

ISL DOCUMENT

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING GLOSSARY

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Owner: IB Programme Coordinators

Please find below a list of terms that you will find throughout the ISL curriculum documentation. If you have any further questions about the curriculum, please contact the respective IB coordinators:

- Reception 3 to Year 6 - IB Primary Years Programme (PYP): pypcoordinator@isl.ch
- Year 7 to Year 11 - IB Middle Years Programme (MYP): mypcoordinator@isl.ch
- Year 12 and Year 13 - IB Diploma Programme (DP): dpcoordinator@isl.ch

Term	Definition, Purpose and Examples
Agency	<p>Definition: Learner agency is when students have voice, choice and ownership for their own learning, and demonstrate self-efficacy.</p> <p>Purpose: When students have agency, they are able to set goals, persist through challenges, and emerge as self-directed learners. When students have agency, the relationship between the teacher and students becomes a partnership.</p> <p>Examples: Student goal setting, student-led conferences, and student- initiated action and service.</p>
Approaches to learning skills (AtL)	<p>Definition: Cross-curricular, interrelated skills that develop the students’ thinking skills, strategies and attitudes, and the ability to reflect on one’s own learning.</p> <p>Purpose: AtL skills are used in units of study to explicitly develop skills that enable the students to become better learners.</p> <p>Examples: Communication, collaboration, self-management, research, critical thinking.</p>
Big idea	<p>Definition: Refers to core concepts, principles, theories, and processes that should serve as the focal point of curricula, instruction, and assessment. A big idea is not tied to a specific unit, but is an overarching idea that connects discrete knowledge and skills to a larger intellectual frame, and provides a bridge for linking specific facts and skills. (McTighe & Wiggins, 2004)</p> <p>Purpose: A focus on these larger ideas helps students to see the purpose and relevance of content and equips them to apply their learning in new situations and beyond school.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (English) The audience and purpose of a text affects the way in which it is written and constructed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Science) Complex systems are made of discrete parts which have their own properties.
Central Idea	<p>Definition: Used within the PYP, an enduring understanding that integrates conceptual understanding and factual knowledge and promotes student inquiry into a transdisciplinary theme.</p> <p>Purpose: Within the PYP, the central idea integrates conceptual understanding and factual knowledge, and frames the inquiry within a unit.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (Y4) Living things adapt and change to survive in their environment. (Y5) Innovation, planning, and market knowledge contribute to being a successful entrepreneur.
Concept Key Concept and Related Concept:	<p>Definition: A mental construct, or “frame of mind” that is broad, abstract, universal, and timeless. It is a condensed theory, expressed as a single word or phrase.</p> <p>Purpose: Concepts are used as the building blocks for a concept-based curriculum that focuses on moving learning beyond the factual level and into the higher order of analysing generalisations and big ideas. Concepts connect big ideas from different areas of knowledge.</p> <p>Examples: Systems, change, power.</p> <p>Key Concepts: (or macro concepts) are generally broad, transfer across subjects and provide the breadth for understanding.</p> <p>Related Concepts: (or micro concepts) are generally discipline-specific and provide the depth for understanding.</p>
Concept-based Curriculum	<p>Definition: A curriculum that focuses on the transfer of the important conceptual ideas of a discipline that is a three-dimensional approach that melds what students will KNOW, DO, and UNDERSTAND.</p> <p>Purpose: Concept-based curriculum is an approach to curriculum design that moves away from subject-specific content and instead emphasises “big ideas” that span multiple subject areas or disciplines. For example, in a concept-based classroom, students may study the big idea of “change” in a variety of areas, from patterns in mathematics, to civilizations in social studies, to life cycles in science.</p> <p>Examples: For example, in a humanities unit, concept-based goals extend the content and skills:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will identify the Axis and Allied powers...in order to understand how 20th century conflict continues to politically and economically impact us today. 2. Students will compare and contrast the environmental characteristics of the United States...in order to understand the environmental impact humans reap.
Formative Assessment	<p>Definition: Ongoing assessment throughout a unit of study that is not formally graded but provides the teacher with information about student understanding of the curriculum standards.</p> <p>Purpose: Formative assessment is aimed at providing information to guide teaching and improve student performance.</p> <p>Examples: Practice quizzes, class discussion, short written responses.</p>
Global Context	<p>Definition: In the MYP, six themes that connect to any unit of study and provide a specific perspective from which the students engage with the content. Teachers will choose one specific context as a basis for inquiry.</p> <p>Purpose: Global contexts establish a focus for meaningful inquiry by identifying specific settings, events, or circumstances that provide more concrete perspectives for teaching and learning.</p> <p>Examples: Globalisation and sustainability, Scientific and technical innovation.</p>
Individualised Education Plan (IEP)	<p>Definition: A document that clearly defines how a school plans to meet a child's unique educational needs that results from diagnosed neurodiversity. The IEP is the cornerstone of a child's specialised education programme.</p> <p>Purpose: The goals of an IEP are twofold: to set reasonable, measurable goals for the child and to also specify the services the school will provide.</p>
Learner Profile	<p>Definition: Ten attributes that describe the IB mission statement in action. Together, they encompass a range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success.</p> <p>Purpose: The learner profile aims to develop internationally-minded people who, recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.</p>

	<p>Examples: Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Open-minded, Risk-takers, Caring, Balanced, Principled, Open-minded.</p>
Lines of Inquiry	<p>Definition: Within the PYP units, lines of inquiry are conceptual statements connected to the theme and central idea within a unit of inquiry.</p> <p>Purpose: Lines of inquiry are used to guide the learning within a unit, unpack the central idea, and frame a student's points of investigation.</p> <p>Examples: (Y5) An Inquiry into...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The entrepreneurship process. ● The connection between market, supply and demand. ● The responsibilities associated with being a principled entrepreneur.
Programme of Inquiry (POI)	<p>Definition: Within the PYP, the POI is composed of the primary school's transdisciplinary units of inquiry, which are based on the six transdisciplinary themes of the PYP. There are four to five units in Reception 3 to Year 1 and six units from Year 2 to Year 6.</p> <p>Purpose: The POI maps out the core curriculum for the PYP, both academic and non-academic, that define the knowledge and understandings developed within the programme.</p> <p>Examples: The ISL POI is published on the school's curriculum web page.</p>
Service Learning	<p>Definition: Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful service with instruction and reflection. Service learning follows a five stage process: 1. Investigating community needs 2. Preparation and planning 3. Action, 4. Reflection and 5. Demonstration and sharing.</p> <p>Purpose: The aim of service learning is to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, build individual character attributes, and strengthen communities. It prepares students for meaningful engagement in the world, and supports development of the ISL and IB mission.</p> <p>Examples: A variety of service projects exist within PYP units, in the MYP service learning programme, and in the DP through the CAS (creativity, activity, service) programme. Service at ISL is informed by the ISL Pillars of Service.</p>

Standards	<p>Definition: Learning standards are concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education.</p> <p>Purpose: Learning standards describe educational objectives—i.e., what students should have learned by the end of a course, grade level, or grade span.</p> <p>Examples: The student will be able to write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</p>
Statement of Inquiry	<p>Definition: In the MYP, a single sentence that explicitly includes the unit’s concepts and global context and expresses the central idea of the unit.</p> <p>Purpose: The statement of inquiry establishes the purpose of the unit and facilitates higher levels of thinking by moving beyond the factual level and into the conceptual level.</p> <p>Examples: “The Earth’s diverse environmental systems are vulnerable and need to be managed sustainably.”</p>
Summative Assessment	<p>Definition: A task assigned often near the end of the unit in which students demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and skills developed throughout the unit.</p> <p>Purpose: The summative assessment allows the teacher and student to understand whether the curricular competencies have been achieved, and supports in understanding the next steps for teaching and learning.</p> <p>Examples: Test, essay, poster, debate, in-class timed response, athletic assessment, lab report.</p>
Transdisciplinary Learning	<p>Definition: Transdisciplinary learning is the exploration of a relevant concept, issue or problem that integrates the perspectives of multiple disciplines in order to connect new knowledge and deeper understanding to real life experiences.</p> <p>Purpose: Integrated learning is the most rudimentary level of collaboration across disciplines. At the very least, it allows teachers and, more importantly, students to make connections across disciplines, creating an opportunity for greater depth and complexity.</p>

	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Units of Inquiry are transdisciplinary within the PYP, integrating multiple subjects. • The Approaches to Learning skills are transdisciplinary, as they are within all areas of learning.
Transdisciplinary Theme	<p>Definition: Universal themes relevant within and across the traditional subject areas, and within and across cultures, that define the body of lasting knowledge valued in a PYP school.</p> <p>Purpose: Within the PYP, the six themes provide a conceptual lens through which to develop understanding of the world.</p> <p>Examples: Who We Are: An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social, and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human</p>
Unit of Inquiry	<p>Definition: A unit of inquiry is a 6-8 week “chunk of learning” structured around a “central idea”, that empowers students to develop a lasting understanding of the identified learning goals informed by the essential elements of the programme. (knowledge, concepts, skills, and disposition)</p> <p>Purpose: The unit of inquiry supports students in learning how to learn while developing the essential knowledge, skills, and disposition of a global citizen. It is the core framework of the curriculum.</p>

Sources

- International Baccalaureate Organization (2016) From Principles into Practice.pdf.
- Understanding By Design (2004) McTighe & Wiggins