

Illinois Learning Standards

Foreign Languages

The benefits of effective foreign language instruction focus on the role of the individual in a multilingual, global society. No longer do Americans live in isolation; instead, there is an ever-changing, interdependent world in which diverse cultural and linguistic groups converge. The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning establish the academic, business, personal, recreational and practical benefits of studying foreign languages, and the *Illinois Learning Standards for Foreign Languages* are based on this rationale. The national document states: "To study another language and culture gives one the powerful key to successful communication: *knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom*. All the linguistic and social knowledge required for effective human-to-human interaction is encompassed in those ten words. . . . The approach to second language instruction found in today's schools is designed to facilitate genuine interaction with others, whether they are on another continent, across town, or within the neighborhood."



Research studies clearly indicate that studying another language may give students the "edge" needed to succeed at higher levels in some other subjects. A study of over 17,000 students applying for college admission revealed that "students who had completed a foreign language course in high school tended to have higher scores on the ACT exams in English and math *regardless of their ability level*" (Olsen & Brown 1992). It has also been verified that "high school foreign language students perform significantly better on the SAT verbal exam than non-foreign-language students, and that SAT verbal scores increase successively with each half year of foreign language study" (*National Standards*).

It is important to consider the special character of the classical languages, Latin and ancient Greek. Although orality may be one common component of instruction in these languages, the main thrust of the curriculum is the comprehension of written language rather than fluency in speaking. This fact must be considered when applying the standards to the classical languages and learning benchmarks found within this document. In addition to reading and writing skills, a social-cultural-historical emphasis may also be an important curricular goal in the classical language classroom.

The standards included in this document are intended to be generic and are not written for any one specific language. Since all languages have differing vocabulary, syntactic structures, sound systems, writing systems and cultures, they offer a different set of greater and lesser challenges to English-speaking students. As a result, users of this document should apply necessary modifications to make them applicable to a specific language.

The five stages are designed to correspond to the students' expected level of progress as they study the language. The Stage One (Beginning) benchmarks need to be mastered first regardless of whether the study begins in elementary school, middle school or high school, with mastery of the other stages following in sequence. In short-term programs (e.g., current 2 - 4 year programs) students may not be able to achieve mastery of the more advanced stages.

Applications of Learning

Through Applications of Learning, students demonstrate and deepen their understanding of basic knowledge and skills. These applied learning skills cross academic disciplines and reinforce the important learning of the disciplines. The ability to use these skills will greatly influence students' success in school, in the workplace and in the community.

Solving Problems

Recognize and investigate problems; formulate and propose solutions supported by reason and evidence.

Learning a foreign language develops the tools for dealing with various types of survival challenges, technical skills and interpersonal exchanges across and among cultures. Students use the process of forming a hypothesis, testing that hypothesis, eliminating nonessential information and drawing conclusions, aided by and further developing the four skills which are at the core of communication: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Knowledge of other cultures and world issues helps students temper their communication about the problems they endeavor to solve.

Communicating

Express and interpret information and ideas.

The four basic skills essential for oral and written communication are enhanced by an understanding of non-verbal gestures, cultural symbols and rituals, global trends, regional varieties of language, and local traditions and contexts. For students of language to contribute to society, they must learn the academic, technical and workplace uses of language and how those realms of knowledge relate to other fields of study. Students learn to communicate for a complete range of purposes including personal, school-based, community, vocational, recreational and professional. In modern languages, curricular designs reflect the importance of students developing simultaneously all four communication skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Using Technology

Use appropriate instruments, electronic equipment, computers and networks to access information, process ideas and communicate results.

Students of foreign languages benefit from access to a wide range of technology helpful in locating primary sources in the target language and interacting directly with native speakers. Students reinforce their knowledge of software, technical skills and vocabulary as they use this technology both within and beyond the foreign language classroom. The use of technology in the foreign language curriculum adds a powerful tool for lifelong learning, advanced research, recreational activities and understanding of global issues.

Working on Teams

Learn and contribute productively as individuals and as members of groups.

Group learning activities at the core of foreign language learning are one component of actual communication in the target language. Students using the target language to engage in group discussions and research projects are already communicating within the classroom. Group learning activities also reflect contexts and processes outside the classroom. For example, students involved in a debate may cover the same issues as presented in a court of law during the French Revolution. Students preparing a group presentation on the Amazon rainforest may cover the same problems as a group of Brazilian engineers and scientists.

Making Connections

Recognize and apply connections of important information and ideas within and among learning areas.

Students of foreign languages make four types of connections throughout their study. First, they learn how to transfer skills and content of the foreign language in ways to better understand skills and content of the first language. Second, students make subject-matter connections, reinforcing content and skills of other areas such as science and fine arts. Third, students explore issues and themes which cross disciplinary lines, and fourth, students use the target language for making connections to vocabulary and processes important in the world .

STATE GOAL 28: Use the target language to communicate within and beyond the classroom setting.

Why This Goal Is Important: At the core of foreign language learning is mastery of the four basic communication skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In modern languages, the ultimate goal is to attain the ability and confidence necessary to interact with fluency in oral and written contexts with native speakers. This communication may occur both in person and through technology. This interaction in the target language is central to all curriculum and instruction in the modern languages. On the other hand, in classical languages, the goal is to focus more on linguistic structures and textual studies with much less emphasis on oral communication.

A. Understand oral communication in the target language.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
28.A.1a Recognize basic language patterns (e.g., forms of address, questions, case).	28.A.2a Comprehend illustrated stories, audiovisual programs or websites.	28.A.3a Comprehend main messages of simple oral and audio presentations with assistance from resources (e.g., glossaries, guided questions, outlines).	28.A.4 Comprehend details of oral and audio presentations unsupported by visual aids.	28.A.5 Comprehend a variety of oral and audio presentations in academic, technical, social or work environments.
28.A.1b Respond appropriately to simple commands in the target language.	28.A.2b Follow instructions in the target language, given one step at a time, for a wide range of activities.	28.A.3b Follow instructions in the target language as given in multistep segments for assignments and activities in and out of the classroom.		

B. Interact in the target language in various settings.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
28.B.1a Respond to and ask simple questions with prompts.	28.B.2a Pose questions spontaneously in structured situations.	28.B.3a Respond to open-ended questions and initiate communication in various situations.	28.B.4a Engage in extended conversations in a variety of situations.	28.B.5a Discuss and defend a position on an issue in a discussion.
28.B.1b Imitate pronunciation, intonation and inflection including sounds unique to the target language.	28.B.2b Produce language using proper pronunciation, intonation and inflection.	28.B.3b Produce language with improved pronunciation, intonation and inflection.	28.B.4b Express differences of meaning using proper pronunciation, intonation and inflection.	28.B.5b Approximate native-like pronunciation, intonation and inflection.
	28.B.2c Comprehend gestures and body language often used in everyday interaction in the target language.	28.B.3c Use appropriate non-verbal cues common in areas where the target language is spoken.	28.B.4c Recognize and use nonverbal cues in various formal and informal settings.	

C. Understand written passages in the target language.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
28.C.1a Recognize the written form of familiar spoken language and predict meaning of key words in a simple story, poem or song.	28.C.2a Comprehend written classroom directions, read simple passages, infer meaning of cognates and recognize loan words.	28.C.3a Comprehend the main message of a variety of written materials with the help of resources (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, software, Internet, e-mail) to expand vocabulary.	28.C.4a Comprehend key vocabulary as well as the main message of complex written materials without the help of visuals.	28.C.5a Comprehend, with little or no support, a variety of materials intended for native speakers in academic, social and work situations.
28.C.1b Infer meaning of cognates from context.	28.C.2b Decode new vocabulary using contextual clues and drawing on words and phrases from prior lessons.	28.C.3b Compare word use, phrasing and sentence structures of the target language with those used in one or more other languages.	28.C.4b Demonstrate understanding of written materials by organizing information and concepts (e.g., outlines, flow charts).	28.C.5b Distinguish nuances of meaning in a variety of contexts (e.g., layers of meaning in poetry and prose).
			28.C.4c Compare the target language with one or more languages in terms of vocabulary, word use, phrase and sentence structure and complete text structures.	28.C.5c Explain how various languages are interrelated in terms of word origin and text structures.

D. Use the target language to present information, concepts and ideas for a variety of purposes to different audiences.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
28.D.1a Copy/write words, phrases and simple sentences.	28.D.2a Write on familiar topics using appropriate grammar, punctuation and capitalization.	28.D.3a Write compositions and reports with a specific focus, supporting details, logical sequence and conclusion.	28.D.4a Write complete expository pieces that include description, definition and analysis for a variety of situations.	28.D.5a Write documents in a variety of forms with supporting evidence from electronic and print sources to meet academic, social and work needs.
28.D.1b Describe people, activities and objects from school and home.	28.D.2b Present a simple written or oral report on familiar topics.	28.D.3b Present findings from research on unfamiliar topics (e.g., the Roman army, the French chateaux, origins of chocolate).	28.D.4b Make a persuasive presentation with documentation (e.g., visuals, interviews, quotes) from target language sources.	28.D.5b Make impromptu presentations in a variety of academic, social and work situations.
	28.D.2c Present an original production (e.g., TV commercials, ads, skits, songs) using known vocabulary and grammatical structures.	28.D.3c Present a simple, original poem or story based on a model.	28.D.4c Present a short original piece (e.g., essay, story, poem) on a given theme with some guidelines.	28.D.5c Present an original piece (e.g., essay, story, poem) on a theme of their choice with minimal guidance.

STATE GOAL 29: Use the target language to develop an understanding of the customs, arts, literature, history and geography associated with the target language.

Why This Goal Is Important: Understanding culture is integral to learning and understanding a language. This goal emphasizes not only the process of learning about the country and its culture, but also the fact that language and culture are inseparable. Through a range of materials in print and other media, students gain a richer understanding of both culture and language. Culture consists mainly of language, literature, fine arts, media, history and geography related to various peoples in the world. Students need to develop an understanding of how customs and traditions are shaped by speakers of language and how that language reflects those customs and traditions.

A. Understand manners and customs of various target language societies.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
29.A.1 Use common forms of courtesy, greetings and leave-takings appropriate to the time of day and relationship (adult, peer, parent).	29.A.2 Demonstrate activities (e.g., games, songs and role playing) associated with the target language.	29.A.3 Demonstrate selected customs, manners and traditions in societies associated with the target language.	29.A.4 Demonstrate target language expressions and levels of formality (e.g., age, social status) appropriate for entry-level work and social situations.	29.A.5 Analyze and interpret manners and customs within the social, academic and work environments of selected target language societies.

B. Understand music, dance, folk art, visual art, drama and architecture related to the target language societies.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
29.B.1a Identify one or more art forms (e.g., Japanese origami, Spanish flamenco) representative of areas where the target language is spoken.	29.B.2a Identify sample art works and their creators associated with areas where the target language is spoken.	29.B.3a Identify and explain ideas and themes expressed in selected works of art associated with target language societies using terms from the target language.	29.B.4a Compare themes that are inherent to areas where the target language is spoken as expressed in different art forms.	29.B.5a Explain the cultural and historical significance of characteristic art forms of a target language society.
29.B.1b Demonstrate one or more art forms representative of areas where the target language is spoken (e.g., dramatizing a sample of children’s literature, performing a song or dance).	29.B.2b Describe selected art forms of areas where the target language is spoken using arts vocabulary from the target language.	29.B.3b Understand and use the essential target language vocabulary referring to tools, processes and products in one or more of the art forms.	29.B.4b Compare and contrast selected art forms of areas where the target language is spoken.	29.B.5b Create an interpretive presentation of a selected art form based on research or a field experience.

C. Understand literature and various media of target language societies.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
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29.C.1a Identify main characters, settings and events from selected samples of children’s literature using audio and visual cues.	29.C.2a Read, retell and summarize selected literary works.	29.C.3a Read, discuss and write about themes and settings of selected materials in the target language with assistance of glossaries, guided questions or outlines.	29.C.4a Compare and contrast the characters, setting, themes and plot of two or more literary works.	29.C.5a Compare and analyze literary themes, styles and perspectives across authors and genres.
29.C.1b Identify different types of literature (e.g., poetry, short stories, plays, legends) in the target language.	29.C.2b Identify sample literary works and their authors representative of the target language.	29.C.3b Read, discuss and write about plot and form of selected literary works as illustrated in comic books, youth literature and abridgments in the target language using target language vocabulary.	29.C.4b Describe characteristics, origins and authors of various literary forms using target language vocabulary.	29.C.5b Explain the influence of historical context on form, style and point of view for a variety of literary works.
29.C.1c Identify primary media sources (e.g., television, radio, CD/ROM, software, films, on-line resources, websites, periodicals) in the target language.	29.C.2c Summarize the main points of selected media presentations in the target language.	29.C.3c Create simple print and/or non-print media messages in the target language modeled on media examples (e.g., advertisements, posters, television, radio, brochures, websites).	29.C.4c Comprehend main ideas from target language media in relation to everyday life.	29.C.5c Compare topics, types and styles of media communication in areas where the target language is spoken.

D. Understand history of areas where the target language is spoken.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
29.D.1 Recognize important people and events (e.g., special celebrations) in the history of areas where the target language is spoken.	29.D.2 Use simple history vocabulary to identify historical concepts and trends (e.g., rise and fall of the Roman Empire, French Revolution).	29.D.3 Identify key historical figures (e.g., scientists, mathematicians, inventors, business leaders) and events associated with areas where the target language is spoken and explain their influence.	29.D.4 Compare and contrast the influences of historical figures and events and their impact on the development of their countries.	29.D.5 Analyze different perspectives of historical events using a variety of media and technology tools.

E. Understand geography of various target language societies.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
29.E.1 Identify and use simple geography vocabulary (e.g., border, city, river, soil, equator) of the target language.	29.E.2 Use maps, charts, digital images, graphs and other geographic representations to describe and discuss the countries where the target language is spoken.	29.E.3 Describe geographical aspects (e.g., population distribution, natural resources and main economic activities) of areas where the target language is spoken.	29.E.4 Compare a target country with the United States using geographic representations to illustrate and explain their economic nature.	29.E.5 Describe how migration, settlement and colonization have affected the economy and environment of country(ies) where the target language is spoken.

STATE GOAL 30: Use the target language to make connections and reinforce knowledge and skills across academic, vocational and technical disciplines.

Why This Goal Is Important: Knowledge of a foreign language relies on communication, culture, and context. The term context here applies to the situations in which students will use the target language. To prepare for those situations, students reinforce and further their knowledge of other areas including academic, technical and recreational. Standards and benchmarks within this goal are meant to reamplify content and skills learned in economics, mathematics, science, physical development, health, career exploration and vocational courses. Combined with the cultural contexts found in goal 29, the standards and benchmarks in this goal contain direct parallels in target language development to the Illinois Goals and Standards in the other six learning areas in addition to vocational education.

A. Use the target language to reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
30.A.1a Recognize the currency of the country(ies) where the target language is spoken and compare values with United States currency.*	30.A.2a Identify products that are from the countries where the target language is spoken and that are found in the United States economy.*	30.A.3a Identify differing systems of trade and exchange in target language country(ies) (e.g., bartering and bargaining) compared to the United States.*	30.A.4a Identify major sources of employment and income in target language country(ies) compared to the United States.*	30.A.5a Describe and explain factors affecting economic conditions in target language country(ies) compared to the United States.*
30.A.1b Use the target language to solve simple math exercises (e.g., identify simple geometric shapes, use numbers to count and do math computations).	30.A.2b Use the target language to make, use and estimate measurements (e.g., time, linear, monetary).	30.A.3b Use the target language to gather and organize data to solve math problems.	30.A.4b Use the target language to analyze and solve math problems based on timetables, schedules, charts and graphs in the target language.	30.A.5b Use the target language for math skills such as statistical analysis, estimating and approximating in experiments or research projects.
30.A.1c Use target language vocabulary to identify simple science terms referring to weather and nature (e.g., clouds, wind, trees, common animals).	30.A.2c Use target language vocabulary to identify and describe basic earth science content (e.g., mountain range, coast, desert) and life forms.	30.A.3c Use the target language to describe the physical and geological features, vegetation and animal life indigenous to areas where the target language is spoken.	30.A.4c Use the target language to analyze the impact of human activity on the natural environment in areas where the target language is spoken.	30.A.5c Use the target language to analyze current science issues (e.g., ecology and the environment, space exploration, health) from the perspective of speakers of the language.
30.A.1d Use target language vocabulary while participating in physical activities (e.g., games, dances).	30.A.2d Use the target language to participate in and/or describe games, dances and sports.	30.A.3d Use the target language to identify diet, nutrition and physical fitness issues in areas where the target language is spoken.	30.A.4d Use the target language to describe and compare daily diet, nutrition and physical fitness regimens in areas where the target language is spoken.	30.A.5d Use the target language to analyze and contrast diet, nutrition and physical fitness programs in areas where the target language is spoken with those of the United States.

B. Use the target language to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a variety of career options.

STAGE ONE BEGINNING	STAGE TWO BEGINNING INTERMEDIATE	STAGE THREE INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FOUR ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE	STAGE FIVE ADVANCED
30.B.1a Use target language vocabulary to identify common professions and occupations.	30.B.2a Use the target language to describe activities and characteristics of selected occupations and work places.	30.B.3a Use the target language to identify and describe occupations unique to areas where the target language is spoken.	30.B.4a Use the target language to compare various occupations in terms of their roles, status and qualifications in areas where the target language is spoken and in the United States.	30.B.5a Use the target language to analyze data relating to job opportunities, preparation, wages/salaries, etc., of occupations in areas where the target language is spoken.
30.B.1b Use target language vocabulary to identify a variety of professions in which the target language may be used.	30.B.2b Use the target language to explain and describe general career choices in which the target language can be used.	30.B.3b Use the target language to explain in detail the preparation for and activities of specific careers in which the target language can be used.	30.B.4b Use the target language to analyze connections between specific businesses and industries in areas where the target language is spoken and in the United States.	30.B.5b Use the target language to evaluate a career option which requires proficiency in the target language through a career exploration or education-to-careers activity.