Helping students become familiar with the format of NAPLAN Tests

- Ensure ‘test literacy’ for all students so that they are familiar with the test format, how questions are constructed and wording used, how to tackle multiple choice questions, how to seek answers within questions, etc.
- Explain clearly and simply the procedures (timing, seating, equipment, etc) of each test session.
- Do some activities that explicitly teach skills needed to complete test e.g. sustained uninterrupted writing lessons, writing within a given timeframe, rereading questions carefully, reviewing answers when finished, etc.
- Ensure children are able to fill in personal and school details correctly.
- Familiarise students with
  - Each different test format;
  - Different question techniques / formats;
  - Contextualising unfamiliar words in texts or suspending judgment of their meaning in order to work more quickly through texts;
  - Making best choice answers; and,
  - Use of pictures / tables / diagrams / other stimuli to gain information.
- Remind students to re-read and refer back to texts and other stimulus material as needed.
- Let students know how they will be assessed and expose them to the marking criteria rubric.

Supporting students

- Encourage all students, especially Year 3 and first time students, to ‘have a go’.
- Use NAPLAN question format and style as part of the teaching sequence throughout the year.
- Be confident about the school, class and each child’s success and effort.

NAPLAN Preparation

- In the two weeks prior to NAPLAN conduct no more than a total of eight ‘NAPLAN preparation lessons’ of 30 – 45 minutes covering NAPLAN test formats.
- Within the above lessons complete a full practice test in each area.
- Experience physical test conditions (desks separated, silence, individual work only, etc)
- Give students opportunities and experience in the selected writing genre.
- Give students explicit ‘timed’ activity practice in test completion, especially writing tasks.

What not to do...

- Teach to the test by giving extensive practice in past papers.
- Use commercially produced NAPLAN preparation material.
- Spend a disproportionate amount of curriculum time on English and Mathematics at the expense of other subjects.
- Use templates or memorisation of samples for text type writing tasks.
- Spend too much time on a specific text type.
- Use NAPLAN as a school marketing tool.

In the home

- Discourage purchase of workbooks by parents.
- Don’t set NAPLAN homework.
- The best preparation for NAPLAN testing parents can provide is ensuring their child has a good night’s sleep of between 10-11 hours and a healthy breakfast on the morning of testing.

On the day

- Keep the classroom environment as familiar as possible and remove distractions.
- Ensure students are organised with equipment, toileted and have had a drink prior to starting.