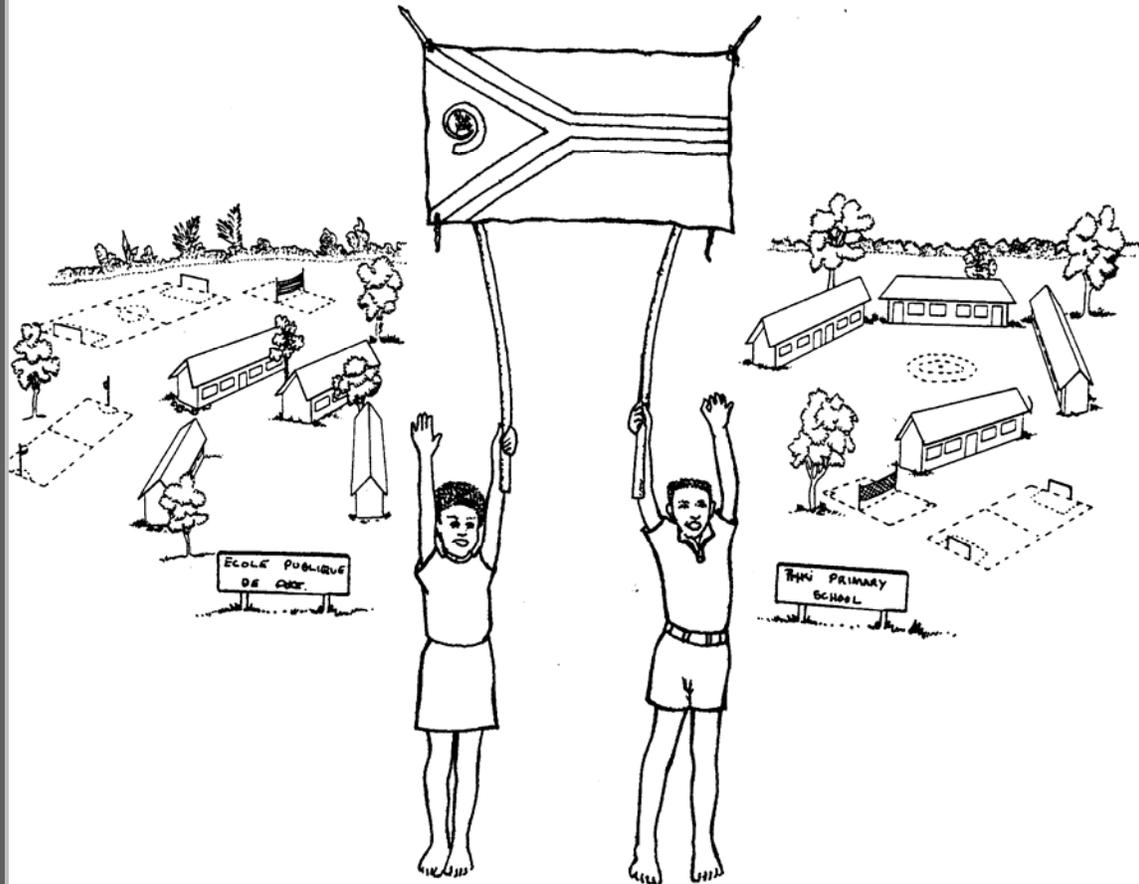


# Unified Primary Curriculum

## An Introduction and Overview



Department of Education  
Port Vila, Vanuatu

Department of Education, Port Vila, Vanuatu

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## FOREWORD

After Vanuatu became independent in 1980, a policy decision was taken by the Ministry of Education to set up a single system of education to replace the two former education systems established by the British and French.

This had implications for both the curriculum and examinations. The need to produce a common curriculum and common assessment methods for English-speaking and French-speaking schools became paramount so that the policy could be implemented effectively.

The production of this Primary Curriculum covering each subject taught in the primary school is part of a process of unifying the curriculum for Years 1–10. It marks a very important step forward for education in Vanuatu. The curriculum presented in this document embodies the thoughts and aspirations of Ni-Vanuatu whose work in education takes place in the field of daily experience.

No curriculum is intended to last for ever. Future needs and events mean that the curriculum may need to be revised and undergo change. The writers recognise this fact, and hence this curriculum will be open to review and revision at some stage in the future.

As Vanuatu progressed towards nationhood it engaged in devising its own appropriate tools to achieve its national goals. It is hoped that this document for primary education will provide these tools, and that they can be used to develop and improve the quality of education for all the young people of Vanuatu. Change in education is needed, and this is a step forward to bring about that change.

A. GWERO

Principal Education Officer, Curriculum and Examinations

## TO THE TEACHER

This curriculum document is designed to give you an overall picture of the unified primary curriculum.

The spirit of the curriculum is, and must remain, Ni-Vanuatu.

It is important to remember that at school Ni-Vanuatu children do not have the familiar linguistic support to cater for their fundamental need for expression and creativity. English and French, the languages of instruction, should not stifle the child's power of thinking and natural curiosity.

There are no ready-made solutions to overcome the particular learning situation in Vanuatu schools. However, this curriculum document fosters progress towards achieving our educational goals for Vanuatu. The ideals and ideas expressed are those which teachers incorporate in their daily teaching.

We hope you find the document useful, and we welcome your comments and suggestions. Further information or advice on the curriculum may be obtained from the following members of staff at the Curriculum Development Centre in Port Vila:

Jacques Sese (Senior Curriculum Officer)  
Nellie Sese (Primary Curriculum Coordinator)  
Helen Laan (Curriculum Officer, English Language)  
Patrick Rory (Curriculum Officer, French Language)  
Maylene Ngwele (Curriculum Officer, Mathematics)  
Edson David (Curriculum Officer; Social Studies)  
Leon Enoch (Curriculum Officer, Arts and Physical Education)

## STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The document outlines the following:

- Goals for Vanuatu schools: these reflect the spirit and purpose of the curriculum.
- Teaching principles: these concern your children, your own teaching, your classroom and your methods of finding out what your children have learnt.
- General skills across the curriculum: these are skills that the children are expected to acquire as a result of their work in all subjects in the curriculum; they are not specific to one subject.

For each subject, the document outlines:

- General objectives: these explain why the children should study the subject.
- Specific objectives: these describe what your children should experience and know about by the end of Year 6.

- A scope and sequence chart for Years 1—6: this indicates when particular topics or skills are most appropriately experienced by children.

## **SUPPORT MATERIALS**

Accompanying this curriculum document will be handbooks, guides and resource books for teachers, and children's books, as appropriate for each subject.

The teacher's handbook provides a general framework for a particular subject in the primary school; it describes why the subject is taught, the content of the subject, its teaching strategies, its assessment and its evaluation.

The teacher's guide gives details of a particular subject for a specific year level, including content, teaching strategies, information which supports the contents of the children's book, and assessment.

The teacher's resource books are provided for some subjects only; they will contain reference material and background information that is not available elsewhere.

The children's books and materials will be designed to meet the specific needs of each subject area.

## **GOALS FOR THE VANUATU SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

The curriculum in Vanuatu schools should enable children to do the following:

### *As individuals*

- to take pride in themselves as unique persons;
- to master appropriate skills and knowledge in order to think positively, critically and logically in analyzing and solving problems in real life;

### *Within the family*

- to respect their families and their traditional values;

### *Within the cultural context*

- to integrate into their culture, society heritage and civilization;

### *Within society*

- to live, work and communicate effectively with other people;

### *Spiritually*

- to respect the creation and the Creator;

### *Within the environment*

- to develop a respect for their environment and its place in the larger, diverse but interdependent global environment;

### *As part of humanity*

- to learn about and respect the cultures of other countries and co-operate with them to build a better world;

### *With respect to the future*

- to become familiar with technological, cultural and economic development and learn to adapt to change and participate in it.

## **EDUCATION PRINCIPLES**

### **PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING**

Teachers teach best when:

- they are professionally competent
- they love children and are keen to teach

- they are accepted by the children
- educational values are reinforced by family and community values
- their lessons are well prepared
- sufficient time is allowed for learning
- the timetable is their servant and not their master
- they recognise that children are individuals and learn at different rates
- they recognise that some children have difficulties and teach accordingly
- they have access to materials
- they are resourceful in preparing and using materials
- they use a variety of teaching techniques and are able to apply appropriate techniques for multi-class and mixed ability groups
- they are healthy and relaxed
- they adapt to the atmosphere and environment of the school
- they have established good discipline in their classes
- they regularly evaluate their teaching
- they seek to co-operate with their children
- they have good working relationships with their professional superiors and colleagues
- regular staff meetings are held to discuss important issues and to determine strategies to resolve them
- they know their professional responsibilities
- the authorities recognise their value and they are appropriately rewarded
- their conditions of service are satisfactory
- they exchange ideas with other teachers and keep up with professional developments through reading and in-service training;
- they co-operate with a supportive community school council and Parents / Teachers Association

## PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

**Children learn best when:**

- they are recognized as individuals
- they have the same opportunities whether they are boys or girls
- they are healthy and free from worry
- they are emotionally attuned to the lesson
- they are motivated to learn
- they understand the concepts behind what they are doing and why they are doing it
- they enjoy the activities in the lesson
- they feel secure and encouraged and are rewarded for their achievement
- they learn at a rate appropriate to their abilities
- they participate in the planning of activities
- mistakes are accepted as part of the learning process
- new learning builds upon what they already know
- aims and instructions in the lesson are clear
- materials for each individual are available and are shared fairly
- teachers are fair and just
- a variety of methods is used
- there is interaction among themselves and with the teacher
- the lesson is stimulating, interesting and enjoyable
- the lessons are related to real situations and the activities are meaningful
- lessons involve seeing, touching, smelling and tasting as well as listening
- attention is paid to neatness and orderliness

## PRINCIPLES OF AN EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM

**The best classroom:**

- is as comfortable, well-lit and ventilated as possible
- makes an appropriate use of space to allow for the flexible grouping of children and easy movement
- is not overcrowded
- has specific working areas which are clearly defined and well maintained
- is one which gives the children a sense of belonging
- displays samples of the children's work

- displays attractive charts and other teaching aids
- displays useful information for the teacher, children and visitors
- is where a well balanced curriculum is taught
- has children interacting in meaningful learning activities
- has books and other materials which are plentiful and effectively used
- is where teachers are keen to create real situations in and beyond the classroom to enhance learning
- is where children are honest, co-operative and well mannered
- is where daily routines are established early

## **ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES**

When assessing children's work teachers should:

- know about the objectives and content of each subject syllabus in the Vanuatu schools curriculum
- take into consideration that neither French nor English is the mother tongue of the children
- be aware of individual differences in children with respect to their age, physical, creative and mental development, and environment
- be able to detect children's individual needs, problems, strengths and weaknesses quickly, and follow up their findings
- be aware of the demands of external influences and expectations on both teachers and children
- be aware that failure may be a result of a combination of factors and not just a child's inability to learn
- be aware that children can learn from their mistakes
- design thoughtful tests and use appropriate items to test skills, knowledge, feelings and attitudes
- analyze and understand the results of a range of different types of tests
- keep individual, continuing, written assessment records based on pupils' development where appropriate
- set new objectives in the light of these results

As well as assessing their children's work, teachers should informally evaluate the curriculum in three related ways by considering:

- the performance of their children on assessment tasks
- the effectiveness of their own teaching
- the suitability of the course they are teaching and the materials they are using

The table opposite contains a list of attitudes and skills that children should acquire as they progress through primary school. They are not specific to any one subject and you are not expected to teach them as you would a topic in Social Studies, for example. Rather, they are acquired by the children as a result of their own intellectual development, assisted by you in your general teaching activities. They are, in fact, skills for life as well as skills for success at school.

The table indicates both the skills themselves and the period (i.e. year levels) over which they should be developed.

Keep in mind that the acquisition of these skills often depends on the maturity and ability level of the individual child. Your task is to ensure that you do not lose sight of the importance of developing these attitudes and skills as you engage in teaching the various subjects in the curriculum.

	YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4	YR 5	YR 6
<b>ATTITUDINAL DEVELOPMENT</b>						
<b>1. Building of personality</b>						
Developing autonomy	→	→	→	→	→	→
Learning of socialising skills:						
• communicating with others	→	→	→	→	→	→
• respecting class rules and those associated with other activities	→	→	→	→	→	→
• becoming aware of other cultures and societies both past and present	→	→	→	→	→	→
• being able to identify world problems (hunger, war, etc.) and show concern for them				→	→	→
• carrying out personal duties				→	→	→
• developing an appreciation of and a curiosity for all art forms	→	→	→	→	→	→
• acquiring cultural reference points	→	→	→	→	→	→
<b>2. The desire to acquire knowledge and showing an eagerness to learn</b>						
• being able to use process learning and an experimental approach	→	→	→	→	→	→
• proceeding from the concrete to the abstract				→	→	→
<b>CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS</b>						
<b>Space and time concepts:</b>						
• placing oneself in relation to past, present and future	→	→	→	→	→	→
• knowledge of different calendars (e.g. school year, civil year, seasons, etc.)	→	→	→	→	→	→
• acquiring space awareness - known environment to abstract environment				→	→	→
• movement from known space/time to abstract space/time				→	→	→
• developing time management				→	→	→
<b>METHODOLOGY SKILLS</b>						
<b>1. Memory:</b>						
• being able to memorise	→	→	→	→	→	→
• developing memorising skills				→	→	→
<b>2. Work methods:</b>						
• organising one's work	→	→	→	→	→	→
• applying instructions for written work	→	→	→	→	→	→
• carrying a task through	→	→	→	→	→	→
• initiating a personal project				→	→	→
<b>TREATMENT OF INFORMATION</b>						
Children should be able to:						
• gather information through listening	→	→	→	→	→	→
• use a catalogue, glossary, dictionary (adapted), directory, table of contents		→	→	→	→	→
• read a simple graph, plan, map or chart		→	→	→	→	→
• recall and reorganise the information that has been collected			→	→	→	→
• analyse and synthesise				→	→	→
• communicate the process used				→	→	→

## **GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

Language in primary schools should enable children to:

- communicate with others in the school, Vanuatu society and the world
- have access to education, specific learning and culture
- develop their full potential as individuals
- acquire a general knowledge of matters related to their interests and needs in daily life
- learn how to learn, so that their education becomes a life-long process

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

By the end of Year 6 children should be able to:

- understand and apply appropriately the basic rules of language
- pronounce, understand, spell and use appropriately a vocabulary of at least one thousand head words
- know how to listen to others and take part in their conversation
- obtain and give information in spoken and written forms
- express clearly their feelings, needs and opinions in speech and writing
- obtain and use information critically in order to solve problems
- write logically ordered and grammatically accurate sentences and paragraphs in order to create imaginative, descriptive and narrative prose of at least 150 words in length; and also short poems
- comprehend and summarize short spoken and written texts and make notes
- read books with understanding and pleasure, and thus grow in knowledge, culture and maturity
- respond as individuals to stories, plays, poems, films and pictures

## LANGUAGE SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

	YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4	YR 5	YR 6
<b>LISTENING</b>						
1. Distinguishing sounds	→	→	→			
2. Being able to listen to and understand audio input in a variety of forms, contexts and registers	→	→	→	→	→	→
3. Being able to listen to and understand a variety of messages from different media such as radio and taped stories	→	→	→	→	→	→
<b>SPEAKING</b>						
1. Pronouncing clearly and accurately	→	→	→	→	→	→
2. Performing a range of functions such as asking for and giving information and opinions, expressing needs, emotions, likes and dislikes, and thanks	→	→	→	→	→	→
3. Being aware of different registers	→	→	→	→	→	→
<b>READING</b>						
1. Knowing the different written media and their uses and realising the relationship between oral and written language	→	→	→	→	→	→
2. Being able to read and understand a variety of texts such as books, stories, newspapers, maps, timetables, poems, posters	→	→	→	→	→	→
3. Reading aloud correctly with regard to punctuation, expression, intonation and phrasing	→	→	→	→	→	→
4. Silent reading		→	→	→	→	→
<b>HANDWRITING</b>						
1. Fine motor skills required for handwriting such as scribbling, patterns, colouring (finger exercises, shapes, modelling)	→	→				
2. Letter formation (writing the alphabet; upper and lower case)	→	→	→			
3. Cursive script		→	→	→	→	→
4. Copying accurately	→	→	→	→	→	→
<b>WRITING</b>						
1. Writing sentences and paragraphs for meaningful communication (for example personal accounts, short stories, descriptive or narrative writing, letter writing and expository writing)	→	→	→	→	→	→
2. Self correction using a simple dictionary					→	→
3. Writing for pleasure			→	→	→	→
4. Composing in a logical and organised way				→	→	→

**LANGUAGE STUDY**

**A. Grammar**

In Years 1 and 2 there is no explicit teaching of grammar. Rather, the grammar involved will be implicit. The explicit teaching of grammar begins in Year 3.

*Skills*

Children should be able to:

• recognise upper case letters and punctuation	→	→	→	→	→	→
• recognise and use simple sentences	→	→	→	→	→	→
• transform simple sentences			→	→	→	→
• use declarative, negative and interrogative sentences	→	→	→	→	→	→
• recognise and transform declarative, negative and interrogative sentences			→	→	→	→
• use complex sentences		→	→	→	→	→
• recognise complex sentences				→	→	→
• transform complex sentences					→	→
• use parts of speech	→	→	→	→	→	→
• recognise and name the principal parts of speech			→	→	→	→
• use regular comparative and superlative adjectives		→	→	→	→	→
• recognise regular comparative and superlative adjectives				→	→	→
• use and recognise irregular comparative and superlative adjectives				→	→	→
• apply the rule of agreement between subject and verb			→	→	→	→
• use time markers	→	→	→	→	→	→
• use present, past, future, continuous and conditional forms of verbs	→	→	→	→	→	→
• use the active and passive voices	→	→	→	→	→	→
• express conditions ('if' clauses)	→	→	→	→	→	→

**B. Spelling**

In Year 1 there is no explicit teaching of spelling. This begins, with simple words only, in Year 2.

*Skills:*

Children should be able to:

• use upper case letters and punctuation	→	→	→	→	→	→
• recognise and use the different sounds of the English language	→	→	→	→	→	→
• memorise and be able to reproduce common words in writing	→	→	→	→	→	→
• distinguish common homonyms and homophones			→	→	→	→
• recognise number and gender		→	→	→	→	→
• recognise and correct spelling mistakes				→	→	→

### Leitau's Turtle

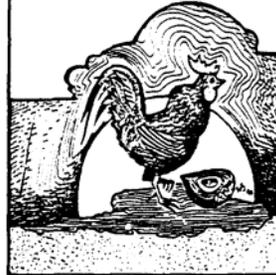


Eunice Simbolo  
Illustrated by David Tovovur

Department of Education  
Republic of Vanuatu

### My Rooster

Nanette Vakessa  
Illustrated by Jean William



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### Kesu from Tongoa

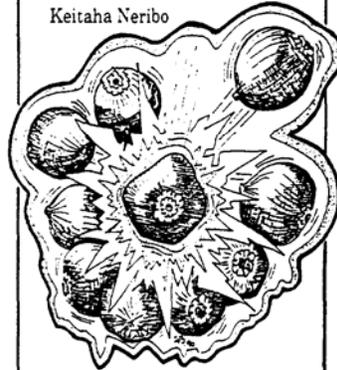


Ismail Pakoa  
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### Ten Brown Coconuts

Keitaha Neribo



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*Some of the titles in the new Vanua Readers series of reading books produced for primary schools by the Department of Education*



