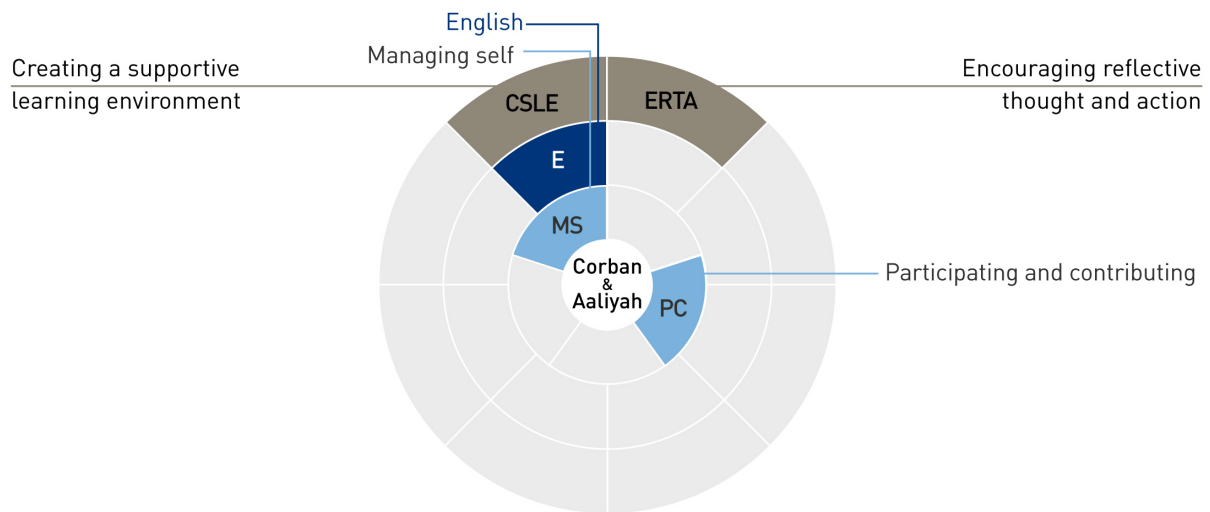


Corban and Aaliyah recite poetry

Links to the curriculum



Students background

Name	Corban & Aaliyah	Corban loves policemen and trucks. He has several friends and his interests include soccer and horse riding. Corban is well organised and is one of the first children in the class of 21 ready for the school day. Corban speaks in three- to four-word phrases or sentences, and he is short sighted.
Age	6	
Year	1	
School	Primary	

Corban has global developmental delay and has a supplementary learning support (SLS) teacher three times a week for three quarters of an hour per session to further support his learning. He uses others as a cue for speech and behaviour; for example, if another child laughs, Corban will laugh. He is unaware of body space and the significance people place on their belongings. Corban responds well to clear and close boundaries. There are inconsistencies with his learning and therefore it is difficult at times to know where to aim things.

It was discovered recently that Aaliyah has fantastic rhythm and loves to dance. As a result, she has been attending music therapy for the last six months.

Aaliyah has global developmental delay. We have been working out ways to help Aaliyah learn how to be with others in a classroom environment.

The skills we have been focusing on include waiting, taking turns, and recognising personal space. This has been further supported by the SLS teacher, who works with Aaliyah three times a week for three quarters of an hour per session.

Two learning stories

1. **Practice time** 19 May 2008
2. **It's show time!** 26 May 2008

These strings of learning stories show Corban and Aaliyah's learning from reciting poetry in front of the whole class. Both take on the challenge and participate fully with their peers.

These learning stories are housed separately in each of the respective student's portfolio. We have put them together in this exemplar to show how teachers can use a shared experience for writing up stories for more than one student. There are many ways of managing learning stories. We invite you to explore management ideas for learning stories in your setting.

Practice time

Students	Corban and Aaliyah	Date	19 May 2008
		Observer	Julie (teacher)

Corban

In week five, we are having a class poetry competition as part of our oral language programme. Corban has been learning his poem with Jenny (SLS teacher). Corban has been learning the poem "Yankee Doodle".

We have daily class practices, where everyone is given the opportunity to say his or her poem in front of his or her peers. Each child receives applause, a comment on the great things he or she did, and constructive ideas to improve delivery.

Today, Corban recited his poem in front of the class for the first time – way to go! We are all looking forward to the poetry competition next week.



Aaliyah

In week five, we are having a class poetry competition as part of our oral language programme. Aaliyah has been learning her poem with Jenny (SLS teacher). Aaliyah has been learning the poem "One, two, three, four, five; Once I Caught a Fish Alive".

We have daily class practices where everyone is given the opportunity to say her or his poem in front of her or his peers. Each child receives applause, a comment on the great things she or he did, and constructive ideas to improve delivery.

Today, Aaliyah recited her poem perfectly in front of the whole class. She had spot-on timing and knew all the words absolutely off by heart. Wow, great stuff! I cannot wait to see you perform at the competition.



Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Corban

Participating and contributing

Corban felt ready to join in today. He had been part of the audience watching and giving feedback.

Managing self

Corban was able to share his poem without laughing, to receive the applause, and to listen to the suggestions the other children had for him – all with a big smile on his face.

Aaliyah

Managing self

Aaliyah was able to stay really focused while sharing her poem. Her presentation was tops – she did not hesitate or jiggle about. She received the applause and listened to the other children’s feedback without becoming frustrated.

Learning areas

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

Corban

Corban is beginning to develop an understanding of how to shape texts for different audiences and purposes.

Aaliyah

Aaliyah is developing an understanding of how to shape texts for different audiences and purposes.

Where to next?

Corban

We will video Corban reciting his poem at the poetry competition and allow him to review his performance.

We will introduce Corban to other poems and get him to be the class expert on a particular poem when teaching others.

Aaliyah

We will use Aaliyah’s natural interpretation of beat and rhythm to teach her letter and name sounds. We will introduce Aaliyah to a variety of dance types to help develop her spatial awareness.

Aaliyah has really surprised everyone today. She concentrated well and presented confidently. Her natural rhythm can be used in the classroom as a learning tool, as well as a way of minimising frustrations.

It's show time!

Students	Corban and Aaliyah	Date	26 May 2008
Topic	Class poetry competition	Observer	Julie (teacher)

Corban

Corban's parents were able to come to the presentation. Corban wore a hat with a feather in it. He stood up and recited his poem wearing his special hat. The first attempt was very quiet and directed at me. After a little encouragement Corban turned, faced his audience and recited his poem. Wow, what a smile when he had finished – he was so pleased.

You really did a great job Corban!

Aaliyah

Aaliyah did very well. She projected her voice so that everybody heard, and her fish prop helped her to focus on her poem. The judges were impressed with the way she kept the rhythm and Aaliyah was chosen as one of three finalists from the class, going through to the junior syndicate poetry competition.

([Click here](#) to view the video clip online)

Footnote: Aaliyah placed second overall in the junior syndicate poetry competition. She stood up on stage with her fish and presented her lines clearly and carefully in front of 200 other children.

What a champion!

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Corban

Participating and contributing

Corban is working hard at being able to join in with his peers. He chose his poem, and learnt it off-by-heart and presented it. Corban wore a big smile when his classmates applauded him.

Aaliyah

Participating and contributing

Aaliyah not only presented her poem using wonderful rhythm and timing, she was also chosen to go forward and represent our class at the next stage.

Learning areas

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

Corban

Corban is beginning to develop an understanding of how to shape texts for different audiences and purposes. He was able to keep his role of poet.

Aaliyah

Aaliyah is developing an understanding of how to shape texts for different audiences and purposes.

Where to next?

Corban

We will expose Corban to more poems.
We will ensure Corban is involved in the forthcoming production.

Corban persevered at learning this poem. Having a prop seemed to help with his confidence. It was special having his parents there, too. It allowed them to see Corban taking part as one of the class and achieving alongside his peers.

Aaliyah

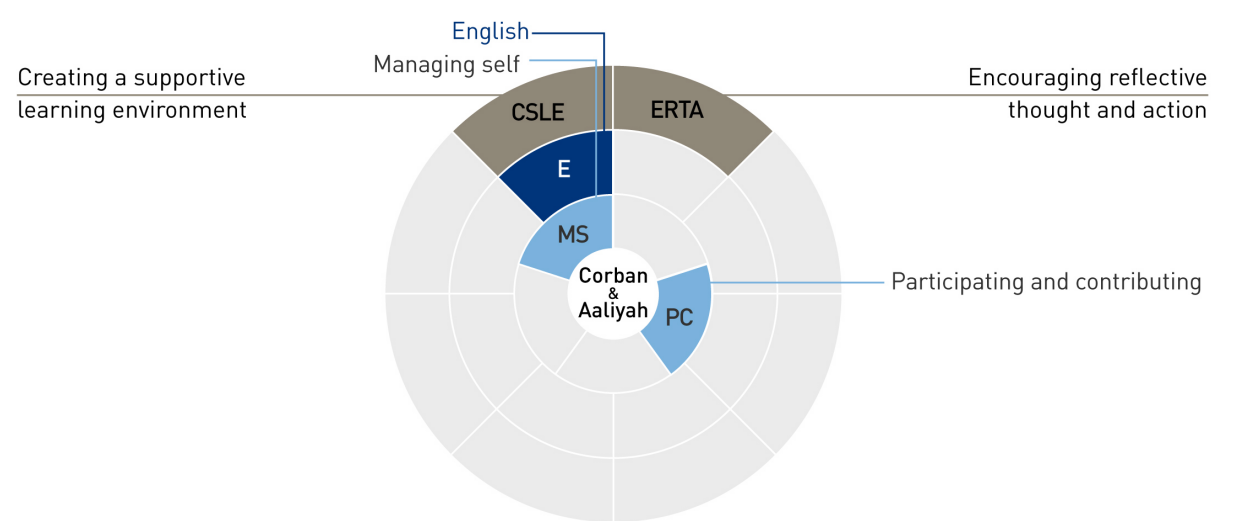
We will meet with Mary, our musical specialist, to see what we can offer Aaliyah.

We will ensure that Aaliyah is involved in the forthcoming production.

Aaliyah has surprised me again. It is a good lesson for me about under-estimating the skills that children have hidden away. The natural rhythm of the poetry has revealed an area of strength for Aaliyah. She has shown she can commit things to memory, especially if it has a clear beat or rhythm.

We think it is really important to develop Aaliyah's musical skills and to get her involved in playing instruments, dancing, and singing. Music and movement may also help develop her self-control and give her an avenue to express her feelings more clearly.

Reflection – what these stories exemplify



Key competencies

Both strings of learning stories refer to key competency learning in managing self, and participating and contributing for Corban and Aaliyah.

How is their learning similar and how is it different?

How might these stories strengthen Corban's and Aaliyah's identities as learners?

Corban and Aaliyah show agency – in what ways?

For both children, their learning is distributed across their class, parents, and, for Aaliyah, the junior syndicate.

What dimensions of strength does this illustrate?

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: Speaking, Writing, and Presenting: purposes and audiences

The learning area and strand is the same for both students.

Can you see how the accompanying statements in the learning stories for English reflect the teacher's knowledge of the child and how she made sense of the learning events observed?

Effective pedagogy

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

The teacher, Julie, has created a supportive learning environment by expecting all of her students to participate and providing what they need in order to do so. Support from home is sought and encouraged. It is great when student learning exceeds expectations, being surprised in this way keeps one's mind open to new possibilities for students and their learning – the sky's the limit!

Julie also encourages reflective thought and action with her students. Feedback is woven throughout the day so students are more mindful of their learning and have the opportunity to improve.

Reflective questions for the reader

"Am I open to the achievement surprises my students give me and do I open up learning opportunities so surprises can happen?"

"How do I encourage reflective thought and action in meaningful ways with my students?"

Useful resources

Ministry of Education. (2003). *Effective literacy practice in years 1 to 4*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Janney, R., & Snell, M. E. (c2006). *Social relationships and peer support* [Part of the set *Teachers' guides to inclusive practices*] (2nd ed.). Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes Pub. Co.