
BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES FOR ENVIRONORTH

EnviroNorth: Living Sustainably in Australia's Savannas environmental curriculum and learning website and *Savanna Walkabout* have been developed from a range of principles derived from National priorities, DEET systemic initiatives and current educational theory and research. It is intended that these principles will inform the processes by which support materials are designed, developed and evaluated.

Principle: Integrity

- Accurately represents ways of knowing and conceptualising the domain addressed by the support material.
- Uses the language and symbols of the domain.
- Supports learners' deepening of knowledge and ability to engage with the domain.
- Incorporates the opportunity for reflecting on the diversity of perspectives in a fair and accurate manner, within the domain.

Principle: Designed for Teaching

- Uses language that facilitates understanding by the range of teachers' experience and knowledge in the NT.
- Incorporates all components to enable materials to be accessible and useable.
- Explicitly states the purpose, process and intended outcomes that may be achieved.
- Describes the pedagogy and instructional techniques that create an effective and inclusive learning environment.

Principle: Learner Centred

- Clearly articulates the learners for whom the material is designed.
- Incorporates pedagogy that promotes and sustains learner engagement.
- Acknowledges and reaffirms cultural identity.
- Builds learning processes from existing skills and knowledge towards the desired outcomes.
- Provides specific language support for learners whose first language is not Standard Australian English
- Clearly articulates how the learning experiences described allow for demonstration and documentation of evidence of learning.

Principle: Life-Long Learning

- Clearly describes the elements that require explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy in order to provide learners with opportunities for successful demonstration of their learning.
- Incorporates and reflects the processes and modes of learning that are embedded within the Exit Outcomes.
- Connects learning experiences to real-life contexts and opportunities in order to ensure learner participation is both meaningful and purposeful.

Principle: Scientific Literacy

- Promotes critical and creative thinking

- Promotes community responsibility and encourages decision making, taking action and applying skills to issues.
- Enhances scientific literacy.
- Represents multiple knowledge systems (i.e. western scientific and indigenous).
- Promotes an openness to inquiry – i.e. uses inquiry-based model.

Principle: Reliability and Accuracy

- Provides fair and factually accurate scientific and environmental concepts, problems and issues.
- Information is derived from primary sources that provide context, documentation and explanation
- Content has been reviewed by a range of experts in the appropriate fields or have participated in the development.
- Achieves high editorial standards.

Principle: Deep Understandings

- Fosters awareness of the natural and cultural environment
- Promotes an understanding of environmental concepts, conditions and issues
- Provides awareness of feelings, values, attitudes and perceptions with issues
- Represents a range of scales – local, regional, national and global scale

Principle: Design

- Promotes visual literacy (i.e. appeals to user through graphics, text, aesthetics, images etc)
- Audio/sound is innovative and used effectively
- Uses a range of narrative elements such as humour, mystery.

Principle: Usability

- Learning is intuitive (user knows what to do and how to do it intuitively).
- Selected technology is appropriate to the audience, purpose and context for which it is intended.

Sources and References:

- Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training – Best Practice Principles, 2003
- The Learning Federation - Educational Soundness Specifications Version 2.1 15 April, 2002
- Educating For A Sustainable Future – A National Environmental Education Statement for Australian Schools, 2005, www.deh.gov.au/education
- Australian Securities & Investments Commission Discussion Paper: Financial Literacy in Schools, June 2003
- The North American Association for Environmental Education – Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence, 2000, www.naaee.org