



IPS PYP Curriculum Guide

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THE INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMS SCHOOL



OUR MOTTO

Learners of today; Leaders of tomorrow; Creators of the future.

مُتَعَلِّمُوا الْيَوْمَ، قَادَةُ الْغَدِ، غَمَازُ الْأَرْضِ

شعارنا

OUR MISSION

IPS empowers today's learners to be internationally minded, lifelong learners, and to use 21st century skills to make a positive difference in the community, the country, and the world.

تَمَكِّينَ مُتَعَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ لِيَكُونَ ذَا عَقْلِيَّةٍ
دَوْلِيَّةٍ، مُتَعَلِّمًا مَدَى الْحَيَاةِ، مَالِكًا لِمَهَارَاتِ
الْقَرْنِ الْحَادِي وَالْعَشْرِينَ، فَاعِلًا فِي وَطَنِهِ
وَمُجْتَمَعِهِ وَالْعَالَمِ

رسالتنا

OUR VISION

To be a leading educational community in Saudi Arabia, respectful of the learner's identity, and committed to a global perspective.

مُجْتَمَعٌ تَعَلُّمِيٌّ رَائِدٌ فِي الْمَمْلَكَةِ
الْعَرَبِيَّةِ السُّعُودِيَّةِ، يَحْتَرِمُ هَوِيَّةَ
الْمُتَعَلِّمِ، وَيَلْتَزِمُ بِأَفْقَى دَوْلِيَّةٍ

رؤيتنا

OUR VALUES قِيَمَاتُنَا

EHSAN (Empathy/
Compassion)
الِإِحْسَانُ

Respect
الاحترام

Responsibility
المسؤولية

Cooperation
التآزر



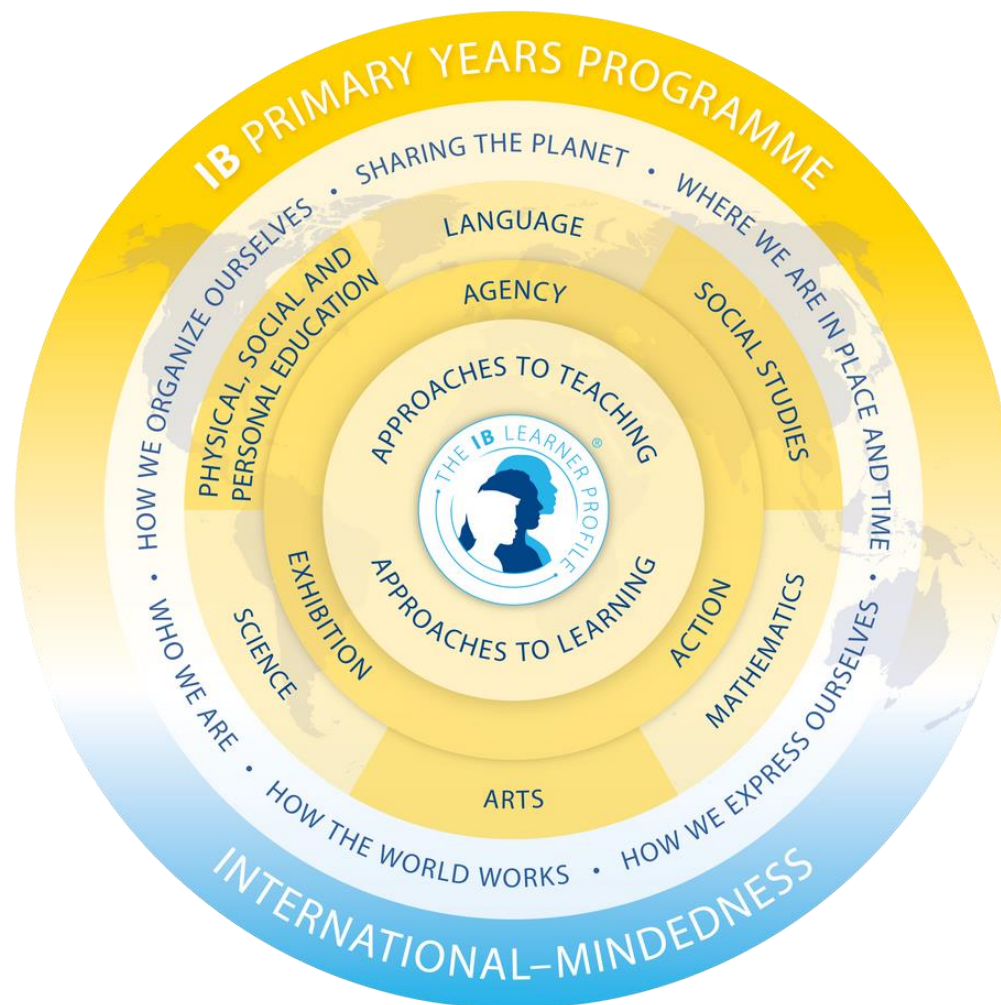
IB mission statement

“The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end, the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.”
(© International Baccalaureate Organization)

Primary Years Programme (PYP) K-5

The International Programs School is committed to providing the best education to its students. IPS is an IB-PYP authorized school accredited by the Middle States Association (MSA) and teaching is guided by the Ontario and Common Core Plus Standards. These standards influence the content and expectations in all curriculum areas.

IPS provides students with opportunities for learning about issues that have local, national and global significance, leading to an understanding of human commonalities. Each grade level K-5 carefully plans transdisciplinary units of inquiry. Collectively, these units form a trans-disciplinary school-wide program of inquiry. Organizing the curriculum around the six transdisciplinary themes contextualizes the learning for the students. It enables them to experience a balance of subject-specific knowledge, concepts, and skills in order to develop an understanding of the transdisciplinary themes.



The inquiry is the leading but not exclusive approach to learning. Students inquire into the transdisciplinary themes and reflect on the connections between life in school, life at home and life in the world. By helping students make the connections and see that learning is connected to life, a strong foundation for future learning is established.

The PYP Curriculum framework

The PYP curriculum framework begins with the premise that students are agents of their own learning and partners in the learning process. It prioritizes people and their relationships to build a strong learning community.

PYP students use their initiative to take responsibility and ownership of their learning. By learning through inquiry and reflecting on their own learning, PYP students develop knowledge, conceptual understanding, skills and the attributes of the IB Learner profile to make a difference in their own lives, their communities, and beyond.

The transdisciplinary model extends across all three pillars of the PYP curriculum framework:

- The learner: describes the outcomes for individual students and the outcomes they seek for themselves (what is learning?)
- Learning and teaching: articulates the distinctive features of learning and teaching (how best to support learners?)
- The learning community: emphasizes the importance of the social outcomes of learning and the role that IB communities play in achieving these outcomes (who facilitates learning and teaching?)

Embedded in the framework is the recognition of the importance of fostering an individual's self-efficacy. Students with a strong sense of self-efficacy are active in their own learning and take action in their learning community.



The Learner

Learner agency

Our understanding

Our understanding of the learner is the foundation of our approach to learning and teaching. Children inquire, question, wonder and theorize about themselves, others and the world around them. They are keen observers and explorers. Through their experiences and interactions, they naturally develop intricate, multi-layered perceptions and understandings. Throughout the PYP, a student is an agent for their own and others' learning through the concept of learner agency. Learner agency is connected to a student's belief in their ability to succeed (self-efficacy)

Agency

Conceptualized by Bandura in social cognitive theory, the agency “enable[s] people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times” (Bandura 2001). PYP students with agency use their own initiative and will, and take responsibility and ownership of their learning. They direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others, thereby building a sense of community and awareness of the opinions, values and needs of others.



When learners have agency, the role of the teacher and student changes; the relationship between a teacher and a student is viewed as a partnership.

Self-efficacy

When teachers acknowledge learner agency and the importance of self-efficacy, students become partners in the learning process. In this partnership, teachers work alongside students, meet with small groups and individuals as needed, and monitor learning and provide feedback.

Students demonstrate agency when they:

- influence and direct their own learning
- make choices
- voice opinions

- ask questions and express wonderings
- communicate understandings
- construct new meanings
- participate in and contribute to the learning community.

How teachers at IPS support agency

Students learn by doing. Teachers create opportunities for agency in the classroom by involving students in the following activities.

- Establishing a respectful and welcoming culture. Collaborate with students to create shared agreements about how to interact with others to create a culture of respect and trust where all students feel welcomed, significant and emotionally safe.
- Creating shared routines. Ask for students' input into developing routines around arrival, transitions, communication signals, meetings, clean up and dismissal.
- Setting up the learning spaces. Ask students to help set up and arrange learning spaces that make them feel safe physically and where they can access learning materials, make choices and take risks.
- Making decisions about learning. Involve students in making decisions about what, why and how they learn—as co-collaborators in the learning community. Allow time to respond to students' ideas about action.
- Communicating expectations. Clarify what knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and dispositions the students are learning, and why.





IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



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Action and international-mindedness

Action, the core of student agency, is integral to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) learning process and to the programme's overarching outcome of international-mindedness. Through taking individual and collective action, students come to understand the responsibilities associated with being internationally minded and to appreciate the benefits of working with others for a shared purpose. When students see tangible actions that they can choose to take to make a difference, they see themselves as competent, capable and active agents of change (Oxfam 2015).

Students taking action in response to their inquiries lays a foundation for community service in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and creativity, activity, service (CAS) in the Diploma Programme (DP). Action is a means for students to show that they have linked their learning to real-life issues and opportunities, and that they are developing responsible dispositions and behaviours towards social and physical environments and to the community within and beyond school. Through action, students develop a sense of belonging to local and global communities. They understand and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependence of issues, and consider these from multiple perspectives (Oxfam 2015, UNESCO 2015).

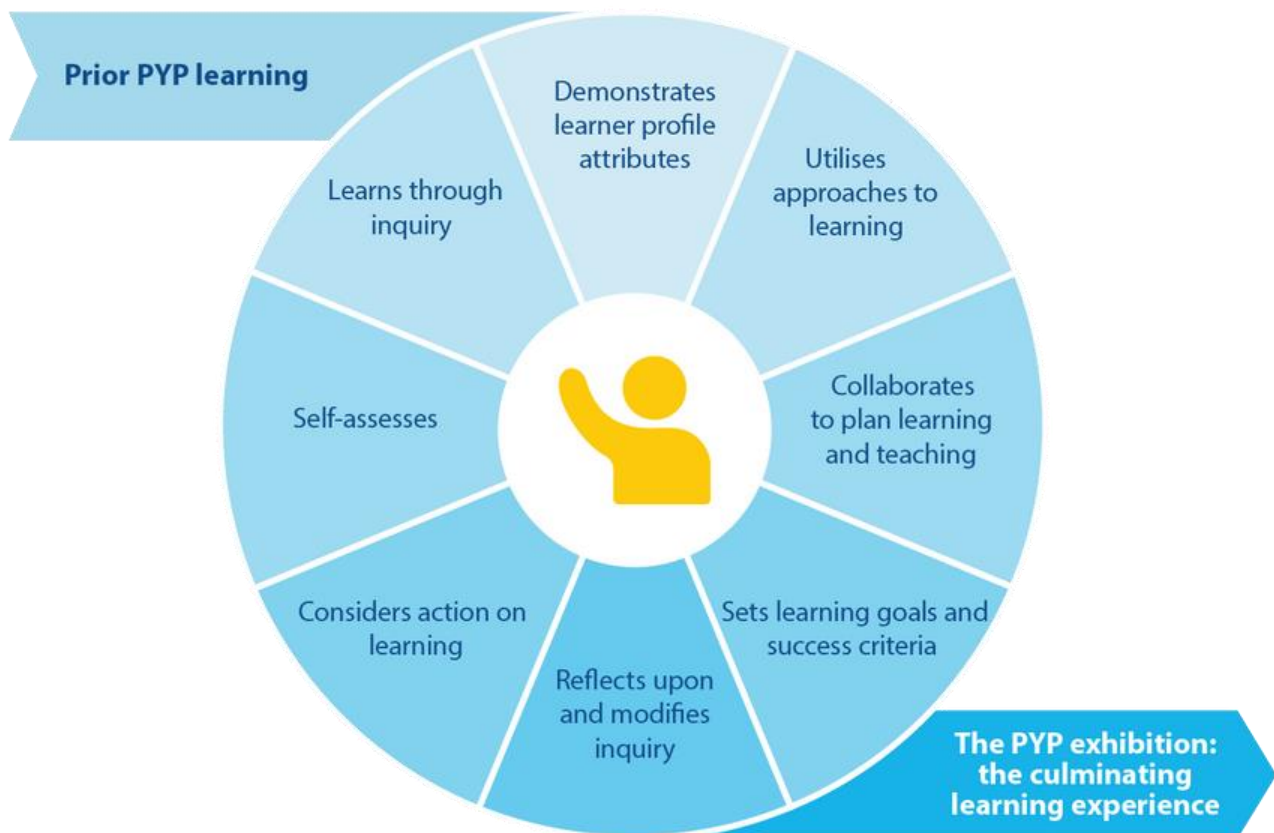
PYP learning communities engage students individually and collectively with local and global challenges and opportunities through action (UNESCO 2015). All members of the learning community contribute to an open and dynamic environment for engaging with the world. Students feel encouraged to take action as a response to past and present inquiries. They are autonomous in taking action and are confident that their actions will be appreciated and supported (Hart 1992; Nimmo 2008).



The exhibition

Culminating learning experiences

The exhibition is the culminating, collaborative experience in the final year of the PYP. The exhibition is an authentic process for students to explore, document and share their understanding of an issue or opportunity of personal significance. All exhibitions are student-initiated, designed and collaborative.



Learning and teaching

Transdisciplinary learning

Transdisciplinary in the PYP framework

It is a fundamental PYP belief that for early and primary years learners, continuous integration and connection of prior and new knowledge and experiences is the most meaningful way to broaden their understanding about the world. When a curriculum approach goes across, between and beyond subjects, and emphasizes participatory and integrated learning, it honours the learners' curiosity, questions and voice, for whom the curriculum is intended (Beane 1995). Transdisciplinary learning in the PYP refers to learning that is not confined within the boundaries of traditional subjects but is supported and enriched by them.

Elements of the PYP framework

Exploring the elements

Effective teaching, Albright (2016: 532) believes, “is implicitly transdisciplinary”, and, by design, multiple elements of the PYP bring to life transdisciplinary learning and teaching. These elements provide the foundation for students to develop transdisciplinary thinking, to explore real-life issues and to effect change. They support the development of “internationally minded people who recognize their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet” (IBO 2017: 2).



Learning through the transdisciplinary themes

The transdisciplinary themes mark the starting point of student inquiries. It is within the context of each theme that students explore related central ideas and assimilate knowledge. These themes engage the learning community in rich dialogues and ongoing collaboration to build an understanding of themselves, their wider community and the world. Designed to have enduring value regardless of the geography or background of IB World Schools and students, the six themes provide guidance for what students will inquire into . They:

- encapsulate our shared commonalities
- indicate the complexity and the connectedness of the human condition globally
- invite students to engage in dialogues about real issues in the world
- allow for authentic embeddedness of subject areas
- contribute to the uniqueness of the PYP.

Transdisciplinary themes	Descriptions
Who we are	An inquiry into identity as individuals and as part of a collective through: • physical, emotional, social and spiritual health and well-being • relationships and belonging • learning and growing
How we express ourselves	An inquiry into the diversity of voice, perspectives, and expression through: • inspiration, imagination, creativity • personal, social and cultural modes and practices of communication • intentions, perceptions, interpretations and responses
How we organize ourselves	An inquiry into systems, structures and networks through: • interactions within and between social and ecological systems • approaches to livelihoods and trade practices: intended and unintended consequences • representation, collaboration and decision making
Where we are in place and time	An inquiry into histories and orientation in place, space and time through: • periods, events and artefacts • communities, heritage, culture and environment • natural and human drivers of movement, adaptation, and transformation
How the world works	An inquiry into understandings of the world and phenomena through: • patterns, cycles, systems • diverse practices, methods and tools • discovery, design, innovation: possibilities and impacts
Sharing the planet	An inquiry into the interdependence of human and natural worlds through: • rights, responsibilities and dignity of all • pathways to just, peaceful and reimagined futures • nature, complexity, coexistence and wisdom

Transcending knowledge through a programme of inquiry

The transdisciplinary themes of global significance provide the context for schools to frame a whole-school programme of inquiry, which is a cornerstone of the PYP pedagogy and its flexible framework. The programme of inquiry articulates how the six transdisciplinary themes will be explored across the different age groups. It provides students in the early and primary years with the opportunity to experience a coherent and balanced curriculum. On one level, it is planned; on another level, it is dynamic because a transdisciplinary programme of inquiry leaves room for emergent and unexpected ideas, directions and connections that students might encounter. When this happens, the teaching team might modify the programme of inquiry or develop additional learning engagements outside the programme of inquiry.

Integrating subjects in the curriculum

Supporting the exploration of the transdisciplinary themes in context are six subject knowledge areas: language; mathematics; science; social studies; arts; physical, social and personal education. Each subject has its place in transdisciplinary learning because transdisciplinarity is as much about the liberal arts, cultural symbolisms and the social and natural sciences (Macdonald 2000). However, subject knowledge is not the end. Rather, it is a means to illuminate larger, more integrative ends (Boyer 1995).

Crossing boundaries with concepts

A concept-driven curriculum, another cornerstone of an IB education, helps the learner to construct meaning through improved critical-thinking and the transfer of knowledge and understanding. In transdisciplinary learning, concepts play a particularly important role in “linking operators” of knowledge (Klein 2004). Whereas knowledge and boundaries between disciplines can change over time (Nicolescu 2014), concepts are organizing ideas that have relevance within and across subjects (Erickson 1998; Fogarty and Stoehr 2008) as well as across national and cultural boundaries. In effect, concepts are transdisciplinary. Unlike subject-specific knowledge, concepts provide the language and the mental structure to foster ways of knowing and thinking across different subjects.

Approaches to learning ATL

Approaches to learning (ATL) are an integral part of an IB education and complement the learner profile, knowledge, conceptual understanding and inquiry. These skills are grounded in the belief that learning how to learn is fundamental to a student’s education. Five categories of interrelated skills aim to support students of all ages to become self-regulated learners who know how to ask good questions, set effective goals and pursue their aspirations with the determination to achieve them. These skills also help to support students’ sense of agency, encouraging them to see their learning as an active and dynamic process (IBO 2017).

Although the ATL are relevant from 3 to 19 years of age, it is particularly important for PYP teachers to interpret these skills in ways that are appropriate for early and primary years learners. All teachers foster and support the development of these skills by providing opportunities embedded in authentic learning experiences.



Categories	Sub-skills
Thinking skills	• Critical-thinking skills (analysing and evaluating issues and ideas) • Creative-thinking skills (generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives) • Transfer skills (using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts) • Reflection/metacognitive skills ((re)considering the process of learning)
Research skills	• Information-literacy skills (formulating and planning, data gathering and recording, synthesizing and interpreting, evaluating and communicating) • Media-literacy skills (interacting with media to use and create ideas and information) • Ethical use of media/information (understanding and applying social and ethical technology)
Communication skills	• Exchanging-information skills (listening, interpreting, speaking) • Literacy skills (reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information) • ICT skills (using technology to gather, investigate and communicate information)
Social skills	• Developing positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration skills (using self-control, managing setbacks, supporting peers) • Developing social-emotional intelligence
Self-management skills	• Organization skills (managing time and tasks effectively) • States of mind (mindfulness, perseverance, emotional management, self-motivation, resilience)

Inquiry in the PYP

Inquiry, as the leading pedagogical approach of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) recognizes students as being actively involved in their own learning and as taking responsibility for that learning. PYP learning is approached with a spirit of inquiry. Drawing from the transdisciplinary themes and students' interests, inquiry is an authentic way for students to relate to, explore and understand the world around them.

As part of the learner profile, students are supported in becoming “inquirers”. Inquiry nurtures curiosity and promotes enthusiasm for life-long learning. Effective inquiry encourages students to think, challenge and extend their ideas; it prompts students to reflect and take action. Through the inquiry process, students develop and demonstrate/practice the approaches to learning and attributes of the learner profile.

Learning and teaching in the IB grows from an understanding of education that celebrates the many ways people work together to construct meaning and make sense of the world. The inquiry process supports the development of international mindedness. Represented as the interplay between asking (inquiry), thinking (reflection) and doing (action), this constructivist inquiry process leads towards open classrooms where different views and perspectives are valued. This process is the basis of the design and implementation of learning and teaching in all IB programmes.

Concepts and conceptual understanding

A concept-driven curriculum

Concept-based inquiry is a powerful vehicle for learning that promotes meaning and understanding, and challenges students to engage with significant ideas. This is central to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) philosophy. Purposeful inquiry is supported by a concept-driven curriculum (Wiggins, McTighe 2005).

A concept-driven curriculum is the means through which students develop their conceptual understandings. Students co-construct beliefs and mental models about how the world works based on their experiences and prior learning. They integrate new knowledge with their existing knowledge and apply these understandings in a variety of new contexts. They learn to recognize patterns and see the connections between discrete examples to strengthen conceptual understandings.

Concepts

A concept is a “big idea”—a principle or notion that is enduring and is not constrained by a particular origin, subject matter or place in time (Erickson 2008). Concepts represent ideas that are broad, abstract, timeless and universal. Concepts add depth and rigour in student thinking to the traditional “two-dimensional” curriculum consisting of facts and skills. Concepts place no limits on breadth of knowledge or on depth of understanding, and therefore are accessible to every student.

Concepts help to:

- explore the essence of a subject
- add coherence to the curriculum
- deepen disciplinary understanding
- build the capacity to engage with complex ideas
- build understandings across, between and beyond subjects
- integrate and transfer learning to new contexts.

Concepts are powerful, broad and abstract organizing ideas that may be transdisciplinary or subject-based. They represent the vehicle for students' inquiry into the opportunities and challenges of local and global significance. Concepts are concise; they are usually represented by one or two words.

Specified concepts

The PYP identifies seven specified concepts (figure CO01) that facilitate planning for a conceptual approach to transdisciplinary and subject-specific learning. Together, these specified concepts form the component that drives the teacher- and/or student-constructed inquiries that lie at the heart of the PYP curriculum.

Specified concepts	Key questions	Definition
Form	What is it like?	The understanding that everything has a form with recognizable features that can be observed, identified, described and categorized.
Function	How does it work?	The understanding that everything has a purpose, a role or a way of behaving that can be investigated.
Causation	Why is it as it is?	The understanding that things do not just happen; there are causal relationships at work, and that actions have consequences.
Change	How is it transforming?	The understanding that change is the process of movement from one state to another. It is universal and inevitable.
Connection	How is it linked to other things?	The understanding that we live in a world of interacting systems in which the actions of any individual element affect others.
Perspective	What are the points of view?	The understanding that knowledge is moderated by different points of view which lead to different interpretations, understandings and findings; perspectives may be individual, group, cultural or subject-specific.
Responsibility	What are our obligations?	The understanding that people make choices based on their understandings, beliefs and values, and the actions they take as a result do make a difference.

Assessment

All IB programmes are informed by assessment, as indicated in the IB approaches to teaching. While assessments look different in each programme, all IB assessment methods are varied and fit for purpose.

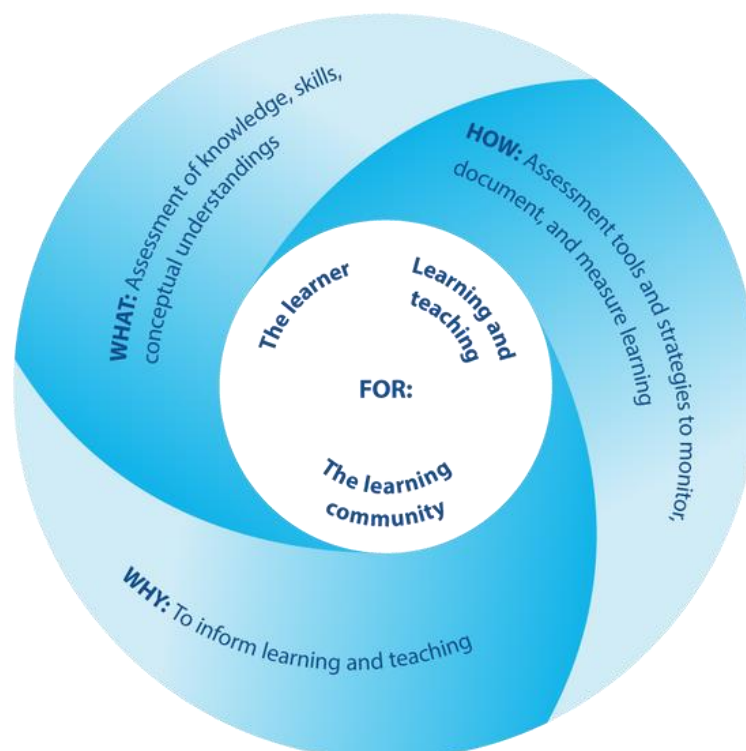
Assessment is central to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) goal of thoughtfully and effectively supporting students through the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and skills, the understanding of concepts and the development of approaches to learning.

The development of knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills requires that both teachers and students demonstrate assessment capability.

Characteristics of effective assessment

Highly effective assessment shares some key characteristics (Adapted from Clarke 2012).

- **Authentic:** It supports making connections to the real world to promote student engagement.
- **Clear and specific:** This includes desired learning goals, success criteria and the process students use to learn.
- **Varied:** It uses a wider range of tools and strategies that are fit for purpose in order to build a well-rounded picture of student learning.
- **Developmental:** It focuses on an individual student's progress rather than their performance in relation to others.
- **Collaborative:** It engages both teachers and students in the assessment development and evaluation process.
- **Interactive:** Assessment encompasses ongoing and iterative dialogues about learning.
- **Feedback to feedforward:** It provides feedback on current learning to inform what is needed to support future learning (Hattie, Timperley 2007) and raises students' motivation.



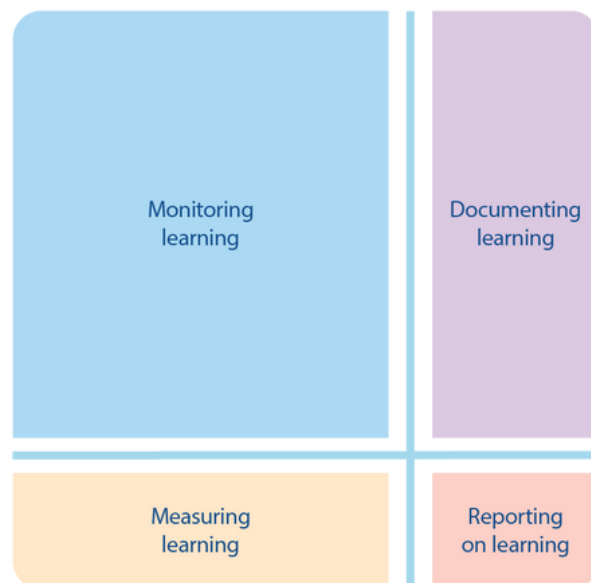
What to assess

The criteria for assessment must be known to students at the beginning of the inquiry and should be documented in one of the PYP planners, an adapted planner or the PYP planning process. The criteria accommodate a wide range of knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills. They are revisited and modified during the course of the inquiry, ensuring that they also reflect emergent knowledge, understandings and skills.

How to assess

The four dimensions of assessment

PYP assessment has four dimensions: monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting on learning. Each of these aspects has its own function, but all aim to provide evidence to inform learning and teaching.



Monitoring learning

Monitoring of learning aims to check the progress of learning against personal learning goals and success criteria. It occurs daily through a variety of strategies: observation, questioning, reflection, discussing learning with peers and teachers, and well-considered feedback to feed forward for next steps in learning. Tools used for monitoring include open-ended tasks, written or oral assessment, and a learning portfolio.

Documenting learning

The documenting of learning is the compilation of the evidence of learning. Documentation can be physical or digital, and can be displayed or recorded in a variety of media forms.

Measuring learning

The measuring of learning aims to capture what a student has learned at a particular “point in time”. Not all learning can be, or needs to be, measured. Measurement tools can be school-designed or commercial, but each measurement tool used provides further data to support a larger picture of student achievement and progress in learning.

Reporting learning

Reporting on learning informs the learning community and reflects the question “How well are we doing?” It describes the progress and achievement of the students’ learning, identifies areas for growth and contributes to the efficacy of the programme.

The Learning Community

A community of learners

- The learning community recognizes that education is a social endeavour benefiting all its members individually and collectively
- An inclusive learning community:
 - lives peacefully together by engaging with different ways of knowing and being
 - prioritizes people and their relationships
 - assumes shared responsibility for learning, health and well-being.
- Everyone in the learning community has agency, see themselves as contributors to its strength and success, and take action to affect change

International-mindedness

- International-mindedness is a view of the world in which people see themselves connected to the global community and assume a sense of responsibility towards its members.
- The learner profile and approaches to learning provide the dispositions and foundational skills for the development and demonstration of international-mindedness.
- The learning community envisions, creates, articulates, and models a culture of international-mindedness.
- An internationally minded learner takes action for positive change.

Collaboration

- PYP schools commit to and support collaboration to improve the transdisciplinary learning experiences and student outcomes.
- Teachers collaborate within and beyond year-level teams, the school and the learning community about learning that takes place both inside and outside of the programme of inquiry.
- Students demonstrate agency, and their capacity to take action for their own learning, by collaborating with teachers and peers.
- Collaborative teaching practices between year-level and subject-specialist teachers come in different forms, and include co-constructed, supported and stand-alone learning experiences.



Learning environments

- A learning environment encompasses multiple learning spaces—built and natural, outdoor and in, formal and informal.
- Students actively participate in the design and co-construction of learning spaces including the learning opportunities that occur within those spaces.
- Learning spaces are flexible, inviting, and engaging.



Subject Areas

Language

Language and communication are at the heart of all programs at IPS. Therefore, all teachers are considered to be language teachers. Literacy is about communication, social practices, relationships, knowledge, language, and culture. The aim is to educate students from diverse backgrounds who are equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a pluralistic society. Language acquisition empowers students to express themselves and gives them the skills to participate positively in a global society. All students will develop and maintain proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. Arabic, as the host country's language, and the dominant mother tongue at IPS is given a strong emphasis in the scheduling as it is a requirement for graduation. We offer an Arabic program for native speakers following the Ministry of education guidelines as well as a well articulated program for our non-native Arabic speakers tailored for their needs.

Science

In the PYP, science is viewed as the exploration of the biological, chemical and physical aspects of the natural world, and the relationships between them. Our understanding of science is constantly changing and evolving. The inclusion of science within the PYP leads learners to an appreciation and awareness of the world as it is viewed from a scientific perspective. It encourages curiosity and ingenuity and enables the student to develop an understanding of the world. Reflection on scientific knowledge also helps students to develop a sense of responsibility regarding the impact of their actions on themselves, others and their world. Inquiry is central to scientific investigation and understanding. Students actively construct and challenge their understanding of the world around them by combining scientific knowledge with reasoning and thinking skills. Scientific knowledge is made relevant through its innumerable applications in the real world. The science process, by encouraging hands-on experience and inquiry, enables the individual to make informed and responsible decisions, not only in science but also in other areas of life.

The importance of science in an international curriculum is recognized as universal and transcends the boundaries of gender, cultural, linguistic and national biases. The inclusion of science within the curriculum develops an understanding of, and competence in using, the facilities of a rapidly changing scientific and technological world while gaining a positive image of science and its contribution to the quality of life today. It also involves the development of an appreciation for the scientific contributions of people from various cultures and backgrounds.

The IB learner profile is integral to learning and teaching science in the PYP because it represents the qualities of effective learners and internationally minded students. The learner profile, together with the other elements of the programme—knowledge, concepts, skills and action—informs planning and teaching in science.

Social Studies

In the PYP, social studies is viewed as the study of people in relation to their past, their present and their future, their environment and their society. Social studies encourages curiosity and develops an understanding of a rapidly changing world. Through social studies, students develop an understanding of their personal and cultural identities. They develop the skills and knowledge needed to participate actively in their classroom, their school, their community and the world: to understand themselves in relation to their communities.

The aim of social studies within the PYP is to promote intercultural understanding and respect for individuals and their values and traditions. In support of the IB mission statement, the social studies component of the PYP curriculum will encourage students to “understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right”. Therefore, there is a strong emphasis on the reduction of prejudice and discrimination within the classroom, the school, the community and the world.

The IB learner profile is integral to learning and teaching social studies in the PYP because it represents the qualities of effective learners and internationally minded students. The learner profile, together with the other elements of the programme—knowledge, concepts, skills and action—informs planning and teaching in social studies.

Mathematics

In the PYP, mathematics is viewed primarily as a vehicle to support inquiry, providing a global language through which we make sense of the world around us. It is intended that students become competent users of the language of mathematics, and can begin to use it as a way of thinking, as opposed to seeing it as a series of facts and equations to be memorized. The power of mathematics for describing and analysing the world around us is such that it has become a highly effective tool for solving problems.

It is also recognized that students can appreciate the intrinsic fascination of mathematics and explore the world through its unique perceptions. In the same way that students describe themselves as “authors” or “artists”, a school’s programme should also provide students with the opportunity to see themselves as “mathematicians”, where they enjoy and are enthusiastic when exploring and learning about mathematics.

The IB learner profile is integral to learning and teaching mathematics in the PYP because it represents the qualities of effective learners and internationally minded students. The learner profile, together with the other elements of the programme—knowledge, concepts, skills and action—informs planning and teaching in mathematics.

Our mathematics program (Zearn) is intentionally made to be a safe and inclusive place for kids to grow their brains—with concept exploration anchored in concrete objects and pictures, supportive feedback on every problem, and lots of chances to learn from mistakes. Zearn promotes an enjoyment and enthusiasm for the exploration and learning of mathematics. Mathematics is understood as a tool for describing and analysing the world around us and is applied to problem solving.

Physical Education

In the PYP, personal, social and physical education (PSPE) is concerned with the individual’s well-being through the promotion and development of concepts, knowledge, attitudes and skills that contribute to this well-being. Well-being is intrinsically linked to all aspects of a student’s experience at school and beyond. It encompasses physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and social health and development, and contributes to an understanding of self, to developing and maintaining relationships with others, and to participation in an active, healthy lifestyle.

Art

Arts are integral to the PYP. They are a powerful mode of communication through which students explore and construct a sense of self and develop an understanding of the world around them. Arts provide students with a wide range of opportunities and means to respond to their experiences and engage with historical, social and cultural perspectives.

Our students are stimulated to think and to articulate their thoughts in new ways, and through a variety of media and technologies. The PYP recognizes that not all learning can be supported solely through language, and that arts as a medium of inquiry also provide opportunities for learning, communication and expression. Learning about and through arts is fundamental to the development of the whole child, promoting creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills and social interactions.

Technology

Similar to language, technology has the power to bring the learning community closer together and overcome boundaries. It is a means to investigate ideas, communicate findings, connect people and innovate solutions. Purposeful technology integration and implementation in authentic contexts can excite, invite, support and extend learning in multiple ways.

Technology plays a key role in an inquiry-based programme that aims to support the development of international-mindedness and attributes of the learner profile.

At IPS IT teachers collaborate with homeroom teachers to support units of inquiry.

Islamic Studies

Islamic Studies is a core subject for Muslim students enrolled in IPS. It is a compulsory subject for all Muslim students from Grade 1 to Grade 12. The PYP curriculum framework fits Ministry of Education Requirements. We offer Islamic studies for native and non-native Arabic speakers following the Ministry of Education requirements and standards. The main goal of the Islamic Studies Department in the International Programs School is to educate the students in the best way possible and strengthen their skills to be able to face religious situations through the 21st century. In Islamic studies students understand the Islamic teachings and values from Al Quran. Students take action by practicing Islam and reflecting on their deeds.

Islamic Culture

Islamic Culture is required for all non-Muslim students, it helps students attain a better understanding of the contributions of Islam to the world while providing an introduction to the history of the Islamic world. Islamic Culture course focuses on the origins and the tenets of Islam, the Islamic culture and the Islamic societies.

KSA Social Studies

KSA Social Studies helps students gain an appreciation of our host country and its impact in world religion, history, and international relations.

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