



World of ABC Language Policy

Last Revised: May 2015

World of ABC Mission Statement

Every little step your child takes around the classrooms will lead them to take bigger steps throughout their life. Here at World of ABC, we plant the seed of knowledge and allow your child to flourish in their own unique way, giving them the ability to reach for the stars.

Purpose of the World of ABC School Language Policy

This policy will serve to inform the school community of the school's philosophy on language learning and teaching, and the goals and associated practices used to teach language. The languages covered in this policy will include each student's mother tongue, the language of instruction (English), and the second language (Spanish). The school's language policy contains input from representative teachers from each grade level, the PYP coordinator, and the school director. It is to be reviewed and revised on a routine basis. This policy will apply to all grades within the school offering the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. It will be communicated to all PYP teachers, administrators, parents, and students, and all aforesaid parties will be notified of any changes to this policy.

World of ABC Language Philosophy

At World of ABC, language is used by students across all subject areas to inquire into the world around them and communicate information and ideas; therefore, all teachers within the school are considered language teachers. As students learn, they are constantly receiving and constructing meaning by listening, viewing, and reading information, and are also creating and sharing meaning by speaking, presenting, and writing information. Therefore, World of ABC provides students with a balanced language framework that develops each student's oral, visual, and written language skills in regards to both their receptive and expressive aspects. In addition, World of ABC ensures that all language instruction is relevant, engaging, challenging, and significant.

Language of Instruction

At World of ABC, English is the primary language of instruction. The following techniques and resources are used to support language acquisition:

- *Integration across Disciplines:* Although reading and writing will be taught at all grade levels during a specified block each day, language instruction will also be interwoven into all subject areas. Students will be provided with opportunities to read, write, and present across the curriculum. This transdisciplinary approach to teaching language will result in many opportunities for students to learn language skills in meaningful and authentic situations, rather than just in isolated skill sets.
- *Inquiry-Based Instruction:* Whether language is being taught within or outside of the program of inquiry, all instruction will be based around purposeful inquiry. Teachers will use the PYP planner to document all language instruction to ensure that inquiry is the means by which students are learning language.
- *Student Language Profiles:* Teachers will use a range of informal assessment methods within the classroom to gauge each student's language fluency and to appropriately extend it. Assessment methods will include reading comprehension checks, individual reading

conferences to assess reading skill level, writing prompts, and vocabulary tests. Assessment results will be stored in each student's portfolio. Student portfolios will also include both teacher- and student-selected student work related to language. Student-selected pieces will be accompanied with a student reflection page for students to reflect upon their language development.

- *Differentiation:* Teachers will use each student's language profile to differentiate language instruction. Teachers will take into account the varying developmental stages, learning styles, and learning experiences of each student when developing lessons. Teachers will scaffold language instruction to provide students with appropriate challenges to extend their language fluency and to think critically about language.
- *Varied Instructional Methods:* Teachers will use a range of specific teaching strategies to promote listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (as specified in the school's language scope and sequence document), including (but not limited to) reading workshop, writing workshop, guided reading, shared reading, shared writing, visual and oral presentations, and class literature discussions.
- *Technological Resources:* Teachers will use technology at all grade levels to facilitate language instruction and to improve student research. These resources will include Smartboard technology, laptop and I-Pad access for each teacher, and mobile laptop cart access for grades Kindergarten and up.
- *Literary Resources:* Each classroom will have access to grade-level appropriate language instructional materials, leveled reading texts, and general classroom libraries (including both fictional and nonfiction books, some of which are used to support units of inquiry and some of which are used for other instructional purposes).
- *Resource Budget:* The directors of the school and the PYP coordinator will work together to develop a monthly and yearly budget for the purpose of acquiring additional language instructional resources as needed.
- *Parent Resources:* Parents will be informed of all language instruction via the use of weekly reports. Teachers will communicate (in English) to parents what is being taught and how each student is understanding and applying the content within the classroom. Teachers will also provide parents with additional strategies and resources to extend language proficiency at home. This will include homework, projects, reading logs, and general suggestions to promote language proficiency.

World of ABC also provides resources for students with limited language proficiency. Students with limited English language proficiency learn the language through immersion in a fully English-speaking classroom. Students participate in all classroom activities, with additional help from the classroom assistant where needed. In addition, teachers in grades kindergarten and above receive specialized instruction on how to differentiate instruction specifically for English language learners. Teachers are provided with a range of instructional resources specifically for students with limited English proficiency, including leveled reading texts. Teachers conference with these students during the school day to promote language skills.

Mother-Tongue Support

The students at World of ABC have varied mother tongues, including Mandarin, Hindi, and English, with the majority of students having a mother tongue other than English. We believe that developing each student's mother-tongue language is essential for cognitive development and for maintaining his or her cultural identity. It also allows other students to discover and understand languages and cultures other than their own, thereby helping to make each student more internationally minded. World of ABC aims to promote the development of each student's mother tongue and cultural identity in the following ways:

- *Library Resources:* Classrooms will be provided with copies of both fictional and nonfictional texts in Mandarin and Hindi. Texts will be used to facilitate student inquiries into a range of topics.
- *Cultural Celebrations:* World of ABC will periodically celebrate holidays important to the diverse cultures within the school. Families will be encouraged to share important items from their cultures, including food, clothing, and artifacts. Teachers will take time out of the school day to allow students to share these items with their classmates and to discuss the importance of and meanings behind them. Parents will also be invited into the classrooms to share with students their culture.
- *Units of Inquiry:* Individual units of inquiry will make connections to the cultures within the classroom where applicable. Students will have opportunities to research both their own cultures and the cultures of people around the world.

Second Language Instruction

At World of ABC, Spanish is taught as an additional language. All students, beginning in Kindergarten through their time of graduation, receive weekly Spanish instruction. Students will be able to read, write, listen, and speak Spanish by the time of graduation with varying levels of proficiency. Students will also be introduced to Spanish culture throughout their lessons. The Spanish teacher will also work collaboratively with classroom teachers to find opportunities to study Spanish within the program of inquiry. Connections will be made especially during units focused on culture and heritage.

Professional Development

World of ABC believes it is essential that all teachers have an adequate understanding of language development and best language instructional practices so that students are able to develop language fluency. The school directors and the PYP coordinator work together to find professional development opportunities to best serve the needs of the school's staff. These opportunities will include:

- *Professional trainings:* Trainings will be given to teachers on best language instructional practices. These trainings will include official IB workshops, outside workshops (such as those held by local colleges and teachers associations), and workshops developed by individual staff teachers with a background in reading. World of ABC provides its teachers with opportunities to conduct trainings for staff members about topics they have expertise and knowledge in.
- *Professional literature:* The PYP coordinator will forward professional book, article, and journal suggestions to teachers related to language instruction.

- *Collaborative staff meetings:* Teachers meet with grade-level planning groups once a week to plan for and reflect on units of inquiry. Teachers will also be able to use this time to share language instructional practices that are being used to complement the units of inquiry, thereby giving teachers opportunities to learn from their colleagues.