

WORLD LANGUAGES PHILOSOPHY

The world language curriculum supports the goal of the WMRHSD “to prepare students in life beyond high school” because it enables students to interact with people of other cultures and to be productive and sensitive members of a diverse community. Instruction is focused on directing communication (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) within a cultural context. Our curriculum follows The National Standards in Foreign Language Education and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, which define what students should know and be able to do in foreign language education.

At WMC and WMM, five goal areas are recognized, which encompass the reasons students why study foreign languages: *Communication*, *Cultures*, *Connections*, *Comparisons*, and *Communities*. These five goal areas underpin the goals and objectives of the World Languages Department.

Communication is central in second language study, whether the communication is face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature.

Through the study of other languages, students gain knowledge and understanding of the ***cultures*** that use that language. It is essential for mastery of language that cultural contexts are mastered in which the language occurs.

Learning languages also provides ***connections*** to other disciplines and perspectives that may otherwise be unavailable to monolingual English speakers.

Through ***comparisons*** and contrast with the language being studied, students develop not only insight into the nature of language but also the concept of culture and realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world.

Together, these elements enable language students to participate in multilingual ***communities*** at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in ways germane to the culture.

“Knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom.”

Formerly, most teaching in foreign language classrooms concentrated on the *how* (grammar) to say *what* (vocabulary). These components of language are indeed crucial. The current organizing principle of foreign language study is, however, *communication*, which also emphasizes the *who*, the *when*, and the *why*. While grammar and vocabulary are essential tools for communication, it is the acquisition of the ability to communicate meaningfully, effectively, and accurately with speakers of other languages. This is the ultimate goal of foreign language teaching and learning at WMC and WMM.

The 5 goals of the National Standards in Foreign Language Education are:

<p>Communication Communicate in Languages Other than English</p>	<p>Standard 1.1 Interpersonal Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions. Standard 1.2 Interpretive Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics. Standard 1.3 Presentational Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.</p>
<p>Cultures Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures</p>	<p>Standard 2.1 Practices Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied. Standard 2.2 Products Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.</p>
<p>Connections Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information</p>	<p>Standard 3.1 Across Disciplines Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language. Standard 3.2 Added Perspective Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.</p>
<p>Comparisons Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture</p>	<p>Standard 4.1 Language Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own. Standard 4.2 Culture Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.</p>
<p>Communities Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World</p>	<p>Standard 5.1 Practical Applications Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting. Standard 5.2 Personal Enrichment Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.</p>

(<http://globalteachinglearning.com/standards/5cs.shtml>)

Among the many benefits of language learning, some major components are:

It correlates with higher academic achievement.

It increases the development of reading abilities.

It enables the ability to hypothesize in science.

It improves cognitive abilities.

It helps develop a more positive attitude toward the target language and/or culture.

(<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=4524>)

New Jersey has two standards for World Language curriculum.

Standard 7.1 Communication

“All students will be able to communicate in at least one world language in addition to English. They will use language to engage in conversation, understand and interpret spoken and written language, present information, concepts, and ideas while making connections with other disciplines, and compare the language/culture studied with their own.” There are three communicative modes: interpretive (understanding and interpretation of spoken or written communication), interpersonal (direct oral or written communication), and presentational (spoken or written communication for an audience).

Standard 7.2 Culture

“All students will demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives of a culture(s) through experiences with its product and practices.” Language and culture are inseparable. Students will learn and appreciate cultural differences through the study of the products (i.e., the arts, cuisine, media, etc.) the practices (gestures, traditions, routines) and the perspectives (popular beliefs, values, folk ideas, assumptions).

In order to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, students will be assessed by a variety of strategies that reflect the classroom activities and tasks. Besides the traditional pencil-and-paper assessments, there are portfolios, journals, performances, presentations, interviews, products, daily participation, just to mention some.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR WORLD LANGUAGES

1. How does the aural perception of individual sounds produce decoding of comprehensible language?
2. What are the mechanics used to produce language in written form to convey a concrete or abstract image?
3. How are words used to achieve the communication of a basic image or complex idea?
4. How are words put together to produce sentences or ideas?
5. How can the knowledge of diverse cultures cultivate an understanding and appreciation of the world community?
6. How are grammar rules and verb tenses used to create language?
7. How do aural skills impact the language acquisition and reproduction process?
8. How does a person use a word or set of words to communicate when speaking?
9. How does the knowledge of vocabulary, tenses, recognition of derivations and stems of words help reading comprehension?
10. How are sets of words combined in written form to communicate a need or image?
11. What can we learn from analyzing the similarities and differences of cultures?

Assessment

A. Philosophy Statement

The district recognizes the need for varied assessments that reflect multiple intelligences and different learning modalities. In developing assessments throughout the year, the teacher should consider the higher levels of thinking in Bloom's Taxonomy (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis) in order to assess the full range of student thinking. In assessing students, teachers should also be mindful of the demands and pedagogy suggested by the International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement programs.

B. Assessment Options

Assessments should be on-going, reflective, and varied. They can be informal and do not necessarily have to be assigned a grade but rather can be used for diagnostic purposes. Using a variety of assessments including, but not limited to, writing samples, tests, quizzes, journals, skits, listening and speaking performances, teachers will be able to more effectively determine what students know. Assessment should directly coincide with what has been taught. Alternative assessments that address multiple intelligences should be used to add to students' learning and provide them with a varied means to demonstrate what they know.

C. Possible Varied Approaches in Student Assessment

1. **Verbal-linguistic:** essays, skits, oral presentations, debates, poems, monologues, quizzes, speeches, debates, journals
2. **Interpersonal:** cooperative projects, presentations, "jigsaw" activities, "Round Robin" quizzes, interviews, skits, peer evaluations, student-led lessons, joint story creations
3. **Intrapersonal:** journals, self-assessment, goal-setting, learning logs, autobiographical reflections
4. **Musical-rhythmic:** songs, poems, written responses, song-writing
5. **Visual-spatial:** vocabulary visuals, collages, graphic organizers, storyboards, illustrations, flowcharts, physical models, videos, photographs, scrapbooks
6. **Logical-mathematical:** sequencing, story boards, cause and effect essays, self-evaluation, meta cognition, Venn diagrams, acrostics, acronyms, computer games, mind maps
7. **Bodily-kinesthetic:** skits, games, student-generated games, role-playing, mimes, charades, color-coded note-taking,
8. **Naturalist:** drawing maps, describing settings, producing research papers and/or posters related to nature, conservation, the environment

D. Possible Methods of Assessment

Assessment will incorporate the areas of vocabulary, grammar, and cultural awareness. The four basic modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) will be assessed by any or all of the following methods:

1. **Listening**
 - a. Dictation
 - b. Listen comprehension tests and quizzes
 - c. Classroom activities
 - d. Listening comprehension exercises

2. **Speaking**
 - a. Pronunciation exercises
 - b. Class participation
 - c. Dialogues
 - d. Student presentations
 - e. Oral proficiency testing

3. **Reading**
 - a. Unit tests
 - b. Quizzes
 - c. Reading comprehension passages
 - d. Homework assignments
 - e. Compositions on readings

4. **Writing**
 - a. Unit tests
 - b. Quizzes
 - c. Compositions
 - d. Projects
 - e. Original dialogues
 - f. Homework assignments
 - g. Dictations
 - h. Classroom activities