the messages presented to us? How do these texts compare in format to this text? Can you explain the differences? What does this suggest to you about Chinese language and culture?*
- Exploring text purpose, context and content – exploring the nature of government or community advertising across languages and cultures, and considering what this text tells us about the target language and culture.

*How do we interpret a text like this, written in sets of two 4-character phrases that end in a rhyming syllable – can we translate both the medium and the message successfully into English? Once we have accessed the required language to understand the text, select a sequence of 6 lines (a quarter of the text) and attempt to make a poetic interpretation of the text meaning in English; then reflect on the challenges you faced. What does it tell you about the nature of Chinese language used in this (poetic) medium?*

- Reflection on text context and impact of this text on their understanding of life in China and in Australia

*What are the key messages the government is trying to portray in this text? How similar are they to the social values expressed to us by our own governments? What are some distinctive features of this message that we would not expect to find in a community campaign in Australia? Why might this be so?*

- Main task and reflection

*As a conclusion to this study, write a summary of the main messages of the text in English, outlining its content, purpose, and features that made an impression on you. Include some lines in both languages, reflecting on issues of interpreting the text in another language. What is easy to translate, what linguistic features tend to be lost in translation? Discuss some of the textual features that are particularly Chinese and how the text content reflects issues in contemporary Chinese society. Consider how the content and images on the text may differ if it were produced for an Australian local audience.*