

Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) program

Information for primary school educators

ELLA is a fun, digital, play-based language learning program for children in preschool. The aim is for children to recognise the different sounds and concepts of a language other than English through the introduction of words, sentences and songs in age-appropriate experiences and practices. Early experience in language learning is an important platform for encouraging language learning in the later years of education.

Preschools involved in this project have chosen one of the available languages to incorporate into their educational program. The ELLA apps are designed to provide children with early language learning experiences and are aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Australian Curriculum (Foundation to Year 2).

The ELLA apps

- The ELLA apps are designed to be engaging and educational.
- The design and development of the ELLA apps was guided by experts in languages, early childhood and technology.
- Children play together as they explore the apps, sharing ideas and helping each other.
- Learning experiences within apps are play-based and draw on the interests and activities of young children; for example, a sandpit, cooking experiences, art activities, building and role-play.
- Educators and children learn together – an effective and collaborative learning method.

What are the benefits for children of participating in ELLA?

There are many benefits to learning another language in the ELLA program.

- Children expand their knowledge of how language works and apply these skills to other literacy tasks such as listening carefully to sounds in words. These skills will be used when children learn to read and write.
- Language learning increases memory, concentration and critical thinking skills.
- Children use social skills when they play with the apps. They share the tablets and their knowledge, and they interact and help each other.
- The apps provide opportunities for children to increase their digital skills.
- The apps create opportunities to celebrate culture and diversity, to share home languages, and to strengthen links between families and the preschool.
- The skills and understandings developed through ELLA can be extended in children's language learning experiences at school, whether this be continuing with the same language or transferring to a new language.

The ELLA program is funded by the Australian Government and managed by Education Services Australia.

Want to find out more? Visit the ELLA website: www.ella.edu.au

Key Japanese language included in the ELLA apps

Each of the ELLA apps engages children in play-based activities in different contexts to provide meaningful opportunities to hear and use language. There are also many cultural elements included in the apps.

Below is a brief description of each app and some of the key words and phrases that children are introduced to.

App 1: *The Polyglots in the Playroom*

When exploring *The Polyglots in the Playroom*, children become familiar with language relating to greetings, introductions, farewells and expressing likes and dislikes.

Through engaging with App 1, children will begin to develop skills to:

- sing the 'Hello' song in Japanese
- say some simple greetings in Japanese. For example:

こんにちは	Konnichiwa	Hello
またね	Mata-ne	See you later
もしもし	Moshi moshi	Hello (on the phone)

- introduce themselves in Japanese. For example:

わたしは (name)。	Watashi wa (name) desu.	I (used by girls) am (name).
ぼくは (name)。	Boku wa (name) desu.	I (used by boys) am (name).

App 2: *The Polyglots at the Beach*

The Polyglots at the Beach provides a playful environment and opportunities to explore the language of colours. While playing above and below the water, children are encouraged to interact with the language of colours, sea creatures and expressions of preference.

Through engaging with App 2, children will begin to develop skills to:

- name some colours in Japanese. For example:

あお	Ao	Blue
みどり	Midori	Green
オレンジ	Orenji	Orange
ピンク	Pinku	Pink
あか	Aka	Red
きいろ	Kiiro	Yellow

- express some likes and dislikes in Japanese. For example:

あか が すき！	Aka ga suki!	I like red!
みどり が すきじゃない！	Midori ga sukijanai!	I don't like green!

App 3: The Polyglots at the Birthday Party

The Polyglots at the Birthday Party is an opportunity to explore the language of numbers through counting candles, singing songs, making cakes and saying how old children are.

Through engaging with App 3, children will begin to develop skills to:

- count to ten in Japanese

いち	Ichi	One
に	Ni	Two
さん	San	Three
し	Shi	Four
ご	Go	Five
ろく	Roku	Six
しち	Shichi	Seven
はち	Hachi	Eight
きゅう	Kyuu	Nine
じゅう	Jyuu	Ten

- say how old they are in Japanese. For example:

わたしは (number) さい。	Watashi wa (number) sai.	I (used by girls) am (age).
ぼくは (number) さい。	Boku wa (number) sai.	I (used by boys) am (age).

- say happy birthday in Japanese

たんじょうびおめでとう！	Otanjoubi omedetou!	Happy birthday!
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App 4: The Polyglots at the Zoo

The Polyglots at the Zoo features animals in an open-range zoo and introduces children to words for foods and drinks, and phrases for being able to say they are hungry and thirsty, for asking politely and saying thank you.

Through engaging with App 4, children will begin to develop skills to:

- name some fruits in Japanese. For example:

りんご	Ringo	Apple
バナナ	Banana	Banana
オレンジ	Orenji	Orange
いちご	Ichigo	Strawberry

- say I'm hungry/thirsty in Japanese

おなかがすいた。	Onaka ga suite.	I'm hungry.
のどがかわいた。	Nodo ga kawaita.	I'm thirsty.

- say thank you in Japanese

ありがとう	Arigatou	Thank you
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- make simple requests in Japanese. For example:

ジュース をください。	Juusu o kudasai.	Can I please have some juice?
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App 5: The Polyglots at the Circus

The Polyglots at the Circus takes children to the magical space of a circus, providing them with the opportunity to experience language related to parts of the body.

Through engaging with App 5, children will begin to develop skills to:

- name some body parts in Japanese. For example:

あたま	Atama	Head
うで	Ude	Arms
ひざ	Hiza	Knees
あし	Ashi	Feet

- say some parts of the face in Japanese. For example:

め	Me	Eyes
みみ	Mimi	Ears
くち	Kuchi	Mouth
はな	Hana	Nose

- say something hurts in Japanese. For example:

あたま が いたい。	Atama ga itai.	My head hurts.
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- use some adjectives in Japanese. For example:

おおきい	Ookii	Big
ちいさい	Chiisai	Small

App 6: The Polyglots at the Park

The *Polyglots at the Park* features games and activities that encourage children to actively engage in learning verbs and adverbs relating to actions.

Through engaging with App 6, children will begin to develop skills to:

- respond to some simple instructions in Japanese. For example:

あるいて	Aruite!	Walk!
おどって	Odotte!	Dance!

- use some adverbs in Japanese. For example:

はやく	Hayaku	Fast/quickly
ゆっくり	Yukkuri	Slowly

App 7: The Polyglots in the Town

The *Polyglots in the Town* provides an opportunity for children to use familiar language developed through apps 1–6 in a range of experiences in the town.

Through engaging with App 7, children will begin to develop skills to:

- name some shapes in Japanese. For example:

さんかく	Sankaku	Triangle
しかく	Shikaku	Square
まる	Maru	Circle

- recognise the meaning of some words written in Japanese

- say goodbye in Japanese

さようなら	Sayounara	Goodbye
またね	Mata-ne	See you later

Connections with the Australian Curriculum for Japanese

The ELLA apps provide an engaging and enjoyable resource to support children in the initial stages of learning Japanese.

The statements below are taken from the Achievement Standards of the Australian Curriculum for Japanese. They capture some of the elements that children will have learnt by the end of Year 2 – after three years of learning Japanese at school.

The ELLA apps provide opportunities for children to engage with the following statements from the Australian Curriculum. Children's abilities and levels of achievement will be influenced by a range of factors.

- Children interact with the educator and their peers through play- and action-related language.
- Children use formulaic expressions and appropriate gestures in everyday interactions such as exchanging greetings and farewells, for example, こんにちは、さようなら、また あした.
- Children use visual, non-verbal and contextual support, such as pictures, gestures, facial expressions and props to make meaning of simple texts.
- When listening to simple repetitive spoken texts, children identify key words such as names or numbers of objects or people, and demonstrate comprehension by actions, drawing or labelling.
- Children present information about themselves and favourite things at word and simple sentence level, using formulaic and modelled language.
- Children describe people and objects using adjectives to indicate colour, shape and size, for example, あかい りんご、おおきい、まるい.
- Children mimic Japanese pronunciation, intonation and rhythm through shared reading and singing.

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