



Mandarin Program

Overview

With the rapid growth of China and its integration in the world economy over the past 30 years, the Chinese language has become an important world language. One in five people on the planet speaks Mandarin, and officials in government agencies, NGO's, international companies, and educational institutions also use it regularly. The demand for people who are fluent in Mandarin has increased as never before. In the greater Washington metropolitan area, there are quite a few large Chinese language schools and Confucius Institutes. The Mandarin classes offered at PWA provide a solid foundation for PWA students' success in a global economy.

The PWA Mandarin curriculum immerses students in a Mandarin language environment. Although written Chinese characters are shared by all the Chinese dialects, Mandarin is the official standard spoken form of Chinese. The Natural Approach and Total Physical Response (TPR) are used in Mandarin classes. In TPR, the students respond to verbal commands with the appropriate physical activity. By understanding and responding to the commands given in Mandarin, students learn Mandarin vocabulary and language patterns. Grammar is learned from language input and not taught explicitly during the beginning stages of learning Mandarin. This method allows the students to think and use the language as native speakers would.

In addition to the International Baccalaureate (IB) themes, the Mandarin curriculum themes will include: simple antonyms, Chinese traditions, culture, holidays and games, classic Chinese fairy tales, Chinese geography and landmarks.

Overview by Grade Level

Preschool 2s and 3s

Students are introduced to basic Mandarin vocabulary and commands. CDs, audiovisuals, and singing are employed to increase learner interest.

Junior Kindergarten

Junior kindergarten students learn to identify basic vocabulary using pictures, and learn simple daily expressions and greetings. Students also speak basic sentences in simple language patterns.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students recognize and pronounce Pinyin Initials in four tones, write Pinyin letters and identify Chinese numbers.

First Grade

First graders recognize and pronounce the whole Pinyin set (Initials and Finals) in four tones. They learn pronouns and their usage in simple sentences. They are also introduced to stroke order in Chinese characters and learn to write Pinyin and simple Chinese characters.

Second Grade

Second graders read and pronounce Pinyin in sentences with correct tones and identify vocabulary for family, people and common objects. Students also recognize and identify objects shown on flashcards, such as colors, weather, etc. Second graders should be able to write basic word group in Pinyin and Chinese characters.

Third Grade

Third graders begin to develop real life conversational skills. Students are introduced to the Chinese dictionary and use Pinyin to find the corresponding Chinese character. Students also learn about Chinese culture through holiday traditions, art and stories.

Fourth Grade

Fourth Grade students continue to increase vocabulary and phrases and expand listening, speaking, and reading skills. Students also learn grammar rules along with singular and plural word usage. They also practice speaking more comprehensively.

Fifth Grade

Fifth graders learn more complex phrases and idioms. They read basic sentences in simple Chinese characters and expand their Chinese character writing ability.

Sixth Grade

Sixth grade students enhance their listening comprehension, and engage in expressing their own thoughts through dialogue. They also read paragraphs describing simple objects, and write basic sentences. Chinese history is introduced.

Seventh Grade

Seventh graders describe favorite objects orally using adjectives. They are also introduced to Chinese culture through classic children's poems, stories, and characters.

Eighth Grade

Eighth graders use proper grammar and language patterns when completing writing assignments. They also continue to learn Chinese literacy and history through presentations.