

Frequently asked questions about the Middle Years Programme

What is the Middle Years Programme?

The Middle Years Programme (MYP) is a curriculum framework designed for learners aged 11–16 by the International Baccalaureate (IB). The MYP is a five-year programme, which can be implemented in a partnership between schools or in abbreviated two-, three- or four-year formats.

In an MYP classroom, you'll notice that the students are at the centre of learning. They are drawing connections between all subject areas, learning is explicitly linked to the world around them, participation in a foreign language is required, and a variety of formal and informal assessments are used to inform teaching and learning. MYP learning experiences infuse global points of view wherever possible in order to promote understanding of other cultures, an awareness of the human condition and an understanding that there is a commonality of human experience.

The MYP curriculum framework comprises eight subject groups, providing a broad and balanced education for early adolescents. Students take the core courses of language and literature, individuals and societies, mathematics, sciences, physical and health education, language acquisition, arts, and design. A unique feature of the programme is that it extends the traditional curriculum to include immersion in four themes—approaches to teaching and approaches to learning, global contexts and concepts. Students also complete a personal project, which is an independent piece of work that may be an essay, an artistic production or another form of expression.

What are the advantages of an IB education?

- IB World Schools (the only schools authorized to offer IB programmes) are subject to a strict accreditation process monitored by the IB, ensuring that schools provide a high-quality education.
- IB teaching methods and curriculums are research-based and draw from the best educational practices from systems around the world.
- IB teachers are required to participate in many professional development opportunities to continually promote their awareness of current educational practices and new thinking.
- IB programmes are recognized internationally and ease the educational transition of mobile students so that their education is not adversely affected if their families relocate.



Do IB teachers receive special training?

All MYP teachers receive professional development in the IB's approaches to teaching and approaches to learning from certified IB workshop leaders. This is a requirement for IB World Schools implementing the MYP.

Are IB programmes considered “gifted” programmes?

In most cases, the MYP requires schoolwide implementation and therefore encompasses all students. All teachers who teach in MYP classrooms are required to participate in collaborative planning and reflection to make their teaching practices consistent and to foster a holistic approach to education. A growing body of evidence suggests a positive relationship between teacher collaboration and student achievement.

Students who complete the MYP are well-prepared to undertake the IB Diploma Programme or Career-related Programme.

Does implementing an IB programme mean my child's school will not teach local or national standards such as the Common Core?

The IB is committed to making sure that students in IB programmes meet and exceed local or national standards. With the implementation of any IB programme, schools are required to examine their curriculum carefully to ensure that there is alignment with local, state or national standards. More information on the IB and the Common Core is available at www.ibo.org.

Have studies been done on the impact of the MYP?

The IB places great value on external validation of its programmes, curriculums and professional development. A recent study found that Middle Years Programme students in a US public school district were more likely to achieve a proficient or advanced performance level on state mathematics and science assessments than their counterparts in five comparison schools. Additional studies on programme impact, quality assurance, programme development and assessment research are available at www.ibo.org/research.

Are there external assessments in the MYP like in the Diploma Programme?

In the final year of the programme, the optional MYP eAssessment provides a balanced and age-appropriate strategy that schools can use to validate student achievement: Students demonstrate their understanding and skills through classroom performance, onscreen final examinations and a personal project conducted over an extended period of time. Students who undertake external assessment are eligible for IB Course Results and the IB MYP Certificate. Find out more about [MYP assessment](#).

How can I learn more about the IB and MYP?

- Visit the IB website at www.ibo.org
- Attend school meetings and events
- Speak with your school's MYP coordinator
- Speak with your child's MYP classroom teacher.

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What is an IB education?

IB's mission and philosophy

At the centre of an International Baccalaureate (IB) education are students aged 3 to 19 with unique learning styles, strengths and challenges. The IB focuses on each student as a whole person. Thus, IB programmes address not only cognitive development but social, emotional and physical well-being. The aim is to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people with adaptable skills to tackle society's complex challenges and who will help to make it a better, more peaceful world.

Validating the efficacy of the IB's four programmes are *research* and more than 45 years of practical experience. IB programmes emphasize learning how to learn and teaching students to value learning as an essential, integral part of their everyday lives. The IB promotes the development of schools that:

- inspire students to ask questions, pursue personal aspirations, set challenging goals and develop the persistence to achieve those goals
- develop knowledgeable students who make reasoned ethical judgments and acquire the flexibility, perseverance and confidence they need in order to bring about meaningful change
- encourage healthy relationships, individual and shared responsibility and effective teamwork.

Measuring Outcomes

To measure what students have learned and to monitor their progress, IB teachers use a range of assessment strategies including formative assessments that provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to develop their teaching and by students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and target areas that need improvement. Teachers use summative assessments which are internationally benchmarked for older students, and are criterion-referenced. This means students are measured against a set of agreed upon learning outcomes rather than graded on a "bell curve" as in norm-referenced assessments.

The IB's four programmes



In the *Primary Years Programme (PYP)*, the IB's youngest students learn about and use knowledge, concepts and skills from a variety of subjects to explore six transdisciplinary themes and begin to develop the attributes of the *learner profile*.



The *Middle Years Programme (MYP)* is a challenging framework that encourages students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world and culminates in a personal project. Students who complete the MYP are well-prepared to undertake the IB Diploma Programme.



In the final two years of high school, students can choose to enter either:

- the *Diploma Programme (DP)*, a curriculum which emphasizes both breadth and depth of knowledge. The DP is made up of six subject groups and a core, comprising theory of knowledge (TOK), creativity, activity, service (CAS) and a research paper of up to 4,000 words, the extended essay (EE);
- or, the *Career-related Programme (CP)*. The CP combines two IB diploma courses with school-based, career-related study. It equips students to pursue further education or to enter their chosen career path immediately.



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