

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 Chinese 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 Chinese
- say some simple greetings in Chinese. For example:

你好！	Nǐ hǎo!	Hello!
回头见！	Huí tóu jiàn!	See you later!
喂！	Wéi!	Hello! (on the phone)

- introduce themselves in Chinese. For example:

我是 (name).	Wǒ shì (name).	I'm (name).
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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 Chinese. For example:

蓝色	Lánsè	Blue
绿色	Lǜsè	Green
橙色	Chéngsè	Orange
粉红色	Fěnhóngsè	Pink
红色	Hóngsè	Red
黄色	Huángsè	Yellow

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

我喜欢红色！	Wǒ xǐhuan hóngsè!	I like red!
我不喜欢黄色！	Wǒ bù xǐhuan huángsè!	I don't like yellow!

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 Chinese

一	Yī	One
二	Èr	Two
三	Sān	Three
四	Sì	Four
五	Wǔ	Five
六	Liù	Six
七	Qī	Seven
八	Bā	Eight
九	Jiǔ	Nine
十	Shí	Ten

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

我五岁了！	Wǒ wǔ suì le!	I am five!
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- say happy birthday in Chinese

祝你生日快乐！	Zhù nǐ shēngrì kuàilè!	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 Chinese. For example:

苹果	Píngguǒ	Apple
香蕉	Xiāngjiāo	Banana
橘子	Júzi	Orange
草莓	Cǎoméi	Strawberry

- say I'm hungry/thirsty in Chinese

我饿了！	Wǒ è le!	I'm hungry!
我渴了！	Wǒ kě le!	I'm thirsty!

- say thank you in Chinese

谢谢！	Xièxie!	Thank you!
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- make simple requests in Chinese. For example:

我要喝果汁！	Wǒ yào hē guǒzhī!	I'd like 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 Chinese. For example:

头	Tóu	Head
胳膊	Gēbo	Arm
腿	Tuǐ	Leg
脚	Jiǎo	Foot

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

眼睛	Yǎnjing	Eye
耳朵	Ěrduo	Ear
嘴巴	Zuǐba	Mouth
鼻子	Bízi	Nose

- say something hurts in Chinese. For example:

我的头疼！	Wǒ de tóu téng!	My head hurts!
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- use some adjectives in Chinese. For example:

大	Dà	Big
小	Xiǎo	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 Chinese. For example:

走！	Zǒu!	Walk!
跳舞！	Tiàowǔ!	Dance!

- use some adverbs in Chinese. For example:

快快	Kuài kuai	Fast/quickly
慢慢	Màn man	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 Chinese. For example:

三角形	Sānjiǎoxíng	Triangle
正方形	Zhèngfāngxíng	Square
圆形	Yuánxíng	Circle

- recognise the meaning of some words written in Chinese

- say goodbye in Chinese

再见！	Zàijiàn!	Goodbye!
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Connections with the Australian Curriculum for Chinese

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

The statements below are taken from the Achievement Standards of the Australian Curriculum for Chinese. They capture some of the elements that children will have learnt by the end of Year 2 – after three years of learning Chinese 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 use spoken Chinese to communicate with educators and peers.
- Children participate in structured and routine interactions using learnt sounds, formulaic phrases, and verbal and non-verbal responses.
- Children respond to and receive information.
- Children use the four tones of Chinese but not always with accuracy.
- Children respond to short predictable imaginative and informative texts, expressing simple likes and dislikes (喜欢, 不喜欢).
- Children use strategies such as imitation and basic contextual cues for comprehension.
- Children recognise the similarities and differences between Chinese and Australian contexts, language and culture.
- Children can identify themselves as learners of languages.

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