

InitiaLit-2

Parent/Carer information



whole-class instruction in literacy

What is InitiaLit-2?

InitiaLit-2 is a literacy program for all children in their third year of school (Year 2). It has been developed by MultiLit, a research-based initiative of Macquarie University.

What does InitiaLit-2 do?

InitiaLit-2 teaches children how to read and spell through daily lessons, using research-based teaching methods. It also uses a range of engaging storybooks to develop children's vocabulary, oral language and writing. InitiaLit-2 will be used daily during the time set aside for literacy. InitiaLit-2 meets the requirements of the Australian National Curriculum.

How does InitiaLit-2 work?

By the time children are in Year 2, they have learnt that words are made up of sounds represented by letters. They should be able to work out most words they encounter for reading and spelling without guessing. The focus now moves to reading comprehension and spelling.

There are four main teaching components in InitiaLit-2 spread across the week.

- Comprehension and fluency
- Spelling
- Grammar
- Vocabulary (using children's literature)

During the first 25-40 minutes of a lesson, the teacher will introduce a new concept to the children in a very clear, explicit way. A number of areas will be covered during the course of the program. Children will learn to use different comprehension strategies to help them understand what they are reading and they will practise reading with expression. They will learn the various ways to spell the sounds of English, as well as some spelling rules to help them make the correct choice. They will also be introduced to some simple and useful grammatical concepts to help with their writing.

After the new concept has been taught, the teacher will work with different groups of children in turn, helping them to develop their reading fluency and comprehension using a variety of reading material. The rest of the class will be engaged in different activities to consolidate what they have learnt.

How does InitiaLit-2 develop oral language and vocabulary?

Throughout the year, children will enjoy listening to a number of quality storybooks. There are four teaching sessions dedicated to each book. They will learn three new vocabulary words per book and do fun activities to help them understand

when and how to use those words. They will also discuss the themes surrounding the book and think about how the story relates to their own world. There is also a writing task used alongside the book.

How will my child be assessed in InitiaLit-2?

Your child's developing reading comprehension and spelling skills will be assessed regularly. Spelling is formally assessed twice a term and comprehension is assessed once a term.

Will my child only be doing InitiaLit-2 during literacy?

In addition to InitiaLit-2, your child will be spending time during the week on different writing tasks. Sometimes the writing tasks will be based on the storybook used in InitiaLit-2 or on the grammar lesson taught in InitiaLit-2.

How can I help with my child's reading and spelling at home?

Take the time to listen to your child read regularly. They may like to choose their own book, or they may have brought a book home from school. Even if your child can read well, it is still appropriate and pleasurable to read to your child. This is a way of exposing your child to books that they may find difficult to read themselves. Provide a mix of non-fiction and fiction books to enjoy together. Discuss the story, pointing out any new words that may enrich their vocabulary.

It is also useful to help your child learn to read and spell the tricky words taught in class. A list of these words is found at the back of the Home Reading Diary. Your child may also bring home spelling words to practise.

In addition to supporting your child's reading and spelling, there are many ways to build your child's vocabulary and oral language. Talk about words in the environment: the way they are spelled, what they mean, what they convey. Make up stories together, do a crossword, play I Spy, sing songs, answer riddles, visit the local library, limit screen time.

What if my child is struggling to learn to read?

Some children do struggle to learn how to read. Talk to your child's teacher if you are worried about their reading or spelling. It is important to address any difficulties as early as possible so that extra support can be put in place to help them catch up.