PREPARING FOR NAPLAN

NAPLAN tests provide information at all levels: national, state/territory, and most importantly, classroom.

NAPLAN results, when used effectively, inform school and teaching (classroom) planning, pedagogy, and the judgements we make about student progress. In this way, the NAPLAN results become Assessment for Learning rather than Assessment of Learning.

Teachers should prepare students technically and academically to successfully participate in the NAPLAN. A range of resources such as the Teaching, Learning and Assessment for reading, writing and numeracy (booklet for each) and the 2010 NAPLAN Analysis using a curriculum focus for numeracy and literacy (booklet for each) provide a comprehensive array of strategies, teaching foci and hints to support teachers in preparing their students for the NAPLAN.

Incorporating the review of test questions into the data analysis process enriches teachers’ and students’ understandings of what was being assessed, the ‘language’ of the test questions and analysis of errors. It subsequently informs planning for future learning.

Developing students’ meta-cognitive skills, including clarification, justification, analysis, evaluation), supports deep literacy and numeracy learning.

Using the resources provided to prepare students for participation in the national assessment is NOT teaching to the test rather it is a valuable teaching strategy to support students’ literacy and numeracy learning, considered critical by educators and the community.

An activity such as Question Deconstruction is a simple example of how preparing for NAPLAN can be built in as part of the daily classroom program. Activities such as this provide the teacher with the ability to observe and identify what their students know and how their students think about particular concepts and word structures, and importantly, how they comprehend or make meaning of each question or task.

The generic Question Deconstruction activity that follows suits reading, numeracy and language conventions test questions.

Go to http://www.det.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/assessment-reporting/nap/schools to view the wide range of resources available for classroom teachers to prepare students for NAPLAN and support their literacy and numeracy learning.
**QUESTION DECONSTRUCTION**  
One question a day – 15 minutes

**Steps for deconstruction**

1. Read the question together out loud.
2. Ask students *‘Who doesn’t know what the words mean?’* If they don’t know, stop and explicitly teach them using examples.
3. Ask at least 2 students to paraphrase (put in their own words) what they are being asked to do by telling another student what to do.
4. If possible, ask students to give a real life situation/context where they might need to use the skill being tested. For example for 31+42 students say *‘When you buy something worth 31c and something that costs 42c you have to add them up to find out how much you have to pay’*.
5. Ask students to estimate (make an informed guess) the correct answer and to justify their choice.
6. Ask other students who agrees, who disagrees and to say why.
7. Ask students *‘Does this answer make sense? Let’s read the question again and see if this can possibly be the answer.’*
8. If the question is a multiple choice ask students which answers could be right and get them to say why.
9. Ask students to think carefully and put their hand up if they would have chosen a, b, c, or d. Choose a student from each choice group and ask them to justify their choice.
10. Facilitate a healthy debate between the four students, allowing other students to join in after a few moments. You may need to model and explicitly teach students how to participate in this debate/argument.
11. To conclude the argument, ask all students again which of the choices they would choose – many will have changed their minds by hearing the justifications and reasons of others and readjusting their own thinking.
12. Finally, tell students what the answer is. The discussion by the students is likely to reveal student misunderstandings or areas that you will need to re-teach in ways that ensure deep correct understanding. Students should be given the opportunity to write down the correct answer with the correct reason.