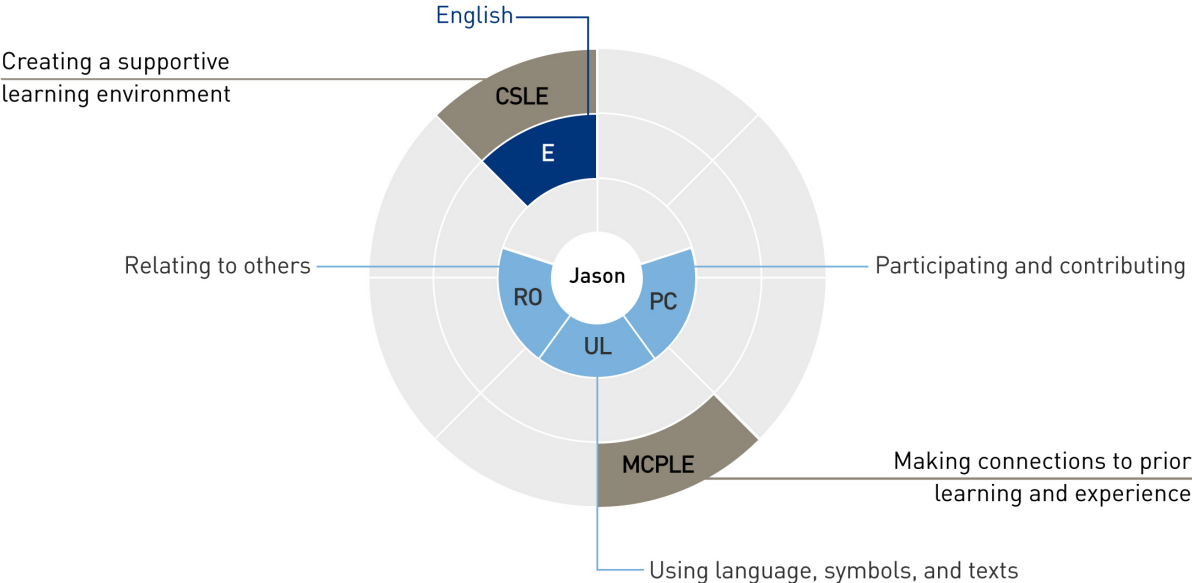


# Jason shares his knowledge

## Links to the curriculum



## Student background

<b>Name</b>	Jason
<b>Age</b>	8
<b>Year</b>	3/4
<b>School</b>	Primary

In 2007, Jason discovered a love of drawing, particularly cartoons. He likes the rich visual details and has joined a cartoon club run by other children at school. He is able to read material at 7 to 7.5-year-old reading age and has a good memory for sight words.

Jason’s ability to discuss meaning in text is improving as he gets older. On a good day, Jason can communicate his preferences, wants, and needs very effectively with words and use a range of expressions gained from favourite television programmes and DVDs. Jason is physically able and enjoys being in on class and school activities.

Keryn (special needs co-ordinator) has been Jason’s specialist teacher for the past three years and helped record the stories included here. In 2008, Amanda (class teacher) is released to be his 0.1 FTE specialist teacher. This is a new arrangement that works very well for Jason and makes the management of changes during the day much easier for him. Jason will often sit apart from group activities and may complete activities some time after the others (up to several weeks later) after he has seen the task or the outcome.

A teacher aide assists Jason to manage environmental challenges, join in with class tasks at the same time as others (where possible), and develop independence in class activities. Jason has a range of visual supports to manage his day and he uses these with increasing independence. He has about 11 hours teacher aide support a week.

## Three learning stories

1. **Jason helps the team** 4 August 2008
2. **Jason discovers the world!** 7 August 2008
3. **Jason: Map expert!** 16 August 2008

This string of learning stories shows Jason participating in the team-building activity, sharing his knowledge with others, and taking a lead in the group. He shows he can effectively use his past learning about countries to contribute to the class learning activity and then develop his skills in understanding about maps of other places.

## Jason helps the team

<b>Students</b>	Jason with classmates	<b>Date</b>	4 August 2008
<b>Topic</b>	Team-building group exercise	<b>Observer</b>	Amanda (teacher)

### Intended learning

- Name their team based on a country.



Jason was seated with a group of children in the classroom for a team-building exercise. This was a great start. Jason often prefers to sit to one side, away from a group, and participate from the periphery. Each team was asked to choose a team name based on a country.

Jason suddenly became very animated and excitedly took the lead by naming a lot of countries, sharing these with his group.

His knowledge far surpassed any other child's in the room! It was great to see how Jason could share his knowledge at the time the class was working on this task.

Because of his knowledge, and his ability to share this so confidently with the group, his team was first to decide on a country team name. This pleased Jason immensely and his team were impressed with Jason's knowledge.

## Analysis – what learning is happening here?

### Key competencies

#### Participating and contributing, Relating to others

Jason readily shared his knowledge with team members to complete a task. As Jason prefers to work on his own most of the time, this was an important step for him.

Jason demonstrated he could have an information-giving role in a group.

### Learning areas

#### Level 1 English: Speaking, Writing, and Presenting: ideas, purposes and audiences

Jason knows a lot of country names, gleaned from favourite contexts at home; for example "The Simpson's" television programme and a car racing video game.

He was able to generalise this information to a new context.

## Where to next?

### Key competencies

We will use Jason as the “expert” on country names for other geography tasks. This will help increase his confidence in being a class member with something of value to contribute.

### Learning areas

We will develop this knowledge by encouraging use of world maps and atlases during the Olympics topic.

During reading time, we will teach information skills related to reading maps; for example, using a key or legend.

## Jason discovers the world!

<b>Student</b>	Jason	<b>Date</b>	7 August 2008
<b>Topic</b>	Find countries on a map	<b>Observer</b>	Amanda (teacher)

### Intended learning

- Use the initial letter to help find the name of a country on a map.



After finding out that Jason knew the names of so many countries, his teacher showed Jason the world map that showed all the countries. Jason was very engaged and looked keenly at the page to find some of the countries he had named so readily in an activity with his class previously.

Amanda gave the prompt, “Sweden is somewhere in this area”, and Jason could find it by himself with his very finely honed visual scanning skills!

Jason stayed at this activity with his teacher for 25 minutes – a long time for any child!

Jason used the initial letter of the country and a verbal prompt from his teacher to successfully find many countries on the map.

## Analysis – what learning is happening here?

### Key competencies

#### Using language, symbols, and texts

Jason was fascinated by the map. He made the connection between his prior knowledge and the way that we represent this knowledge in books through text and graphics.

### Learning areas

#### Level 1 English: Listening, Reading and Viewing: processes and strategies

The map was a highly motivating text from which Jason was able to select and read information using visual and graphophonic cues.

## Where to next?

### Key competencies

We will follow Jason's lead when he shows an interest in countries.

We will provide opportunities for him to share his country knowledge with others at news time or at reading time.

### Learning areas

Jason loves using maps and looking at countries. To help him to do this more efficiently, he could be taught to use a key or a legend to find countries.

## Jason: Map expert!

<b>Students</b>	Jason with classmates	<b>Date</b>	16 August 2008
<b>Topic</b>	Class discussion about countries competing in the Olympics	<b>Observer</b>	Angela (teacher)

### Intended learning

- Discuss whether a statement is true or false based on evidence.

Some time after looking at world maps and identifying the countries Jason knew, the class was given the statement: "New Zealand won the most gold medals at the Olympics" and asked whether it was true or false. They had a medal tally chart to refer to.

After looking at the information the class said that this was false and that China was the winner of the most gold medals.



As soon as China was mentioned, Jason called out "I know where that is!" Someone else mentioned the United States as a top medal winning country and Jason said "I know where that is too!" These were two of the many countries that Jason had looked at with his teacher earlier.

He had remembered the information and connected it to the discussion in class. Jason was very excited to share his new skills.

## Analysis – what learning is happening here?

### Key competencies

#### Thinking

Jason is making connections with his learning in different contexts (using prior knowledge in another area). He is building on the knowledge he has acquired and is then sharing this knowledge with others.

### Learning areas

**Level 1 English: Speaking, Writing, and Presenting: ideas**

**Level 1 English: Listening, Reading and Viewing: processes and strategies**

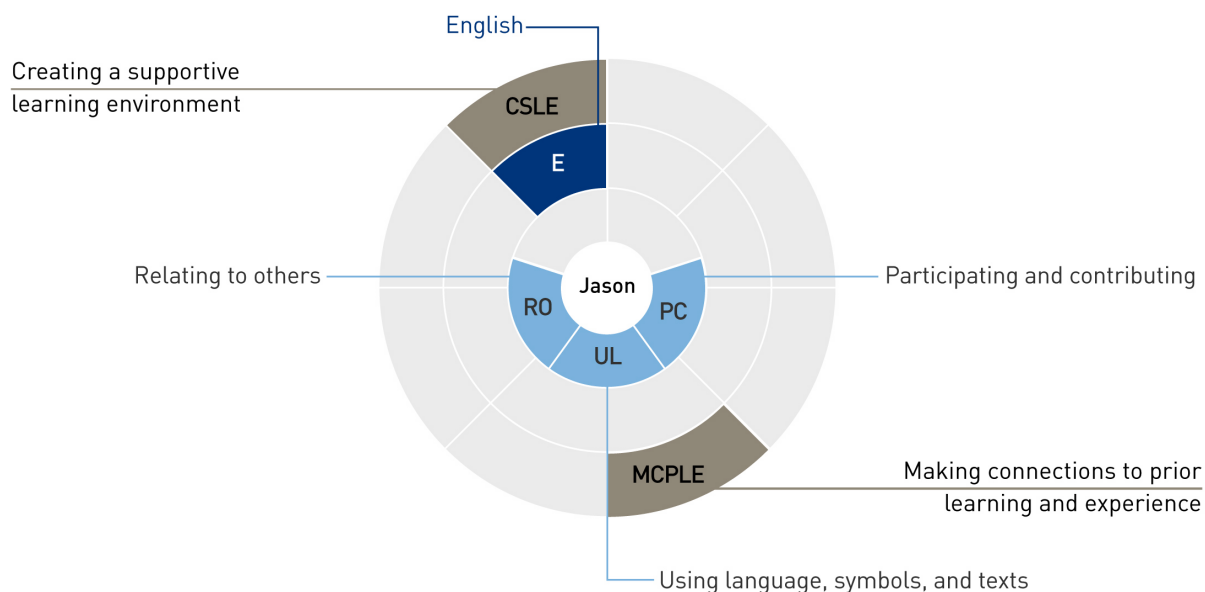
Jason was able to confidently participate in the class discussion, drawing on knowledge gained from reading the map.

## Where to next?

### Key competencies

We will provide examples of maps that are personally relevant to Jason to show that maps represent actual environments. Jason has used visual plans for his lego creations before. In the same way, he could be shown examples of maps of lego towns and buildings and be encouraged to draw these himself. This might, in time, be extended to maps of his home environment and eventually wider contexts, such as his school and neighbourhood.

### Reflection – what these stories exemplify



### Key competencies

Jason was making meaning when he made the link between the country names he knew so well from other contexts (DVD, games) to their representation in maps (using language, symbols, and texts).

Jason readily shared his knowledge of countries with others for a purpose that met the needs of the whole group (participating and contributing, relating to others). This is exciting as this type of activity is usually challenging for him.

### How might these stories strengthen Jason's identity as a learner?

Jason readily took the lead in the group activity by recording the country names for his group. He contributed to the class discussion at a later stage and was able to include others in the group exercise, using encouraging comments about their knowledge too (agency). Jason used his knowledge of country names, gleaned from DVD's, television programmes, and games in the new context of the class discussion (breadth). Jason shares his knowledge with a number of others – his teacher, teacher aide, and other class members (depth).

For more information on the four dimensions of agency, breadth, continuity, and depth (ABCDs), refer to *Narrative assessment A guide for teachers*.

## Learning areas

### Level 1 English

Jason uses a map to find countries he knows about from other contexts. Jason listens to others and participates in the group discussion. He contributes meaningfully to the task at hand. He acts as a recorder for his group and listens to the country names (using texts for a specific purpose, and audience). Jason is making the connection between oral, written, and visual language.

## Effective pedagogy

### What does this tell us about teaching and learning in this setting?

Jason's teacher provided the opportunity for Jason to take the lead in an area of expertise. This allowed him to shine in a context that is natural and meaningful for all in his group. This supportive learning environment fosters Jason's confidence and lets others in the class see him as someone with special and useful expertise.

Jason's teacher builds on what he has already learned by introducing him to maps. This natural integration of Jason's learning leads him to make the connection between country names and their representation on maps (making connections to prior learning experiences).

### Reflective questions for the reader

"How do you give space to children when they need it?"

"How do you enable children to strengthen their interests and become experts in their class community?"

### Useful resources

McKenzie, J. (1997). *A questioning toolkit*. Retrieved 26 November, 2008, from <http://questioning.org/Q7/toolkit.html>.

Mitchell, D. (2008). *What really works in special and inclusive education: using evidence-based teaching strategies*. Abingdon [England]: Routledge.