

This part first presents the advantages of teaching phonics through the use of language arts materials. This will be followed by an elaboration on how the phonics focuses for junior secondary students (as presented in Part I) can be addressed through some suggested activities. Each set of suggested activities is built around a single language arts text type and designed with the understanding that phonics is an integrated, rather than a standalone, part of English language learning.

## 1. Why should phonics be taught through the use of language arts materials?

### – ***The role of language arts in the English Language curriculum***

Language arts involves the use of written and spoken imaginative texts in the language classroom. These texts may be selected from high or popular literature, or from the media, and include poems, chants, short stories, dramas, film titles, film/drama scripts, advertisement slogans or jingles, popular song titles/lyrics, newspaper headlines, etc. Language arts texts help students

- work towards the learning targets and objectives of the Experience Strand, which puts a premium on responding and giving expression to real and imaginative experience; and
- handle those modules in the Elective Part of the Senior Secondary English Language curriculum involving the use of such texts (e.g. Learning English through Poems and Songs, Learning English through Drama, Learning English through Popular Culture).

### – ***Language arts as a context for the learning and teaching of phonics***


Language arts materials can be used as springboards for the learning and teaching of phonics in a meaningful and enjoyable way. This is particularly true for those language arts texts (such as poems, rhymes, chants, advertisement slogans) that are rich in phonological features, e.g. alliteration, rhyme. These texts, which are often written for reading aloud, are short, funny, catchy and easy to remember. They can

- help raise students' awareness of the range of phonological features used in authentic contexts;
- encourage them to experience the potential of the language itself; and
- develop their appreciation of the richness and variety of the language.

### – ***Language arts and meaning-focused phonics instruction***

Language arts materials provide convenient opportunities for presenting and reviewing phonics concepts without the danger of divorcing the instructional focus from the larger task of ensuring student engagement with text meaning. They allow students to experience phonics as an integrated part of a language learning activity. For instance,

- a story title can be used as a jumping-off point for making students become aware of the manipulation of the phonological elements for sound effects before the focus is shifted back to student enjoyment of the story; and


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- the composing of a simple rhyme can be seen as an opportunity to prompt students to use their phonics knowledge and see a purpose for this knowledge while they, at the same time, attend to the meaning of the rhyme.

## 2. How can phonics focuses be addressed through language arts materials?

Six sets of suggested phonics-focused activities are provided in the sections to follow. For each of the six sets of activities, the following are included:

- notes on the phonics focus concerned in the form of Q&A;
- one or two sets of suggested activities outlining the materials required, learning objectives and teaching steps<sup>2</sup>;
- activity sheets; and
- references<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Teaching steps that involve the use of the audio clips in the CD-ROM are marked by the icon .

<sup>3</sup> The web links or addresses included in this part were accurate at the time this resource package was published. They may, however, be subject to change. Teachers might like to make use of a search engine to regain access to any resources that have been relocated, or may look for similar resources on the web.