

MIDDLE YEARS

ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE CURRICULUM

In addition to providing the requisite curriculum components (nature of the discipline, rationale, philosophy, aim, structure, student learning outcomes and standards), curriculum documents incorporate the following elements.

ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES

Aboriginal perspectives are integrated into curricula to enable students to learn the history of Manitoba and Canada before European settlement, and to give the perspectives of Aboriginal people since that time. Each subject area addresses the perspectives and accomplishments of Aboriginal people, as appropriate.

Aboriginal perspectives apply to learning experiences for all students; however, there may be unique and particular learning experiences that apply specifically to Aboriginal students. Aboriginal students are learners and participants in Aboriginal cultures, and are not necessarily experts in the culture. Their knowledge about their culture may be the same as that of other students in the class. If, however, they do have extensive knowledge about their culture, sharing their knowledge could benefit the entire class.

Goals

For Aboriginal Students

- to develop a positive self-identity through learning their own histories, cultures, and contemporary lifestyles
- to participate in a learning environment that will equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to participate more fully in the unique civic and cultural realities of their communities

For Non-Aboriginal Students

- to develop an understanding and respect for the histories, cultures, and contemporary lifestyles of Aboriginal people
- to develop informed opinions on matters relating to Aboriginal people

Resources

To assist Manitoba educators in incorporating Aboriginal perspectives, the following Native Studies documents were developed and published:

- *Native Studies Early Years (K–4): A Teacher’s Resource Book*
- *Native Studies Middle Years (Grades 5–8): A Teacher’s Resource Book Framework*
- *Native Studies Senior Years (S1–S4): A Teacher’s Resource Book Framework*

In 2003, the Department published *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators*. This document is meant to assist Manitoba curriculum developers and educators as they integrate Aboriginal perspectives into new and existing curricula. It provides direction for the integration of Aboriginal perspectives within the various curricula taught in Manitoba classrooms.

For your information: The curriculum document *Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation* is available online at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/abedu/foundation_gr12/index.html.

ASSESSMENT

The Department has published the following two support documents to provide guidance for assessment practice in Manitoba:

1. *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind* (2006) affirms that assessment must be planned with its specific purpose in mind, and that what is done to assess student learning and how the information about learning is used will differ according to the purpose. The document defines the following three distinct but interrelated purposes for assessment:
 - *Assessment for learning*: Where assessment helps teachers gain insight into what students understand in order to plan and guide instruction, and provide helpful feedback to students.
 - *Assessment as learning*: Where students develop an awareness of how they learn, and use that awareness to adjust and advance their learning, taking an increased responsibility for their learning.
 - *Assessment of learning*: Where assessment informs students, teachers, and parents, as well as the broader educational community, of achievement at a certain point in time in order to celebrate success, plan interventions, and support continued progress.
2. *Communicating Student Learning* (2008) aligns with and extends the ideas contained in *Rethinking Classroom Assessment*. Its focus is on ways to communicate with students and parents throughout the learning process that are most supportive of further learning. It includes guidelines for quality grading and reporting practices.

Current research suggests that implementing the following three key strategies can have a significant positive impact on student achievement:

- Increase the amount of assessment *for learning* in classrooms
- Offer more opportunities for student involvement and engagement in their learning (assessment *as learning*)
- Ensure high-quality assessment *of learning*, and improve grading and reporting practices

Evidence in classrooms that these three strategies are being implemented would include the following:

- Teachers have an assessment plan for a unit, developed at the outset of the unit, which is communicated to students (and parents as appropriate).
 - The assessment plan would include not only the culminating (summative) assessments through which students demonstrate understanding, but the formative assessment opportunities that help both the teacher and the student to see how they are doing and what they could do to improve during the instruction and practice phases of the learning cycle.
- Teachers and students understand the learning outcomes that are the focus of the lesson/unit.
 - The learning outcome(s) that are the focus of the lesson/unit might be posted in the classroom in age-appropriate/student-friendly language.
 - If asked, students could articulate what they are learning and why.
- Students understand the criteria that will be used to judge the quality of their work.
 - Sometimes these criteria are described or listed by the teacher. In some classrooms, students and teachers co-construct the criteria.
 - Samples of work at the desired level, or at a variety of levels, might be displayed, assisting students in assessing their own work.
- Teachers check for students' prior knowledge and readiness prior to instruction, and frequently check for the development of the requisite understanding and skills throughout instruction.
 - A variety of strategies might be used, including the following:
 - KWL (What you already know, what you want to learn, what you have learned)
 - Visual signals (thumbs-up/thumbs-down, etc.)
 - Graphic organizers (Venn diagrams, before and after diagrams, concept maps, etc.)
 - Written responses (exit passes, journal entries, learning logs, etc.)

- Students receive and generate descriptive feedback on their work in relation to the agreed-upon criteria.
 - Students may have access to checklists or rubrics that remind them of the criteria and performance standard they are working toward.
 - Students receive specific descriptive feedback in relation to the criteria from the teacher, and/or from peers, and they have the opportunity to generate the feedback for themselves.
- Students demonstrate what they have learned by the end of the unit.
 - A variety of culminating tasks might be used that require students to apply and synthesize what they have learned, such as
 - Demonstration
 - Role-play
 - Performance
 - Essay
 - Test
- Teachers use assessment information to plan appropriate next steps for each learner.
 - Instruction is differentiated according to the learner’s profile of strengths and areas requiring improvement.
- When grades are required, teachers use assessment information and professional judgment to assign grades that are
 - Meaningful
 - The grade is a valid indicator of the learning outcomes that were focused upon.
 - Teachers design and organize assessment evidence by learning goal, not by assessment method (e.g., project, quizzes, tests, homework).
 - Consistent
 - The grade is based on how well the student has done in relation to the criteria that were outlined, not based on how well the student did in relation to peers.

- Accurate
 - Assessments are of high quality – that is,
 - The assessment method is appropriate for the learning outcome.
 - A sufficient sample of evidence is included.
 - Students have had a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning.
 - The grade has not been distorted by non-achievement factors (such as effort, lateness, missing assignments, etc.).
- Supportive of learning
 - Only marks from summative assessments are used in determining grades.
 - When more recent evidence shows that a student now understands or can do what was intended, the more recent evidence replaces earlier evidence that may have indicated the difficulty the student had at the beginning of instruction.
 - Students are involved in the assessment process
 - They have some choice in how they demonstrate their learning.
 - They are involved in keeping track of their learning (e.g., portfolios, learning logs).
 - They are involved in communicating about their learning (e.g., student-involved or student-led conferences).

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

In May 1992, the Department published *Multicultural Education: A Policy for the 1990s*. This document focused on the following three thrusts: education for full participation in society; education for cultural and linguistic development; and education for intercultural understanding.

More recently, the Department has recognized the need to renew and refresh its commitment to diversity and equity. In October 2006, *Belonging, Learning, and Growing: Kindergarten to Grade 12 Action Plan for Ethnocultural Equity* was released. This document outlines a variety of strategies and initiatives for enhancing diversity and equity education in Manitoba.

As a result of the vision and hope to create a more inclusive school, the Department made a commitment in 1996 to integrate the following elements into all subsequent curriculum documents:

Gender Fairness

To address the challenges of gender fairness and to develop student understanding in all subject areas in a balanced way, teaching, learning, and assessing must be equally accessible, relevant, interesting, appropriate, and challenging to male and female students. This will ensure that all students have opportunities to succeed regardless of gender.

Curriculum documents, learning resources, and classroom practice should reflect a commitment to gender fairness and inclusion. All students, regardless of gender, should be encouraged and supported to develop to their full potential.

Appropriate Age Portrayals

There is a growing awareness of stereotypes and discriminatory practices and attitudes related to aging. The contributions of all age groups, including the aging population, should be supported in teaching, learning, and assessing. Stereotyping related to age should be avoided.

Human Diversity

Manitoba is a rich mosaic of people with a diversity of cultures, languages, religions, and other characteristics. These aspects of human diversity should be recognized, accepted, and celebrated. This will create learning environments that prepare all students for full participation in society, provide students with opportunities for cultural and linguistic development, and encourage intercultural understanding and harmony.

Anti-Racism/Anti-Bias Education

Effective schools strive to create and maintain inclusive school programs and environments that welcome diversity and challenge bias and discrimination. An anti-bias and anti-racism educational approach is a critical element in the development of curriculum documents and school environments so that students can experience learning in a safe environment and can develop the required knowledge and skills.

Resources

The following support documents produced by the Department provide guidance for integrating diversity and equity in education:

- *Multicultural Education: A Policy for the 1990s.*
- *Manitoba K–S4 Education Agenda for Student Success, 2002–2006* provides a set of priorities for education in Manitoba.
- The consultation document *Diversity and Equity in Education: An Action Plan for Ethnocultural Equity* provided a basis for discussion for the consultations held from 2003 to 2005.
- In October 2006, *Belonging, Learning, and Growing: Kindergarten to Grade 12 Action Plan for Ethnocultural Equity* was released.
- *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Action Plan for Ethnocultural Equity 2006–2008* outlines the Department’s plan for implementing a number of initiatives that build capacity for diversity and equity in education.

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education for sustainable development (ESD) is a priority for the Department as educators, schools, and school divisions are realizing the importance of promoting sustainable living among students.

Concept

The concept of sustainable development is the process of integrating and balancing the economy, environment, and the overall health and well-being of society through a consensus-based decision-making process so that each of these areas – the economy, the environment, and society – can be sustained for future generations. ESD is embedded in the curriculum, specifically in social studies, science, and physical education/health education. An interdisciplinary approach to engaging students in ESD provides the opportunity to integrate all other subject areas.

Education for Sustainable Development

ESD involves incorporating into the education system key themes of sustainable development such as poverty alleviation, human rights, health and environmental protection, and climate change.

The challenge is to enable students to make choices that incorporate the essential principles and values of sustainability. In order to do this, students need to be given opportunities to think and act according to the principles of sustainability. This process will contribute to their development as informed and responsible citizens who demonstrate attitudes and make decisions that reflect concern for the sustainability of this planet.

Resources

The following Department resources provide guidance for integrating sustainable development into other curricular areas:

- The ESD website at <www.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd> contains current information, resources, and supports for educators. It is updated regularly with new initiatives, such as correlation charts that highlight ESD learning outcomes, a toolkit to assist teachers in creating theme-based lessons, information on the Eco-Globe Schools recognition program, and supporting websites with teacher-ready materials to support educators and school communities participating in ESD activities. This website also includes ESD grant programs, posters with activities and teacher guides, parent brochures, school division newsletters, as well as courses and units with an ESD focus.
- *Education for a Sustainable Future: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators* (2000) is intended to help Manitoba curriculum developers and educators to integrate sustainability concepts into new and existing curricula. It is interdisciplinary in approach, and provides direction for the integration of sustainability knowledge, skills, values, and life practices into the curriculum, the classroom, and the community.

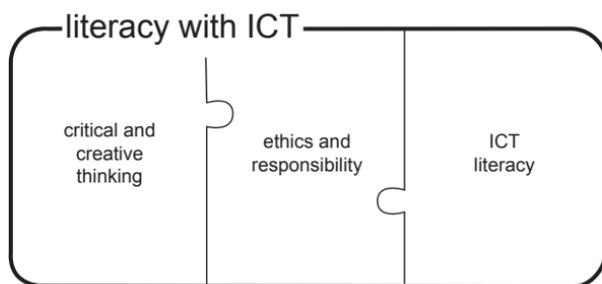
LITERACY WITH ICT ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/index.html

What is Literacy with ICT (LwICT)?

Literacy with ICT (LwICT) is the ability to find, evaluate, use, and share information by thinking **critically**, **creatively**, and **ethically**. It is also about when, why, and how to use ICT in **responsible ways**. This approach does not create a separate curriculum. Rather, it uses a continuum that is congruent with and infused with existing concepts across the curriculum.

Literate students develop LwICT through a **process of inquiry** across the curriculum. The *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT* paints a picture of how students develop their critical and creative thinking, in curricular context, and through the responsible and ethical use of ICT. It also provides a vehicle for students to self-assess and set goals for their learning.



This representation shows the relationship between **ICT literacy** (i.e., demonstrating ICT skills) and **literacy with ICT** (i.e., choosing and using ICT, responsibly and ethically, to support critical and creative thinking about information and about communication across the curriculum). ICT literacy is a critical component of literacy with ICT, but it is not sufficient in itself.

What is the *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum*?

A developmental learning continuum is an assessment tool for learning based on teacher observations. It describes what teachers see and hear students doing as they demonstrate their literacy. Many teachers already use continua for assessing learning in reading, writing, and numeracy.

The *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT* paints a picture of how students develop their critical and creative thinking, in a curricular context, and through the responsible and ethical use of ICT.

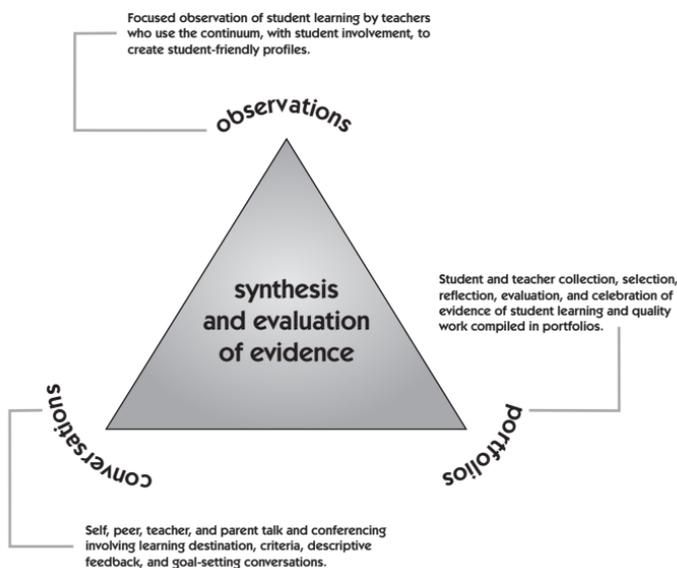
Supporting Principles of LwICT

The *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT* is a matrix of descriptors that portray how students demonstrate their LwICT. The following concepts, processes, and methodologies are embedded in the continuum and have become supporting principles for the implementation of *Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum*:

- Inquiry
- Constructivist learning
- Higher-level critical and creative thinking
- Reaching deeper understanding
- Gradual release of responsibility
- Digital citizenship
- Multiple literacies for the 21st century

For a description of each principle, visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/tell_me/sp.html.

Assessing, Evaluating, and Reporting on Student Progress in LwICT



Authentic assessment begins with pre-assessment and with learners knowing and helping to develop the criteria on which they will be assessed. It continues as students apply established criteria to the real-world performances/products they have created. In the most sophisticated learning context, students develop assessment criteria and apply them independently to representations of their understandings, as components of overall assessment *for/as/of* learning. (For further information, see the Department document *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*.)

The *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT* functions as both a planning tool and as assessment *for/as/of* learning. By observing learners as they engage in inquiry using ICT, teachers determine which behaviours students have demonstrated and those they are still working towards. This information helps teachers plan for instruction, as it indicates the nature of the learning contexts that will further develop student LwICT (assessment *for* learning). There are three components in assessing student LwICT: observations, portfolios, and conversations.

Policy on Reporting LwICT

Manitoba schools are required to implement *Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum* for students from K to Grade 8. The implementation began in the 2006/2007 school year, with full implementation achieved by the end of 2008/2009.

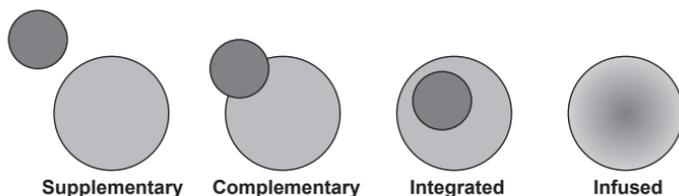
Schools are expected to report to parents of K-8 students within their existing reporting structure. Reporting is mandatory for Grades 2, 4, 6, and 8. Reporting on the progress of each student's literacy with ICT along the developmental continuum is based on the following framework:

- reporting on three competencies of LwICT
 - demonstrates critical thinking with ICT to plan and gather information
 - demonstrates creative thinking with ICT to produce and communicate information
 - demonstrates responsibility and ethics with ICT
- providing evidence of and opportunities to discuss student LwICT at parent/teacher/student conferences. These discussions can be facilitated by
 - portfolios of student work
 - individual student profiles on the *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT*

Role of School Leaders in Supporting LwICT

For an in-depth description of the role of the school leader, see www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/licit/s_leaders/index.html.

What Does LwICT Look Like in My School?



A *supplementary* relationship separates ICT and curriculum in space, time, and personnel—separate computer labs, computer classes, and computer teachers. A *complementary* relationship begins to connect ICT with curricula in various ways. An *integrated* relationship allows the classroom teacher to bring ICT **into** the classroom so it is available at teachable moments. An *infused* relationship allows the transparent application of ICT, wherever and whenever appropriate, to enhance critical and creative thinking.

While there is not a single model for LwICT in Manitoba schools, the goal of LwICT is to foster an infused relationship.

Factors that Influence How LwICT Can Support and Extend Student Learning

School leaders need to be knowledgeable about learning, teaching, and assessing in the context of developing students' literacy with ICT. In order to support LwICT in their school, they need to understand the instructional factors that influence students' literacy with ICT, including school factors, teacher factors, and student factors.

School factors include resources and timely access to ICT, collegiality and professionalism, ethics, responsibility and safety, and reporting to parents.

Teacher factors include effective use of ICT, instructional strategies, classroom management, and professional use of ICT.

Student factors include home environment, and exposure and prior knowledge.

Guiding Concepts for Implementing LwICT

By asking themselves the appropriate questions, school leaders consider concepts of continuity, complexity, diversity, differentiation, equity, fairness, and relevance in the development of student LwICT.

Suggestions for the Successful Implementation of LwICT

School leaders, together with their staff members, develop procedures within the context of provincial and divisional policies, and the school plan, to implement *Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum*. Areas to be considered are: common planning time, professional learning, budget, technical support, access to ICT in the classroom, and reporting procedures.

The following resources produced by the Department support the implementation of LwICT:

- The *Developmental Continuum for Literacy with ICT*
- A handbook entitled *A Continuum Model for Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum*
- Age-appropriate snapshots of student development of LwICT
- Age-appropriate, student-friendly versions of the continuum to enable student involvement in assessment
- *Literacy with ICT Is for Me! – a parent handbook on learning with information and communication technology*
- A website that provides school leaders with practical guidelines to support teachers as they implement *Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum* to enhance student learning, found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/s_leaders/index.html
- A website to help teachers, school leaders, and curriculum developers to understand the role of ICT in classroom learning, teaching, and assessment, found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/index.html, including
 - *Learning Experiences* for students, based on the Kindergarten to Grade 8 curriculum
 - *Professional Learning for Teachers*, with tutorials on subjects
 - Information on *ePearl* electronic portfolios

The Department has also enabled the establishment of divisional implementation teams and has provided those teams with ongoing support through professional learning opportunities, ongoing consultation, and institutes. Divisional teams may include any of the following: an ICT consultant, school leaders, curriculum consultants, Early Years and Middle Years teachers, teacher-librarians, and others.

