



International  
School  
Stuttgart



# The Primary Years

## PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is first and foremost a transdisciplinary programme organized around six themes of global significance. Additionally, there are six defined subject areas that have value in themselves and provide students with knowledge and skills to explore the six transdisciplinary themes. Students should be made aware of the links across the curriculum in order to understand the interconnected nature of the subject areas, both with one another and with the transdisciplinary themes. The information below provides information about the role that each subject area plays in the PYP.

### TRANSDISCIPLINARY THEMES

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

#### ***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.

#### ***Where we are in place and time***

An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

#### ***How we express ourselves***

An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

#### ***How the world works***

An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

#### ***How we organize ourselves***

An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

### ***Sharing the planet***

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

Students inquire into, and learn about, these globally significant issues in the context of units of inquiry, each of which addresses a central idea relevant to a particular transdisciplinary theme. Lines of inquiry are identified in order to explore the scope of the central idea for each unit.

## ARTS

Arts are integral to the IB Primary Years Programme (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. The 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.

*Strands:*

*Responding*

*Creating*

## LANGUAGE

Language is involved in all learning that goes on in a school, in both the affective and effective domains. Learners listen, talk, read and write their way to negotiating new meanings and understanding new concepts. In the “knowledge” area of the PYP, language is the most significant connecting element across the school’s curriculum, both within and outside its transdisciplinary programme of inquiry. It plays a vital role in the construction of meaning. It empowers the learner and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking.

In the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), it is recognized that the teaching of language should be in response to the previous experience, needs and interests of the student, rather than the consequence of a predetermined, prescriptive model for delivering language. Fragmenting learning into the acquisition of isolated skill sets can create difficulties for learners—for example, learners may be able to read, write and spell words correctly in isolation but may not be able to read, write or spell those same words in other contexts. Learners’ needs are best served when they have opportunities to engage in learning within meaningful contexts, rather than being presented with the learning of language as an incremental series of skills to be acquired.

*Strands:*

*Oral Language - Listening and Speaking*

*Visual Language - Viewing and Presenting*

*Written Language - Reading and Writing*

## MATHEMATICS

In the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), mathematics is also viewed 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 analyzing 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.

*Strands:*

*Data Handling*

*Measurement*

*Shape and Space*

*Pattern and Function*

*Number*

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PSPE in the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) 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.

*Strands:*

*Identity*

*Active Living*

*Interactions*

## SCIENCE

In the Primary Years Programme (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. 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.

*Strands:*

*Living Things*

*Earth and Space*

*Materials and Matter*

*Forces and Energy*

## SOCIAL STUDIES

In the Primary Years Programme (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. Additionally, in the Primary Years Programme (PYP), social studies learning guides students towards a deeper understanding of themselves and others, and of their place in an increasingly global society. It provides opportunities for students to look at and think about human behaviour and activity realistically, objectively, and with sensitivity. Exposure to and experience with social studies therefore opens doors to key questions about life and learning.

*Strands:*

*Human Systems and Economic Activities*

*Social organization and Culture*

*Continuity and Change through Time*

*Human and Natural Environments*

*Resources and the Environment*

## EXHIBITION

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) exhibition represents a significant event in the life of a PYP school and student, synthesizing the essential elements of the PYP and sharing them with the whole school community. As a culminating experience it is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile that have been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP.

In the students' final year of the PYP, there are five units of inquiry and the exhibition. The exhibition unit takes place under any transdisciplinary theme at the discretion of the school. Students are required to engage in a collaborative, transdisciplinary inquiry process that involves them in identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real-life issues or problems. The central idea selected must be of sufficient scope and significance to warrant a detailed investigation by all students.

As the culminating PYP experience, it is required that the exhibition reflects all the major features of the programme, including:

- provide an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the IB learner profile that have been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP
- incorporate all the key concepts; an understanding of the key concepts should be demonstrated by the application of key questions throughout the inquiry process
- synthesize aspects of all six transdisciplinary themes
- require students to use skills from all five sets of transdisciplinary skills; students should be given the opportunity to develop and apply skills from all the transdisciplinary skill areas in their exhibition inquiry
- offer the students the opportunity to explore knowledge that is significant and relevant
- offer opportunities for students to display attitudes that relate to people, the environment and their learning;
- provide opportunities for students to engage in action; students should demonstrate an ability to reflect on and apply their learning to choose appropriate courses of action and carry them out; this action may take the form of personal involvement with the planning and implementation of the exhibition and/or service-orientated action; action may not always be clearly or immediately visible or measurable but evidence should be recorded whenever a particular behaviour results from the learning involved
- represent a process where students are engaged in a collaborative and student-led, in-depth inquiry facilitated by teachers; records should be kept that reflect the process of planning and student engagement with the exhibition
- include ongoing and rigorous assessment of the exhibition process; this assessment should take two forms: firstly, ongoing assessment of each individual student's contribution to and understanding of the exhibition; secondly, a summative assessment and reflection on the event itself.