

SCHOOLS' GUIDE TO

THE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

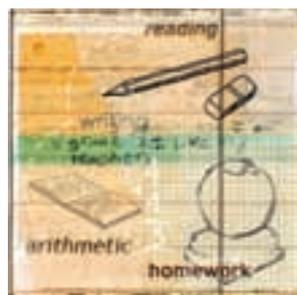




Education for life

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), a non-profit educational foundation based in Geneva, Switzerland, offers the Diploma Programme for students in the final two years of school aged 16 to 19, the Middle Years Programme for students in the 11-16 age range, and the Primary Years Programme for students aged 3 to 12 years.

The IBO has authorized some 1,300 schools in



110 countries to teach these programmes. In addition, the organization provides curriculum and assessment development, teacher-training and information seminars, electronic networking and other educational services to these schools.

Produced by corporate relations

International Baccalaureate Organization • Tel: +41 22 791 7740 • Fax +41 22 791 0277

www.ibo.org

IMPORTANT NOTE: This printed version of the schools' guide to the programme is revised and reprinted every two years. It is a companion document to the online version at www.ibo.org which is kept current.

THE ONLINE VERSION IS THE OFFICIAL ONE and please refer to it for changes.

Designed by Diana Catherines

The Primary Years

P R O G R A M M E



The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is designed for students between the ages of 3 and 12 years. It is an international, transdisciplinary programme designed to foster the development of the whole child, not just in the classroom but also through other means of learning. The PYP focuses on the total growth of the developing child, touching hearts as well as minds and encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic welfare.

The PYP combines the best research and practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create a relevant and engaging educational framework for all children.

Student Profile

The philosophy of the Primary Years Programme, as it directly affects the child, is expressed in a series of desired attributes and traits that characterize students with an international perspective. Taken together, they create a profile of PYP students.



Inquirers

Their natural curiosity has been nurtured. They have acquired the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research. They actively enjoy learning, and their love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Thinkers

They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and to solve complex problems.

Communicators

They receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language, including the language of mathematical symbols.

Risk-takers

They approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence and independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are courageous and articulate in defending those things in which they believe.



Knowledgeable

They have spent time in our schools exploring themes which have global relevance and importance. In doing so, they have acquired a critical mass of significant knowledge.

Principled

They have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning. They have integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice.

Caring

They show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a sense of personal commitment to action and service.

Open-minded

They respect the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures, and are accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of view.

Well-balanced

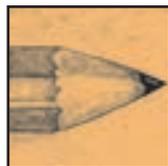
They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being.

Reflective

They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and analyse their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

The Curriculum

M O D E L



At the heart of the Primary Years Programme's philosophy is a commitment to structured inquiry as the leading vehicle for learning. Six transdisciplinary themes provide the framework for the exploration of knowledge. Teachers and students are guided by these themes as they design curricular units for exploration and study. Students explore subject areas through these themes, often in ways that transcend conventional subject boundaries. In the process, they develop an understanding of important concepts, acquire essential skills and knowledge, develop particular attitudes and learn to take socially responsible action.

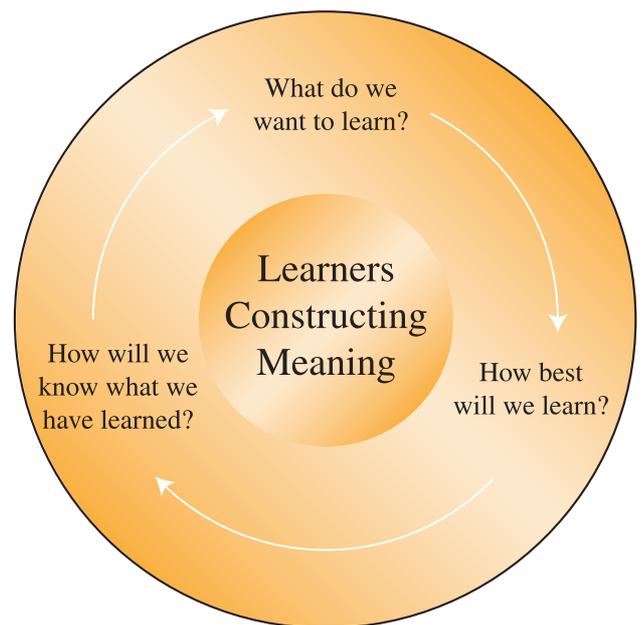
Primary Years Programme



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Rationale

The Primary Years Programme offers a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning. It provides a complete curriculum model which incorporates guidelines on what students should learn, as well as guidelines on teaching methodologies and assessment strategies. This model is expressed through three interrelated questions shown in this diagram:





CONCEPTS	SKILLS	ATTITUDES	ACTION
Form	Thinking	Tolerance	Reflect
Function	Communication	Respect	Choose
Causation	Social	Integrity	Act
Change	Research	Independence	
Connection	Self-management	Enthusiasm	
Perspective		Empathy	
Responsibility		Curiosity	
Reflection		Creativity	
		Cooperation	
		Confidence	
		Commitment	
		Appreciation	

Written curriculum

What do we want to learn?

The written curriculum incorporates five essential elements:

CONCEPTS

SKILLS

ATTITUDES

ACTION

KNOWLEDGE

The first four – concepts, skills, attitudes and actions – are relevant in and across all subject areas and provide the framework for structured and purposeful inquiry. They can have different applications and interpretations, depending on the subject area. The fifth element is knowledge, which is considered to be a holistic understanding of ideas, not merely the acquisition of facts and skills.



Concepts:

What do we want students to understand?

Eight fundamental concepts, expressed as key questions, propel the process of inquiry and help to encourage a transdisciplinary perspective. These concepts drive the research units – called units of inquiry – which teachers and students design and which lie at the heart of the curriculum model. The concepts are the following:



- Form: What is it like?
- Function: How does it work?
- Causation: Why is it like it is?
- Change: How is it changing?
- Connection: How is it

connected to other things?

Perspective: What are the points of view?

Responsibility: What is our responsibility?

Reflection: How do we know?

Skills:

What do we want students to be able to do?

The five sets of transdisciplinary skills acquired in the process of structured inquiry are thinking, communication, social, research and self-management skills.



Attitudes:

What do we want students to feel, value and demonstrate?

The programme promotes and fosters a set of attitudes that include tolerance, respect, integrity, independence, enthusiasm, empathy, curiosity, creativity, cooperation, confidence, commitment and appreciation.

Action:

How do we want students to act?

Students are encouraged to reflect, to make informed choices and to take action that will help their peers, school staff and the wider community





Knowledge

The Primary Years Programme identifies a body of significant knowledge for all students in all cultures, in six principal subject areas: language; social studies;

mathematics, science and technology; the arts; personal, social and physical education.

An authorized PYP school is expected to provide for the teaching of an additional language other than the school's language of instruction in order to support the international perspective of the curriculum.

Subject knowledge should be integrated using the six transdisciplinary themes of the curriculum model, which are the following:

Who we are

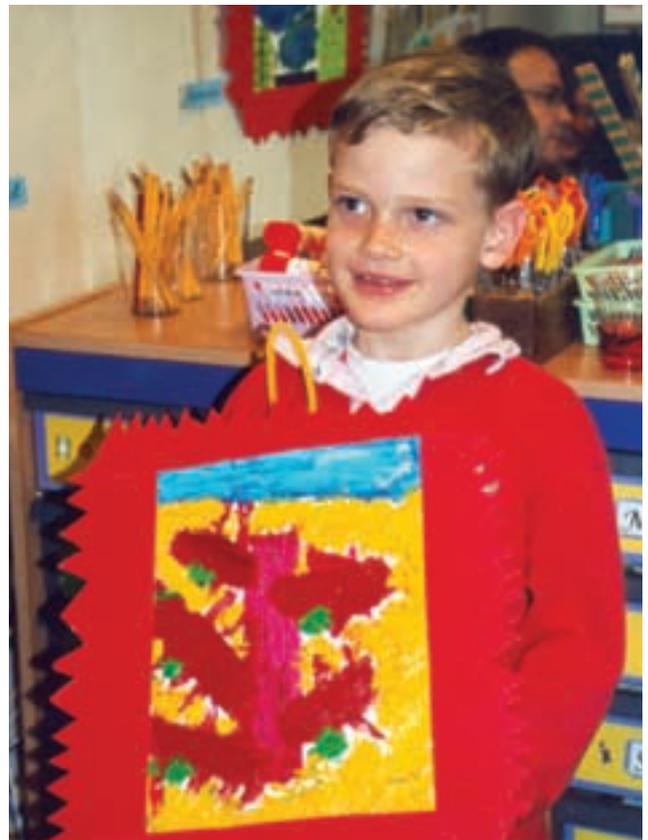
Where we are in place and time

How we express ourselves

How the world works

How we organize ourselves

Sharing the planet



Taught curriculum

How best will we learn?

The Primary Years Programme offers specific guidelines and support for teachers:

Professional development

Through IBO sponsored or approved workshops, teachers are provided with the opportunity to work collaboratively on exemplar sample material pertaining to planning, teaching and assessing. In their schools, they are encouraged to use a diversity of strategies appropriate to the needs of their students.



Unit planner

The IBO provides a structured approach to collaborative planning in the form of a unit planner designed to assist teachers in planning effectively for inquiry. The unit planner is

designed around seven open-ended questions:

What is our purpose?

What resources will we use?

What do we want to learn?

How best will we learn?

How will we know what we have learned?

How will we take action?

To what extent did we achieve our purpose?

Learned curriculum

How will we know what we have learned?



Assessment

All assessment of student work in the Primary Years Programme is carried out by teachers in participating schools; there are no externally set examinations or externally moderated work. Assessment in the PYP is of two types, each of which has a specific function:

Formative assessment is interwoven with daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what the students

already know in order to plan the next stage in learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other.

Summative assessment happens at the end of the teaching and learning process and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned.

The Primary Years Programme promotes the use of a range and balance of school-based assessment and feedback techniques, including student/teacher/parent conferences, writing samples, structured observations, and performance tasks assessed by teachers and by the students themselves.





The PYP portfolio

The PYP portfolio – a profile of student achievement and accomplishments – is an important mechanism for documenting a student’s educational progress through the curriculum.

The student and teachers collaborate on selections for the portfolio, which may contain examples of the student’s work:

- Examples of the student’s work

Information about any extracurricular achievements or other activities undertaken by the student

- A self- assessment by the student.

The portfolio also serves to assist in handling transfers of students between schools offering the Primary Years Programme.

example

A group of 9-11 year old refugees from Sierra Leone are about to be placed in the school’s local community. Children are asked to prepare a proposal to the town authorities advising them how to best meet the needs of these refugee children.

Students will be told that the school board has given them a plot of land on their new school site. They will be given the dimensions of the site lot as well as the budget allotted to their group. They are to design a quiet outdoor area conducive to learning.

The PYP exhibition

Students in the 10-12 age range who are in the final year of the PYP are expected to carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry project – The PYP exhibition— under the guidance of a teacher. There is considerable flexibility in the choice of the central idea to be explored in the exhibition.



Implementing the programme

The Primary Years Programme is designed for students between 3 and 12 years old, although not all schools will include the entire age range.

It is important to obtain and consider all relevant information published by the International Baccalaureate Organization before introducing the Primary Years Programme in a school. All staff involved in teaching and administering the programme should also be involved in the initial planning stages and need to participate in IB professional development activities.

Strategic planning

The decision to adopt the Primary Years Programme is likely to affect the organization of the entire school. Strategic planning is necessary to establish the objectives of the

programme in the context of the school and its particular conditions, to set up a timeframe for the implementation of the PYP, to assign funds for the allocation of the necessary resources, and to explain the new programme to the school community.

The Primary Years Programme depends on committed teaching in the spirit of the inquiry-based curriculum. This in turn requires thorough institutional support. All participating teachers need to engage in an ongoing process of professional development. Opportunities to do so include attendance at regional teacher-training events and participation in school-based training. Before receiving authorization, the IBO requires the school to ensure that there is adequate provision of materials such as books, computers and other resources necessary for successful implementation of the programme.



Coordination

The Primary Years Programme requires coordination within the school, between the school and the community, and between the school and the IBO. Each school is required to appoint a PYP coordinator who is responsible for communication between the school and the IBO to ensure effective implementation of the programme. The coordinator, who in some cases may be the school head or principal, is expected to provide leadership for the PYP. Teachers need to work as a cohesive, informed team to enable students to derive maximum benefit from a fully integrated and well-managed programme.





Programme evaluation

All authorized schools are revisited and their programmes evaluated three years after the date of authorization to offer the PYP, and every five years thereafter. Schools may request additional consultative visits at any time in the five-year cycle.

This service is designed to review the effectiveness of the delivery of the Primary Years Programme at the school. The IBO-selected evaluation team consists of knowledgeable professionals familiar with the programme in the school. The evaluation process does not assess individual students or teachers.

The evaluation process identifies the strengths and weaknesses of a school's programme, and the degree of success with which the school has implemented the PYP. It will follow up on any recommendations made at the time of the authorization visit. The information provided should assist the school in the further development of an effective programme.

This printed guide is a companion to the schools' guide that appears on www.ibo.org, the IBO's public Web site. The online version is revised more frequently than the printed one and should be considered the valid document. Changes since the last printed version appeared will be posted on www.ibo.org as an easy reference for schools.

The IBO does not recommend that schools download and print the online version pages because of the Internet time and large amount of ink required.

To order printed copies go to the IBO's sales catalogue: www.ibo.org.



International Baccalaureate Organization
15, Route des Morillons • CH-1218 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 791 7740 • Fax +41 22 791 0277
www.ibo.org