



ISS

SINGAPORE CAMPUS

Realising Potential

Language Guidelines

Revised August 2022



Statement of Philosophy	4
How literacy is taught at ISS	5
Primary	5
High School	5
Grades 11 – 12:	6
Language Planning	6
Primary School	6
High School	7
Reading	7
Primary School	8
High School	8
Writing	10
Primary School	10
High School	10
Listening and Speaking/Viewing and Presenting	11
Primary School	11
High School	11
Spelling/Word Study	12
Primary School	12
High School	12
Handwriting	12
Primary School	12
High School	13
Learning/Literacy Support/Inclusion	13
Primary School	13
High School	13
Assessment	13

Primary School	13
High School	14
Terminology:	15
Learner Profile :	15



ISS Language Guidelines

Statement of Philosophy

At the International School of Singapore (ISS), students learn language, learn through language, and learn about language in an environment where they are actively engaged in asking questions and solving problems, making meaning, thinking reflectively and building enduring understandings. All teachers are responsible for both general and subject-specific language teaching at all levels.

ISS recognises that the acquisition and control of language constitute genuine empowerment for individuals in society and that in order to adequately equip students for success in their lives, it is crucial that they develop proficiency and expertise in listening and speaking, viewing, reading and writing in a wide range of modes and registers. Full academic literacy in English, Japanese, Korean, Chinese or other Mother Tongue languages is the ultimate goal of the Language A (Language and literature) programme.

In addition, the Language B (Language Acquisition) programme at ISS actively promotes additive bilingualism: students learn an additional language without detriment to the development of their first language, or their culture.

ISS fosters the development of each student's full literacy potential through the integration of home, school and community. ISS is committed to ensuring that all students are successful in literacy and become skilled independent readers, writers, listeners and speakers. Through carefully planned reading instruction and a balanced literacy approach, students will learn strategies that support their continued growth as life-long readers, writers, listeners and speakers.

How literacy is taught at ISS

The development of essential literacy skills – reading, writing, viewing and presenting, listening and speaking– are a vital part of a student’s literacy development.

Primary

With a focus on independent learning, time is allocated on a daily basis for the teaching of language. This designated time for instruction in reading, writing, listening and word study includes whole group instruction (focus lessons, read-aloud), small group instruction (differentiated groups, strategy lessons, shared reading and writing), and independent work (independent reading, writing and listening, in order to practise and apply skills and strategies).

In accordance with the trans-disciplinary practice of Approaches To Learning (ATL), language is authentically incorporated into units of inquiry.

To promote intercultural understanding, communication and respect, Mandarin instruction is provided three times per week to all students who have some proficiency and independence in English. The recognition of the importance of Mother Tongue is promoted through the Librarian working with students/ parents.

Currently, students who require language support in order to access the curriculum have additional English language support as well as differentiated assistance from the class teacher and the EAL teacher in the mainstream class where possible. Beginner EAL students in Grades 1-5 will receive EAL withdrawal lessons. This will occur at the same time as mainstream students receive Literacy tuition.

High School

Grades 6 – 10: Where possible, students follow the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP).

The Language and literature programme supports students as they work to achieve mastery in the skills of reading, writing, viewing and presenting, listening and speaking in their most proficient language. At present, students participate in the Language and literature programme specifically in English, Japanese, Korean and Mandarin. Other languages are catered for in the Mother Tongue class.

Some students are able to access Language and literature programme in more than one language.

The importance of the acquisition of an additional language is acknowledged in the Language acquisition programme. This programme supports students to develop skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. This year, students participate in Language acquisition classes in English, French or Mandarin.

As the Approaches To Learning (ATLs) are interdisciplinary, literacy is incorporated into

units when authentically possible. With the aim to move students from supported to independent learning, reading, writing and vocabulary development is integrated into all units of study across all subjects through a variety of literacy strategies.

Where possible, additional English language instruction is provided for students on a needs basis. Currently, Grade 6 - 8 students (English Phases 1-2) who require language support in order to access the curriculum have additional English language instruction in lieu of a Language and literature course. Grades 9 - 10 students who require English language support have additional English language instruction and study their Language and literature. Students in Phases 1-2 of English Acquisition are also supported in core subjects by an EAL Specialist teacher wherever possible.

Grades 11 - 12:

Students study either the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) or the ISS High School Diploma Programme (HSD).

Both the Diploma Programme (IBDP) and the ISS High School Diploma Programme (HSD) challenges students to become literate readers and writers. Students enrol in IBDP Language A: English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Self-Taught (Mother Tongue). Where fitting, students will access the programmes in more than one language thus earning a bilingual degree.

Language B programmes support students in second-language acquisition. At present, the Language B courses are offered in English, Chinese and French.

The focus of all courses is the development of independent language learning and text analysis skills in preparation for the rigours of the IBDP and HSD courses. Some students will opt for a bilingual diploma.

Within the Approaches To Learning (ATL), literacy is incorporated into all units when authentically possible, thereby encouraging students to become competent users of a variety of literacy strategies that aim to foster independence in all subject areas.

Students following the High School Diploma path also have access to IB Diploma classes (Language A and B) as well as a teacher directed IELTS (International English Language Testing System) programme which culminates in them gaining an IELTS certificate .

Language Planning

Primary School

Teachers are guided by the Language standards and benchmarks associated with the Program of Inquiry. They collaboratively plan the Language programme to ensure balance and articulation across the grade levels. Faculty and Coordinator meetings are used as a platform for discussion of the Language curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations.

Grade level teachers collaboratively plan on a weekly basis with Integrators where appropriate.

Yearly overview planning involves:

- Grade teams
- Integrators
- Learning Support Team
- PYP Coordinator
- Faculty TLL (Language Arts)
- Head of EAL (K-12)
- Deputy Academic Director of Teaching and Learning
- Academic Director of Teaching and Learning

ISS teachers are provided with professional development to ensure an inclusive, differentiated approach that nurtures multiple learning styles. ISS aims to ensure Learning support staff plan collaboratively with teachers to ensure that all students are empowered to reach their potential.

High School

Teachers work together to plan the overall language programme for the school, ensuring balance and progression across the grade levels, following the school's MYP and DP units with Outcomes and Benchmarks. Staff and subject group meetings are used as a platform to discuss the language curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations.

The High School Diploma (HSD) is offered to those who are unable/choose not to access the IB Diploma. However, HSD students are able to access/receive recognition for the IB Language A (English, Korean, Japanese, Mandarin) and B (English) courses. The HSD standards are accredited by CPE (Singapore Ministry of Education), WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) and CIS (Council of Independent Schools).

The Learning Support & Wellness Team and the Teaching and Learning Literacies Team (ESL) also meet with language teachers and support staff as needed.

Yearly overview planning involves:

- Subject groupings
- Learning Support staff
- MYP, DP and HSD Coordinators
- Head of EAL & EAL Specialists
- Learning Support Team
- Deputy Academic Director of Teaching and learning
- Academic Director of Teaching and learning

Students at ISS have a variety of learning styles and needs, therefore ISS provides staff with extensive professional development opportunities to address the diverse needs, particularly differentiation, of the students.

Reading

In order to develop lifelong reading habits, ISS learners are encouraged to read for pleasure, interest, and information, experiencing an extensive range of quality fiction and non-fiction texts. As learners engage with interesting and appealing texts, appropriate to their experiences and developmental phases, they acquire the skills, strategies and conceptual understandings necessary to become competent, motivated, independent readers. At ISS, we strive to incorporate current educational practices into our planning and teaching.

Primary School

Students choose a variety of resources from class libraries which are supplemented by teacher and student selected resources from the ISS school library. Class libraries are rotated between classes on a regular basis during the school year.

The following reading practices are implemented:

- Students are exposed to a variety of genres and practise and develop reading skills daily through explicit teaching of strategies and through the Programme of Inquiry. There is an allocated time for independent reading, reading to a peer, or listening to reading each day.
- Teachers plan using a variety of resources to provide systematic, direct and explicit phonics instruction so that students master the essential alphabetic code-breaking skills required for foundational reading proficiency.
- Students are encouraged to take reading materials home daily to enable parents and carers to share and support them in the process of attaining reading proficiency.

High School

Reading materials are from a variety of resources, both fiction and non-fiction.

The following reading practices are implemented:

- Students are exposed to a variety of genres and have the opportunity to practise and develop reading skills.

- Where possible, students are provided with an integrated approach to reading that supports the development of oral language, vocabulary building, grammar, reading fluency and comprehension skills.
- Students are encouraged to react to their independent/academic reading through dialogue with parents/guardians. This is particularly important in the Mother Tongue/Self Taught classes.
- Many classrooms/corridors have a range of texts in a variety of languages available to students.
- Through teachers and the librarian, students have access to a wide range of online resources.
- Students are encouraged to regularly visit the school library to borrow books or to use library resources.
- Students are encouraged to contribute to reading resources (Library/class rooms) regardless of language.
- Students have access to literacy programmes delivered online exposing them to differentiated fiction and non-fiction.
- Diagnostic reading assessments are used (ISA, WIDA, IELTS)

Writing

At ISS, students are provided with opportunities to develop a variety of writing strategies. Students are encouraged to attempt new styles of writing, which are introduced and modeled by the teacher.

Primary School

The following writing practices are implemented:

- Consistent use of the Writing Process as a structure and practice (planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing), as age-appropriate throughout the grade levels.
- Consistent use of the 6 Traits of Writing (Voice, Ideas, Organization, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency and Conventions) as the core scheme with which to assess components of skillful writing, and to structure individual goals and associated strategies during Work on Writing.
- Students are provided with varied, challenging, authentic and meaningful opportunities to recognise the purpose of writing as a form of communication through a variety of text types that are integrated within the units of inquiry.
- Students are provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and use written

language specific to different subject areas and through the PYP.

- Students are provided with opportunities to make the connection between learning to write and listening to reading.
- Students participate in modeled, shared, guided and independent writing activities.

High School

The following writing practices (across numerous languages) are implemented:

- Communication is fostered by providing students with challenging and meaningful writing opportunities.
- Consistent use of the writing process across the grade levels (planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing).
- Students are provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and apply correct and appropriate use of language.
- Students participate in guided and independent writing activities.
- Students are provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and use written language specific to different subject areas through MYP, DP and HSD.
- Students are led to reflect on their writing process and product.

Listening and Speaking/Viewing and Presenting

Primary School

Students are offered a language-rich environment where opinions are valued and students are given opportunities to speak within formal and informal situations and for a variety of audiences. Regular practice is provided in speaking and listening to develop confidence and self-esteem. Students are encouraged to listen, discuss, review and develop their own ideas in cooperation with others.

- Students are provided ample opportunities to develop and utilise oral language beyond everyday classroom conversations through oral presentations, debates, speeches, role-play, poetry recitations, songs, online activities and dialogue.
- Teachers model language usage in conversation, while being sensitive to the social context, students' cultural backgrounds and mother tongues.
- Teachers plan activities that expose students to conventions of oral language and aid them in responding appropriately to a range of contexts and audiences.

High School

At ISS, students are offered a language-rich environment where opinions are valued and students are given opportunities to speak in formal and informal situations. Regular practice in speaking and listening is encouraged so as to develop confidence and fluency.

The following practices are implemented:

- Students are encouraged to listen, discuss, re-enact and develop their own ideas in collaboration with others.
- Where possible, students are provided ample opportunities to develop and utilize oral language beyond everyday classroom conversations through oral presentations, debates, speeches, role-play, poetry recitations, songs, online activities and dialogue.
- Students learn to use the conventions of oral language through activities that expose them to a range of contexts and audiences.
- Students learn to use the conventions of oral language through activities that expose them to a range of contexts and audiences including school assemblies and public events.

Spelling/Word Study

Primary School

At ISS, spelling is considered a vital part of language development. Spelling conventions are consistently modelled and displayed throughout the school.

The following spelling/word study practices are implemented:

- In Kindergarten, differentiated and developmentally appropriate spelling is taught in authentic contexts in multi-sensory forms and with reference to Words Their Way: Word Study For Phonics.
- In Grades 1- 5, students will have an explicit differentiated spelling programme guided by Words Their Way: Word Study For Phonics, Vocabulary and Spelling Instruction. Spelling will also include relevant words from reading, independent writing and the units of inquiry. Teachers model a variety of methods and resources for learning and checking spelling and to enhance their spelling program.

High School

One of the main ATLs is communication: the MYP and DP include “Using language” as a

criterion in both Language A and B. The development of vocabulary and spelling is contextualised according to the unit of study.

Teachers (subject/age appropriate) use online resources /vocabulary banks to enhance spelling and widen the students' range of vocabulary.

Handwriting

Primary School

ISS recognises a goal of legibility for all students. Both printed (manuscript) and cursive handwriting and keyboarding skills will be taught using a differentiated approach according to need through individual, small group and whole group instruction.

- Students in Grades K- 5 use a variety of resources with a focus on legibility

High School

When identified, Learning Support teachers assist students with specific needs in this area.

Learning/Literacy Support/Inclusion

Primary School

ISS is committed to personalising learning thus enabling all students to realise their own learning journey within a supportive environment. Curriculum materials and resources are designed to promote international-mindedness and the learner profiles. Classroom, ESL and Learning Support staff collaborate to support all learners within the extent of the school's resources, as well as recognising the need, on occasion, for outside agencies.

High School

ISS is committed to personalizing and supporting learning that provides the opportunity for students to realize their own learning journey within a supportive and inclusive environment. Curriculum materials and resources are designed to promote international-mindedness and to realise the IB Learner Profile qualities. Teachers and support staff collaborate to support all learners within the various programmes. Where necessary, after consultation with parents/guardians, Learning Support Staff, teachers and the student, outside agencies are involved.

Assessment

ISS has common assessments across the grade levels at scheduled times throughout the year to assess student progress and development. Teachers' collaboration on internal moderation is encouraged in MYP and DP. Feedback from previous MYP/DP exams is used to guide internal assessment and provide support for staff/students.

Primary School

ISA testing (Mathematics, Reading and Writing) for students in Grades 3 to 5 is conducted once a year.

WIDA Testing is conducted from Grades 1 – 5 for EAL students.

Students' reading skills are also evaluated during Daily 5 conferencing, using the PM Benchmarks/Probe Scheme.

All students from Kindergarten 2 to Grade 5 are assessed using the appropriate spelling inventory from Words Their Way: Word Study For Phonics, Vocabulary and Spelling Instruction conducted in August/May.

- Students in Kindergarten 2 are assessed using the Primary Spelling Inventory from Words Their Way: Word Study For Phonics, Vocabulary and Spelling Instruction.
- Students from Grades 1 to 3 are assessed using the Lower Level Spelling Inventory.
- Students from Grade 4 - 5 are assessed using the Upper Level Spelling Inventory. These assessments may be differentiated according to EAL or Learning Support needs.
- Assessments are conducted twice a year.

All students from Grades Kindergarten to Grade 5 receive a Writing Prompt assessment twice a year which is scored using the ISS 6 Traits rubrics (K-2 and 3-5) and administered in August and May.

Formative assessment carried out by the class teacher is used on a regular basis to inform future planning. It involves identifying goals and strategies from the CAFE, 6 Traits of Writing, Learning objectives and ISS Standards and Benchmarks to inform next steps.

High School

Formative Assessment is used to assess student progress and to inform planning. In addition to teacher generated assessment, ISS administers standardised diagnostic tools to inform learning. These are currently:

ISA testing (Mathematics, Reading and Writing) for students in Grades 6 to 9 is conducted once a year.

Achieve3000 and Read Theory diagnostics for students in grades 6 to 10, Language acquisition (English) are used to assess reading Lexile levels and to guide student choice of reading material.

Summative tasks are administered to assess student achievement and are based on IB MYP and DP assessment criteria and these are used to inform planning. All students are given the opportunities to take exams and complete unit assessment (Formal Semester/Yearly exams, E-Portfolio, and E-Assessments). The Language acquisition students receive regular WIDA Testing to aid placement in the MYP Language acquisition phases.

Terminology:

Literacy: For the purposes of this document, literacy incorporates reading, writing and viewing & listening and presenting.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Terminology

- MYP = Middle Years Programme
- DP = Diploma Programme

HSD = High School Diploma

Programme Nomenclature by sector	K - 5	Grades 6 - 10	Grades 11 - 12
PYP	Literacy		-
MYP	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language and literature ● Language acquisition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language and literature ● Language acquisition
DP HSD	-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language A + SSST ● Language B

Learner Profile :

<p>Inquirers Knowledgeable Thinkers Communicators Principled Balanced Reflective Open-minded Caring Risk-takers</p>
