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With the support from the Pew Family Foundation, the Pew Second Language Design Team was formed in April 1998. This team is comprised of elementary, middle school, high school teachers, administrators and university professors representing eleven different languages. In response to the State mandates and the search for excellence in second language acquisition, the Pew Second Language Design Team was provided with background materials and has done an extensive study of the National Standards, State Standards and Common Curriculum Goals, ACTFL and PASS. The Team has worked diligently and collaborated to develop our PPS District Performance Standards and Content Standards.

The Team prepared recommendations for performance standards for the PPS Board of Education. This is the Content Standards and Benchmark Stages that clearly outline for our teachers and the community what the students are expected to know and be able to do in a second language. This is a living document and a work in progress. As these Benchmark Stages become more fully integrated into instruction, as more student performance data is collected, and instruments to assess student performance are developed, it may grow and change over time.

These Content Standards have had numerous reviews throughout the process by teachers across the District, stakeholders in the community, representatives from University level, and others, and this feedback was used to continue preparation and improvement of the content and performance standards.

With the support from the Pew Foundation an increased number of second language teachers in the PPS district have been trained to do oral interviews in order to check for students who have reached benchmark stage IV. All of our teachers have attended CIM workshops and many have completed the workshop *Language Teaching for Proficiency*.

Language learning includes culture, communication and communities. The team shares the belief that students must be prepared to live in a pluralistic society, looking beyond our borders. We know that functioning in at least one second language can equip them to do this successfully. This necessitates a change from the previous thinking of a "seat time" requirement to a proficiency requirement with acknowledgement that second language learning is part of the core curriculum.

The purpose of this document is to assist teachers in aligning their curriculum to help students meet the standards of the State's CIM/CAM and PASS. This can be used as a basis of assessment, an aid to curriculum alignment and a tool for explaining the standards to parents, students and administrators. The following documents represent the best thinking of the Pew Second Language Design Team and PPS second language teachers and other interested persons in the community of Portland.

These are the members of the Second Language Design Team:

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# Philosophy & Assumptions

We believe that all persons in our culturally rich and linguistically diverse nation should be provided the opportunity and be encouraged to become proficient in more than one language to a degree of mastery commensurate with their needs and aspirations. The learning of other languages adds new linguistic competence and cultural sensitivity to our diverse linguistic backgrounds. We believe language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. It is our responsibility to educate students to be equipped linguistically and culturally in order to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad.

We envision a future in which ALL students develop and further their proficiency in English and at least one other language. One language is never intended to supplant another. Those who are not proficient in English should be provided the opportunity and encouragement to reach full proficiency in their first language and English. These students should be given the opportunity to study an additional language of their choice. It is through the knowledge of languages and cultures that we best learn to tolerate and appreciate cultural and linguistic diversity at home, to understand our contemporaries abroad, and so achieve our potential as citizens of the world.

## **Basic assumptions**

The Pew Second Language Design Team shares the following basic assumptions:

- All students can learn a second language.
- Learning takes place in a variety of settings and styles.
- A proficiency-based approach and use of best practices leads to competence.
- A substantial body of research continues to support the many benefits of starting second language acquisition as early as possible.
- A long sequenced, articulated program of study results in higher levels of proficiency.
- Second language learning fosters a sense of humanity and friendship along with an increasing understanding and sensitivity to other languages and cultures.
- Second language learning provides insights into one's first language.
- Learning one second language facilitates the learning of additional languages.
- Proficiency in a second language is an asset in many careers and for professional advancement.
- Skills and concepts acquired through a second language transfer to one's first language.

# Best Practices in Second Language

Portland Public Schools' second language instruction places a high value on developing a second language program that is based on performance of the language rather than knowledge about the language. Students are engaged in meaningful, authentic and purposeful language learning tasks which include an integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as building cultural understanding.

**Teachers, as much as possible, emulate authentic language use. They:**

- use the target language extensively and encourage the students to do so.
- establish an affective climate in which students feel comfortable taking risk.
- provide opportunities to use the target language to interact with others, to understand others and to make oneself understood.
- use a variety of print and non-print materials including authentic materials.
- value students for whom this is their first language.

**Teachers understand that language learning is not additively sequential but is recursive and paced differently at various stages of acquisition. They:**

- utilize class time for listening, speaking, reading and writing which is appropriate to course objectives and to the language skills of students.
- use the textbook as a tool, not as a curriculum.
- use explicit error correction in activities when the focus is on discrete language points and uses indirect correction when communication is the focus.

**Teachers understand that language proficiency involves both comprehension and production. Comprehension abilities tend to precede and exceed productive abilities.**

- Classroom assessments reflect the way students are taught.

- Student tasks and teacher questions reflect a range of thinking skills.
- Students are explicitly taught second language learning strategies and are encouraged to assess their own progress.
- Culture is systematically incorporated into instruction.
- Students are enabled to develop positive attitudes toward cultural diversity.
- The physical environment of the classroom reflects the target language and culture.

**Teachers understand that language learning is complex. Instruction takes into account individual learning styles and rates, and also attends to teaching process strategies for successful learning. They:**

- use a variety of print and non-print materials including authentic materials.
- use technological resources to assist in language learning and practice.

**Teachers understand that the ability to perform with language is facilitated when students actively engage in meaningful, authentic and purposeful language learning tasks.**

- Activities simulate real-life situations.

**Teachers assess oral proficiency in open-ended tasks as well as achievement of specific skills. They are familiar with oral proficiency interviews and use them to assess students' proficiency.**

# How to use this document

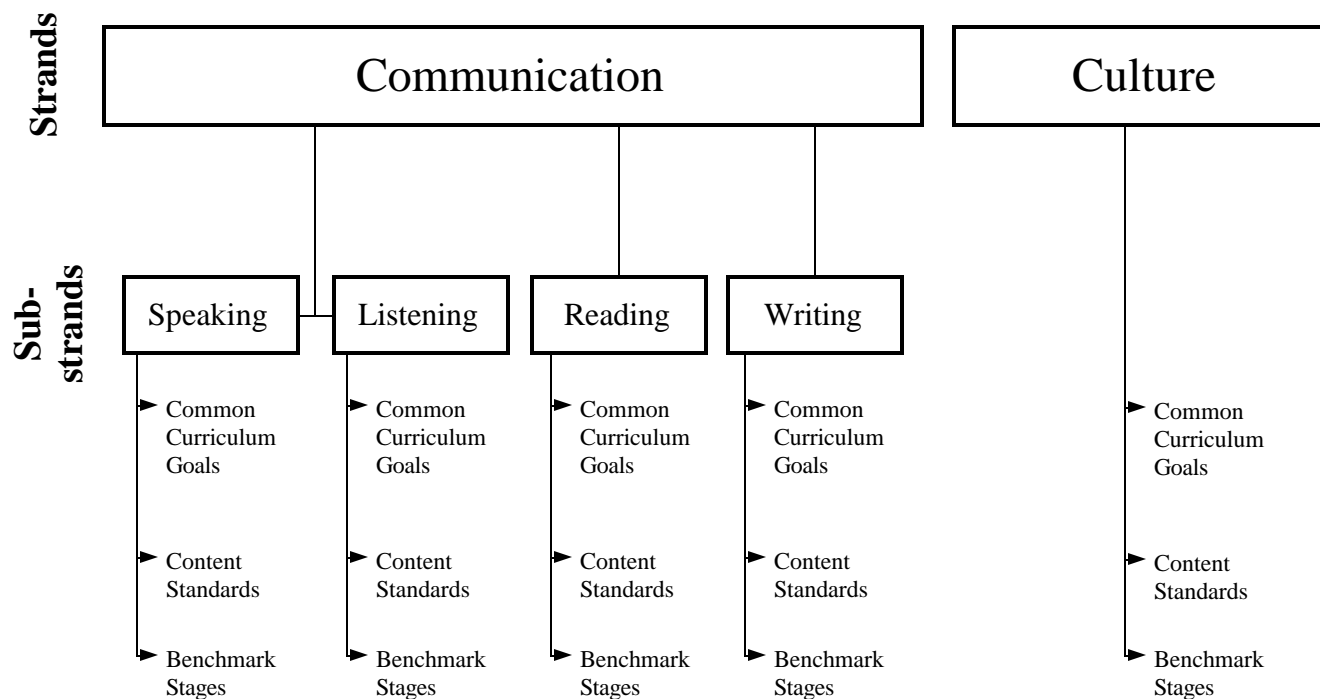
This document is intended as a guide for the second language teachers of Portland Public Schools. It should allow the user to easily locate and understand the standards and desired outcomes for students in Portland Public Schools. There are 2 Content Strands: Communication and Culture. There are 4 sub-branches under the Communication Content Strand: Listening & Speaking, Reading, Writing.

These are then described in detail using a scale of Benchmark Stages one (1) through six (6). *These Benchmark Stages are not tied to any particular grade level in a standard school system.*

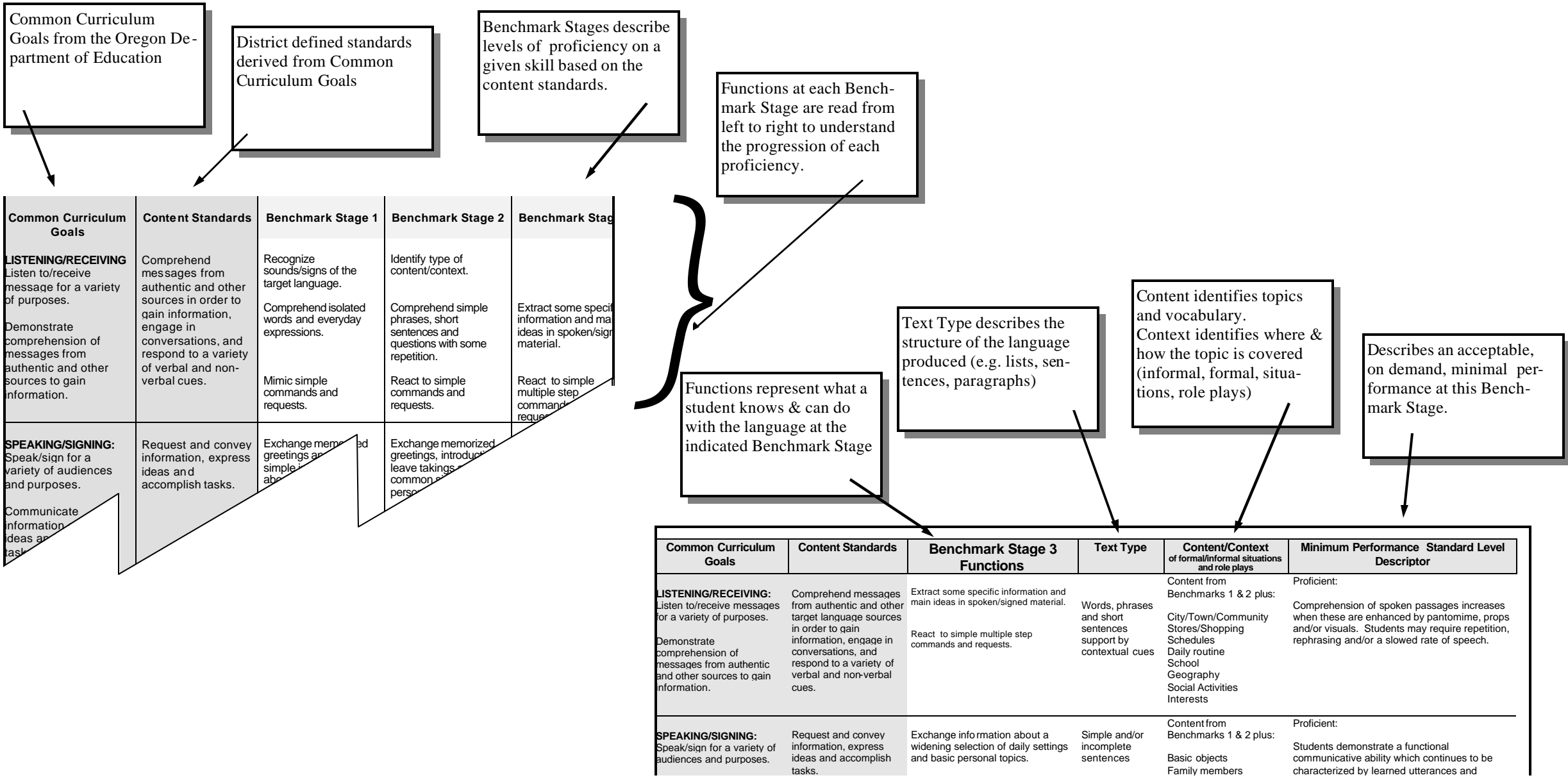
Rather, these levels may be achieved by any student of any age, depending on experience and cognitive development. Following each initial page of Content Standard & Benchmark Stages,

subsequent pages elaborate each Benchmark Stage in greater detail (see Page Layout Explanation). By using this document, teachers should be able to plan curriculum & assessments to meet certain levels of proficiency, and also to make determinations on the current proficiency level of their students. It can also be a tool for articulation and to align curriculum and programs within schools and across the district. Lastly, it can aid its user in explaining second language standards to students, parents, administrators and other persons in the district. Each document should be read both from the top of the Benchmark Stage column down to the bottom, as well as from left to right across each Benchmark Stage. In addition, one may make use of the sample task

Diagram of the standards



# Explanation of Page Layout



## Relevant Terminology to a Proficiency Oriented Classroom

Proficiency	Refers to what a student can do with knowledge plus function according to a performance descriptor.	On demand	Refers to a performance task or assessment which is open-ended, not tied to any particular recently learned content, and not dependent on a specific scope & sequence.
Function	Describes the task that is to be accomplished. More simply, it is what a student knows and can do with a language. It may be something simple as “express a greeting” and a “leave-taking,” or it may be something complex as “persuade,” which requires a richer vocabulary and more complex structures.	Curriculum embedded	Refers to a task or assessment which is tied to a specific learned content.
Text Type	The structure of the discourse produced by the student. At low levels, the student produces memorized phrases and lists. When they advance, they can form sentences and eventually string several together. Advanced students may produce paragraph length discourse.	Cultural Perspectives	Refers to meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas of a culture.
Content	The topics and vocabulary of the language. Students typically begin with topics related to self, everyday activities & their immediate environment.	Cultural Practices	Refers to patterns of social behavior.
Context	The location and situation of the language produced. In the classroom the 4 basic contexts are: formal, informal, situation, role play.	Cultural Products	Refers to items present within a culture
Cognate	Refers to a word with a similar origin, spelling and pronunciation in two languages. It does not include borrowed foreign words.	- tangible products	Refers to items particular to a culture that can be touched, seen, or purchased, such as books, tools, & foods.
False cognate	Refers to words which in spelling and/or pronunciation appear to be cognates, but actually have significant semantic differences.	- intangible products	Refers to items particular to a culture that cannot be touched, seen, or purchased, such as laws, music, & games.
		- expressive products	Refers to both tangible & intangible products which are dedicated to, in whole or part, (or have elements of) expression, such as music, painting, drama, handmade artifacts or crafts, advertising, etc.
		Cloze passage	Substitution type exercises that require students to complete one or multiple blanks in a sentence or paragraph. Cloze responses require patterned, fixed or random answers which focus on vocabulary, syntax, or structural elements.





## Content Strand: Communication

Communicate effectively in a language other than English for a variety of audiences and purposes and listen effectively to gather information. Identify and respect that people from various cultures have different ways of communicating verbal and non-verbal

# Listening & Speaking

### Recognized foundations of this sub-strand

Communication requires many skills; most importantly the ability to listen/receive and to speak/sign. Listening/receiving and speaking/signing are skills that are interconnected.

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
<p><b>LISTENING/ RECEIVING</b> Listen to/receive message for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Recognize sounds/signs of the target language.</p> <p>Comprehend isolated words and everyday expressions.</p> <p>Mimic simple commands and requests.</p>	<p>Identify type of content/context.</p> <p>Comprehend simple phrases, short sentences and questions with some repetition.</p> <p>React to simple commands and requests.</p>	<p>Extract some specific information and main ideas in spoken/signed material.</p> <p>React to simple multiple step commands and requests.</p>	<p>Extract main idea plus some specific details within familiar topics.</p> <p>React to multiple step commands and requests within familiar situations.</p>	<p>Extract the main idea plus important details on a variety of familiar everyday topics.</p> <p>React to multiple step commands and requests with some complexity.</p>	<p>Extract the main idea plus important details of a longer message from a variety of personal and general topics.</p> <p>React to multiple step commands and requests with predictable complexities.</p>

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange memorized greetings and very simple information about self.</p> <p>Ask memorized, well-rehearsed questions in highly predictable interactions on very familiar topics.</p> <p>Identify and list memorized vocabulary.</p> <p>Express quantities in numbers.</p> <p>Repeat simple directions and commands.</p>	<p>Exchange memorized greetings, introductions, leave takings and common simple personal information.</p> <p>Ask memorized questions in highly predictable, common daily settings.</p> <p>Name and list vocabulary of common everyday items (i.e. colors, objects, days of the week, months of the year, etc.).</p> <p>Express numbers in time, dates, currency , phone numbers and addresses.</p> <p>Give some memorized directions and commands.</p>	<p>Exchange information about a widening selection of daily settings and basic personal topics.</p> <p>Formulate and ask simple questions using familiar, learned material (i.e. requesting simple information).</p> <p>Create simple statements using memorized, familiar vocabulary (i.e. describe within a given context)</p> <p>Exchange information using time, date and location.</p> <p>Give basic, simple directions and commands.</p>	<p>Exchange information, perform basic tasks (such as introduce self, order a meal, give directions and make purchases), and express preferences.</p> <p>Initiate and respond to simple questions using known topics and vocabulary within the context of a familiar conversation.</p> <p>Create, initiate and respond to simple statements within the scope of limited language.</p> <p>Use numbers, prices and times in common tasks such as making purchases.</p> <p>Give instructions for a familiar simple task in steps.</p>	<p>Exchange personal feelings, thoughts, ideas and basic opinions.</p> <p>Initiate and briefly maintain a conversation using a series of simple, related questions and responses.</p> <p>Initiate, sustain and close a basic communicative task by combining and recombining learned elements.</p> <p>Use numbers in a widening variety of tasks such as making appointments and reservations.</p> <p>Give multi-step directions for a simple task.</p>	<p>Exchange information within a wider range of topics, express personal feelings, thoughts, ideas and opinions, and attempt to persuade others.</p> <p>Initiate, maintain and extend familiar communicative tasks using a series of related questions and responses.</p> <p>Initiate, sustain and bring to closure uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations by recombining learned vocabulary and structures.</p> <p>Acquire goods and services through basic negotiation and monetary exchange.</p> <p>Give multi-step directions for a more complex task.</p>

# Benchmark Stage 1

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content/Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p><b>LISTENING/RECEIVING:</b> Listen to/receive messages for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other target language sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Recognize sounds/signs of the target language.</p> <p>Comprehend isolated words and everyday expressions.</p> <p>Mimic simple commands and requests.</p>	<p>Isolated words with repeated prompts and obvious contextual clues</p>	<p>Basic objects (e.g., classroom, household, personal) Self (autobiographical, etc.) Greetings Introductions Family members Colors Numbers Calendar Clock time</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>The student's understanding is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high frequency social conventions and is often dependent upon the communication partner's use of objects, visuals, and gestures in speaking.</p>
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange memorized greetings and very simple information about self.</p> <p>Ask memorized, well-rehearsed questions in highly predictable interactions on very familiar topics.</p> <p>Identify and list memorized vocabulary.</p> <p>Express quantities in numbers.</p> <p>Repeat simple directions and commands.</p>	<p>Predictable or simple familiar language within a few known or specified topics and contexts;</p> <p>Short lists of vocabulary and/or memorized words or phrases, learned formulae and patterns, generally 2-3 word utterances</p>	<p>Basic objects (e.g., classroom, household, personal) Self (autobiographical) Greetings Introductions Family members Colors Numbers Calendar Clock time</p>	<p>Proficient Level</p> <p>Using memorized words and phrases, students demonstrate very limited functional communicative ability. The student's oral production consists of isolated words and perhaps a few high frequency phrases. Pronunciation inaccuracies and interference from the native language usually characterize speech. Students are understood primarily by those who are very accustomed to interacting with language learners.</p> <p>In Progress:</p> <p>Using memorized words and phrases, students demonstrate very limited functional communicative ability. The student's oral production consists of <i>less than 35 isolated words*</i>. Pronunciation inaccuracies and interference from the native language characterize speech. Students are understood only by those who are very accustomed to interacting with language learners.</p> <p>*any 35 words from Benchmark Stage 1 given in an on-demand assessment</p>

## Benchmark Stage 2

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content/Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p><b>LISTENING/RECEIVING:</b> Listen to/receive messages for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other target language sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Identify type of content/context.</p> <p>Comprehend simple phrases, short sentences and questions with some repetition.</p> <p>React to simple commands and requests.</p>	<p>Memorized or rehearsed words, phrases, simple questions, commands, statements</p>	<p>Content from Benchmark Stage 1 plus:</p> <p>Seasons Weather Activities (sports, leisure) Home Currency Clothing (shopping) Animals Friends Foods</p>	<p>Proficient: The student's comprehend some words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high frequency commands and courtesy formulae about topics that refer to basic personal information or the immediate physical setting, but often require long pauses for assimilation and periodically request repetition and/or slower rate of speech.</p>
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange memorized greetings, introductions, leave takings and common simple personal information.</p> <p>Ask memorized questions in highly predictable common daily settings.</p> <p>Name and list vocabulary of common everyday items (i.e. colors, objects, days of the week, months of the year, etc.)</p> <p>Express numbers in time, dates, currency, phone numbers and addresses.</p> <p>Give some memorized directions and commands.</p>	<p>Predictable or simple familiar language within rehearsed, known or specified topics and contexts;</p> <p>Memorized words phrases and patterns</p>	<p>Content from Benchmark Stage 1 plus:</p> <p>Seasons Weather Activities (sports, leisure) Home Currency Clothing (shopping) Animals Friends Foods</p> <p>Simple basic needs and courtesies (i.e. likes, dislikes, preferences, common personal and everyday information).</p>	<p>Proficient Level: Students demonstrate a functional communicative ability based on memorized, isolated words and high frequency phrases which is limited to handling simple, elementary needs and expressing basic courtesies. Long pauses and repetition of interlocutor's words characterize the students' oral production. Pronunciation inaccuracies and interference from the native language usually characterize speech. Students often show evidence of false starts, prolonged and unexpectedly placed pauses, and recourse to their native language. Students are understood primarily by those who are very accustomed to interacting with language learners.</p>

# Benchmark Stage 3

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content/Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p><b>LISTENING/RECEIVING:</b> Listen to/receive messages for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other target language sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Extract some specific information and main ideas in spoken/signed material.</p> <p>React to simple multiple step commands and requests.</p>	<p>Words, phrases and short sentences support by contextual cues</p>	<p>Content from Benchmarks 1 &amp; 2 plus:</p> <p>City/Town/Community Stores/Shopping Schedules Daily routine School Geography Social Activities Interests</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Comprehension of spoken passages increases when these are enhanced by pantomime, props and/or visuals. Students may require repetition, rephrasing and/or a slowed rate of speech.</p>
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange information about a widening selection of daily settings and basic personal topics.</p> <p>Formulate and ask simple questions using familiar material (i.e. request simple information).</p> <p>Create simple statements using memorized, familiar vocabulary (i.e. describe within a given context)</p> <p>Exchange information using time, date and location.</p> <p>Give basic, simple directions and commands.</p>	<p>Simple and/or incomplete sentences</p> <p>Sustain sentence level for more than half the time and relies on word/phrase level language</p>	<p>Content from Benchmarks 1 &amp; 2 plus:</p> <p>Basic objects Family members Colors Clothing Weather expressions Days of the week Months of the Year Today's date Current year Current time of day</p> <p>Simple basic needs and courtesies (i.e. likes, dislikes, preferences, common personal and everyday information). Simple survival situations (i.e. asking for directions, ordering a meal)</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students demonstrate a functional communicative ability which continues to be characterized by learned utterances and memorized phrases rather than of personalized, situationally adapted ones although in the context of a widening vocabulary of basic personal topics. The students show signs of spontaneity although this falls short of real autonomy of expression. The student usually comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high frequency commands and courtesy formulae. Speech is usually characterized by pronunciation inaccuracies and interference from the native language, however, accuracy in pronunciation and intonation is demonstrated when presenting well-rehearsed material on familiar topics. Students often show evidence of false starts, prolonged and unexpectedly-placed pauses, and recourse to their native language. Students are understood primarily by those who are very accustomed to interacting with language learners.</p>

## Benchmark Stage 4

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content/Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p><b>LISTENING/RECEIVING:</b> Listen to/receive messages for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other target language sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Extract main idea plus some specific details within familiar topics.</p> <p>React to multiple step commands and requests within familiar situations.</p>	<p>Strings of sentences consisting of recombined learned elements</p>	<p>Content from Benchmark Stages 1-3 plus:</p> <p>Health Occupations/careers Transportation Travel/Vacation Future Planning/goal setting Relationships between units of meaning (comparisons, possession, negation)</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>The students comprehend content that refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and routine tasks although understanding is often uneven and misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently. Students demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas and some details from sentence-length utterances that consist of recombinations of learned elements in a limited number of content areas, particularly if strongly supported by the situational context. Understanding is often uneven; repetition and rewording may be necessary. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently.</p>
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange information, perform basic tasks (such as introduce self, order a meal, give directions and make purchases), and express preferences. Initiate and respond to simple questions using known topics and vocabulary within the context of a familiar conversation.</p> <p>Create, initiate and respond to simple statements within the scope of limited language.</p> <p>Uses numbers, prices and times in common tasks such as making purchases.</p> <p>Give instructions for a familiar simple task in steps.</p>	<p>Sentences and strings of simple sentences on familiar topics; information-gap questions</p>	<p>Content from Benchmark Stages 1-3 plus:</p> <p>Health Occupations/careers Transportation Travel/Vacation Future Planning Goal setting Relationships between units of meaning (comparisons, possession, negation)</p> <p>Survival situations: finding lodging, food, transportation, medical assistance, obtaining directions.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students demonstrate the communicative ability to create with the language by combining and recombining learned elements into a range of sentences and strings of sentences on very familiar topics. Students are able to initiate, minimally sustain and close in a simple way basic communicative tasks as well as ask and answer questions. Presentations are primarily in present time but also, with preparation, in past and future time. The student may show inaccuracies as well as some interference from the native language when attempting to present less familiar materials.</p>

# Benchmark Stage 5

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content/Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p><b>LISTENING/RECEIVING:</b> Listen to/receive messages for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other target language sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Extract the main idea plus important details on a variety of familiar everyday topics.</p> <p>React to multiple step commands and requests with some complexity.</p>	<p>Strings of sentences within face-to-face conversation on a variety of familiar topics</p>	<p>Content of Benchmark Stages 1-4 plus:</p> <p>Holidays/Traditions Leisure Activities Transportation Education/Career Goal Setting</p> <p>Language for specific purposes in at least one of the following CAM Strands:</p> <p>Health Services Arts &amp; Communication Industrial and Engineering National Resources Business &amp; Management</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>The students comprehend content that refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and short routine tasks although understanding can be uneven and misunderstandings of details arise occasionally. Students understand listening tasks that pertain to spontaneous face-to-face. Students demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas and a few significant details of spoken passages in familiar contexts occasionally inferring meaning of many unfamiliar words in order to understand the gist of the passages. When listening, students use background knowledge, contextual clues, paraphrase and redundancy to aid comprehension of spoken passages.</p>
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange personal feelings, thoughts, ideas and basic opinions.</p> <p>Initiate and briefly maintain a conversation using a series of related questions and responses.</p> <p>Initiate, sustain and close a basic communicative task by combining and recombining learned elements.</p> <p>Use numbers in a widening variety of tasks such as making appointments and reservations.</p> <p>Give multi-step directions for a simple task.</p>	<p>Strings of sentences about a single topic in an organized form; multiple information-gap questions related to a single topic.</p>	<p>Content of Benchmark Stages 1-4 plus:</p> <p>Holidays/Traditions Leisure Activities Transportation Education/Career Goal Setting</p> <p>Language for specific purposes in at least one of the following CAM Strands:</p> <p>Health Services Arts &amp; Communication Industrial and Engineering National Resources Business &amp; Management</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students demonstrate the ability to function in a wide variety of uncomplicated, basic communicative tasks and social situations recombining learned vocabulary and structures and demonstrating partial control of present time. Students can participate in simple conversations. Students are able to initiate, sustain and close basic communicative tasks as well as ask and answer questions. The students use pronunciation and intonation patterns that can be understood only by those accustomed to interacting with language learners although they frequently make false starts and pause to search for words. Students occasionally supplement their basic vocabulary with expressions acquired from other sources such as dictionaries. Students occasionally use circumlocution when faced with difficult syntactic structures, problematic spelling or unfamiliar vocabulary as well as memory aids (notes, visuals) to facilitate presentations.</p>



## Benchmark Stage 6

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content/Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p><b>LISTENING/RECEIVING:</b> Listen to/receive messages for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Demonstrate comprehension of messages from authentic and other sources to gain information.</p>	<p>Comprehend messages from authentic and other target language sources in order to gain information, engage in conversations, and respond to a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues.</p>	<p>Extract the main idea plus important details of a longer message from a variety of personal and general topics.</p> <p>React to multiple step commands and requests with predictable complexities.</p>	<p>Strings of sentences and spontaneous discourse beyond face-to-face conversation on a variety of topics.</p>	<p>Content from Benchmarks 1-5 plus:</p> <p>At least two of the following PASS content areas:</p> <p>Mathematics Language Arts Science Social Science Visual and Performing Arts</p>	<p>Proficient: Students understand listening tasks that pertain to spontaneous face-to-face conversations as well as short routine telephone conversations although some misunderstandings of details arise occasionally. Students demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas, themes, and some significant details of spoken passages in familiar contexts inferring meaning of many unfamiliar words in order to understand the gist of the passages. When listening, students use background knowledge, contextual clues, redundancy, paraphrase and restatement to aid comprehension of spoken passages. Understanding may be uneven.</p>
<p><b>SPEAKING/SIGNING:</b> Speak/sign for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Communicate by asking and responding to questions, using introductions, greetings, courtesies and performing transactions.</p> <p>Express ideas, needs, likes, dislikes, opinion and make suggestions by initiating and engaging in conversations.</p>	<p>Request and convey information, express ideas and accomplish tasks.</p>	<p>Exchange information within a wider range of topics, express personal feelings, thoughts, ideas and opinions, and attempt to persuade others.</p> <p>Initiate, maintain and extend familiar communicative tasks using a series of related questions and responses.</p> <p>Initiate, sustain and bring to closure uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations by recombining learned vocabulary and structures.</p> <p>Acquire goods and services through basic negotiation and monetary exchange.</p> <p>Give multi-step directions for a more complex task.</p>	<p>Strings of sentences about a single topic in an organized form with a few connectors and transitions; multiple information-gap and follow-up questions.</p>	<p>Content from Benchmarks 1-5 plus:</p> <p>At least two of the following PASS content areas:</p> <p>Mathematics Language Arts Science Social Science Visual and Performing Arts</p>	<p>Proficient: Students demonstrate the ability to function in a wide variety of uncomplicated, basic communicative tasks and social situations recombining learned elements into a range of sentences and strings of sentences with sufficient accuracy that listeners understand most of what is presented. Students can generally participate in simple conversations on topics beyond the most immediate needs. The students use pronunciation and intonation patterns that can be understood by those accustomed to interacting with language learners although they make false starts and pause frequently to search for words. Students often supplement their basic vocabulary with expressions acquired from other sources such as dictionaries. Students often use circumlocution when faced with difficult syntactic structures, problematic spelling or unfamiliar vocabulary as well as memory-aids to facilitate presentations and make efforts at self-correction to avoid errors likely to interfere with communication. Presentations are primarily in present time but can express at least one other time frame or aspect consistently and show evidence of control of the syntax of noncomplex sentences.</p>

## Content Strand: Communication

Communicate effectively in a language other than English for a variety of audiences and purposes and listen effectively to gather information. Identify and respect that people from various cultures have different ways of communicating verbal and non-verbal

# Reading

## Recognized foundations of this sub-strand

Reading requires many skills. It is a complex process that includes understanding information, implications and relationships within sentences and throughout the text. Critical to reading is identifying the main ideas, supporting details, summarizing and understanding the communicative value of the text. Exposure to a variety of reading materials, including authentic texts, exhibit the true features of the target language and culture.

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.	Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.	<p>Recognizes and knows sounds of the alphabet or character system. Combines sounds to read words.</p> <p>Recognizes and makes meaning of some words and high frequency phrases by using phonics, syntax, contextual and visual cues.</p> <p>Begins to get the gist of the main idea in simple texts on familiar topics.</p> <p>Makes very simple predictions.</p>	<p>Reads and understands some common cognates, borrowed words, and high frequency words from familiar material.</p> <p>Uses contextual and visual cues to make meaning of an increasing number of words &amp; phrases (e.g., bilingual dictionaries, pattern books and children's</p> <p>Picks out the main idea by using contextual and visual cues.</p> <p>Makes simple predictions.</p>	<p>Reads a short paragraph consisting of common cognates, borrowed words, and recombines words from familiar material.</p> <p>Uses cueing strategies (e.g., syntax, semantic, phonetic and contextual cues) to construct meaning from a wider variety of familiar texts (e.g., schedules, timetables.)</p> <p>Understands the relationship between main idea and some details.</p> <p>Makes reasonable predictions, anticipations and inferences.</p>	<p>Reads short simple texts on mostly familiar topics. Understands common cognates, borrowed words, and recognizes some false cognates.</p> <p>Uses contextual clues and reading strategies to construct meaning for instructional and/or practical and social needs.</p> <p>Paraphrases and draws simple conclusions based on the understanding of main idea and supporting details.</p> <p>Recognizes the purpose of a text.</p>	<p>Reads a variety of short simple texts on some unfamiliar topics.</p> <p>Uses a variety of reading strategies to increase comprehension and learning from primarily non-complex texts.</p> <p>Identifies the sequence of events, main ideas, and details and facts.</p> <p>Discusses and asks meaningful questions about a simple text.</p>	<p>Reads a wider variety of familiar texts selected for second language learning.</p> <p>Extends ideas presented in the text with simple opinions, conclusions and judgments.</p> <p>Reads and compares two texts on the same topic.</p> <p>Discusses and asks meaningful questions about a more complex text.</p>

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.</p>	<p>Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Recognizes and knows sounds of the alphabet or character system. Combines sounds to read words.</p> <p>Recognizes and makes meaning of some words and high frequency phrases by using phonics, syntax, contextual and visual cues.</p> <p>Begins to get the gist of the main idea in simple texts on familiar topics</p> <p>Makes very simple predictions.</p>	<p>Isolated characters, letters, words and some high frequency phrases</p>	<p>Simple labels Calendar Posters Common signs Photos and Pictures</p> <p>Authentic, educationally designed and/or teacher-created materials within highly predictable common situations of everyday life.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>When reading, the student can identify and comprehend isolated words and some common high frequency phrases when supported by context and/or visual cues. Understanding is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words and high frequency words and social conventions. Understanding is enhanced through the use of visuals.</p> <p>Partially-Proficient:</p> <p>When reading, students identify isolated words when strongly supported by context and/or visual clues most of the time. The student's understanding is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high frequency social conventions and is nearly always dependent upon the use of visuals.</p>

## Benchmark Stage 2

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.</p>	<p>Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Reads and understands some common cognates, borrowed words, and high frequency words from familiar material.</p> <p>Uses contextual and visual cues to make meaning of an increasing number of words &amp; phrases (e.g., bilingual dictionaries, pattern books and children's literature.)</p> <p>Picks out the main idea by using contextual and visual cues.</p> <p>Makes simple predictions.</p>	<p>Patterned sentences Simple sentences Major phrases Short texts that are enhanced by visual cues Simple cloze texts</p>	<p>Including everything from Benchmark 1 plus:</p> <p>Lists Notes Tickets Brochures Advertisements Other media Familiar children's literature Simple geographical information (e.g., maps) Bilingual or picture dictionaries</p> <p>Authentic, educationally designed and/or teacher-created materials within highly predictable common everyday situations.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>When reading, the student understands important information and begins to pick out the main idea when strongly supported by contextual and/or visual cues. Reading is limited to short phrases including cognates and borrowed words. Comprehension may require re-reading and is limited to familiar materials.</p>

# Benchmark Stage 3

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.</p>	<p>Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Reads a short paragraph consisting of common cognates, borrowed words, and recombines words from familiar material.</p> <p>Uses cueing strategies (e.g., syntax, semantic, phonetic and contextual cues) to construct meaning from a wider variety of familiar texts (e.g., schedules, timetables.)</p> <p>Understands the relationship between main idea and some details.</p> <p>Makes reasonable predictions, anticipations and inferences.</p>	<p>Simple statements and questions</p> <p>Simple strings of sentences in paragraph form</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmarks 1 &amp; 2 plus:</p> <p>Short letters Postcards Headlines Rhyming poems Short narratives Simple cloze passages</p> <p>Authentic, educationally designed and/or teacher-created materials within highly predictable situations of everyday life.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students continue to rely on illustrations and other contextual cues to aid comprehension of short written passages. Students read simple statements and questions as well as high frequency words and phrases. Students use text markers to add to flow and comprehension. Students begin to self correct by re-reading text.</p>

## Benchmark Stage 4

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.</p>	<p>Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Reads short simple texts on mostly familiar topics. Understands common cognates, borrowed words, and recognizes some false cognates.</p> <p>Uses contextual clues and reading strategies to construct meaning for instructional and/or practical and social needs.</p> <p>Paraphrases and draws simple conclusions based on the understanding of main idea and supporting details.</p> <p>Recognizes the purpose of a text.</p>	<p>Mostly simple passages with clear underlying structure.</p> <p>Short, simple texts on mostly familiar topics.</p>	<p>Content and Context from Benchmark Stages 1-3 plus:</p> <p>Simple stories and personal correspondence</p> <p>Contextualized print drawn from authentic, educationally designed and/or teacher-created materials within the context of informal social settings, a limited number of transactional situations, and topics mostly related to self and the immediate environment.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas and some details from the simplest connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. Students use background knowledge, contextual clues and reading strategies (i.e. gleaning information from the first and last paragraphs), to aid comprehension of written passages. Some misunderstandings will occur.</p>

# Benchmark Stage 5

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.</p>	<p>Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Reads a variety of short simple texts on some unfamiliar topics.</p> <p>Uses a variety of reading strategies to increase comprehension and learning from primarily non-complex texts.</p> <p>Identifies the sequence of events, main ideas, and details and facts.</p> <p>Discusses and asks meaningful questions about a simple text.</p>	<p>Short literary or informational texts on familiar topics or topics of personal interest.</p> <p>Simple texts with a clear underlying internal structure.</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmarks 1-4 plus:</p> <p>Short literary texts Current events Abbreviated stories Translated texts Poems Non-complex plays Personal journals and writings</p> <p>Authentic, educationally designed, or teacher-created materials within the context of informal social settings, a limited number of transactional situations, and topics mostly related to self and the immediate environment.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students demonstrate an understanding of most of the details relating to who, what, when in familiar contexts. Comprehension of details is increasing but dependent on background knowledge, contextual clues, and reading strategies. Con summarize the main idea and provide sequence of two to three events of a familiar text.</p>



## Benchmark Stage 6

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Read and comprehend information from a variety of written texts in a second language.</p>	<p>Read silently and aloud with comprehension for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Reads a wider variety of familiar texts selected for second language learning.</p> <p>Extends ideas presented in the text with simple opinions, conclusions and judgments.</p> <p>Reads and compares two texts on the same topic.</p> <p>Discusses and asks meaningful questions about a more complex text.</p>	<p>Linguistically non-complex with clear underlying structure.</p> <p>Selected texts of varying lengths and topics.</p> <p>Multiple paragraphs on one topic.</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmarks 1-5 plus:</p> <p>Variety of stories Personal correspondences</p> <p>Contextualized print from authentic, educationally designed, or teacher-created materials within the context of informal social settings, a limited number of transactional situations, and topics mostly related to self and the immediate environment.</p>	<p>Proficient:</p> <p>Students demonstrate an understanding of the main ideas, themes, and some significant details of written passages in familiar contexts. Students begin to infer the gist of the text as well as the meaning of many unfamiliar words. Students continue to use background knowledge, contextual clues, reading strategies (i.e. gleaning information from the first and last paragraphs), and knowledge of the target language structures to aid comprehension of written passages. Students begin to draw simple conclusions and make reasonable extensions based on texts.</p>

## Content Strand: Communication

Communicate effectively in a language other than English for a variety of audiences and purposes and listen effectively to gather information. Identify and respect that people from various cultures have different ways of communicating verbal and non-verbal ideas.

# Writing

## Recognized foundations of this sub-strand

Writing is the literacy component and integral part of communication. Students use writing for practical and creative purposes. Good writing is a process that utilizes the organization of ideas. Writing as a skill should parallel oral proficiency development.

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
<p>Writing: Write/compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/ videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Copies basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases.</p> <p>Forms the symbols/ characters of the language from written models. Demonstrates awareness of print protocol. (e.g. Japanese, writing from top to bottom and right to left.)</p>	<p>Writes basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases from familiar material.</p> <p>Writes from memory some familiar words and phrases. Employs print protocol (e.g., Japanese, writing from top to bottom and right to left.)</p>	<p>Writes simple sentences using memorized or familiar/personal material to describe a simple event/ happening.</p> <p>Employs print protocol and diacritical marks.</p>	<p>Creates, initiates and writes simple statements and questions on familiar topics to meet limited practical needs.</p>	<p>Creates, initiates and writes on a widening variety of familiar and some unfamiliar communicative tasks (e.g., wide variety of social transactions).</p>	<p>Writes on simplified topics related to other content areas.</p>

### Benchmark Stage 1

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Writing: Write/compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Copies basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases.</p> <p>Forms the symbols/characters of the language from written models. Demonstrates awareness of print protocol. (e.g. Japanese, writing from top to bottom and right to left.)</p>	<p>Isolated letters and simple words from classroom environment and a few formulaic expressions and patterns.</p> <p>Writes from a simple model.</p>	<p>Simple labels Calendar Posters Common signs</p>	<p>Proficient level:</p> <p>Writing consists entirely of reproducing memorized, high frequency words and phrases. Writing displays numerous errors (e.g., diacritical marks, misspellings, etc.) but can still be understood.</p>

## Benchmark Stage 2

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Writing: Write/ compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/ videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Writes basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases from familiar material.</p> <p>Writes from memory some familiar words and phrases. Employs print protocol (e.g., Japanese, writing from top to bottom and right to left.)</p>	<p>Memorized words, high frequency phrases</p> <p>Simple sentences</p> <p>Patterned sentences</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmark Stage I, plus:</p> <p>Lists (e.g., Grocery)</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>Recipes</p> <p>Cloze</p> <p>Signs</p> <p>Forms</p> <p>Calendar</p> <p>Postcards</p>	<p>Proficient Level:</p> <p>Writing continues to consist of reproducing memorized words and phrases on familiar topics. Writing exhibits some errors (e.g., interference from first language, misspellings, lack of diacritical marks, common word order, etc.). A sympathetic reader can understand most of what is being presented.</p>

### Benchmark Stage 3

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Writing: Write/ compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/ videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Writes simple sentences using memorized or familiar/ personal material to describe a simple event/ happening.</p> <p>Employs print protocol and diacritical marks.</p>	<p>Lists of simple sentences of recombined and memorized words and phrases.</p> <p>Strings of sentences on the same topic.</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmark Stages 1 &amp; 2, plus:</p> <p>Short letters Postcards Simple poems Fill-in-the-blanks Invitations Short e-mails Guided compositions</p>	<p>Proficient Level:</p> <p>Writing consists of combining and recombining memorized words and phrases on familiar topics. Readers understand most of what is being presented.</p> <p>Writes all the symbols in an alphabetic system and/or 50-100 characters or compounds in a character writing system.</p> <p>Students often supplement their basic vocabulary with expressions acquired from other sources such as dictionaries.</p> <p>Writing continues to exhibit some errors which do not interfere with understanding.</p>

## Benchmark Stage 4

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Writing: Write/ compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/ videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Creates, initiates and writes simple statements and questions on familiar topics to meet limited practical needs.</p>	<p>Recombination of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences and strings of sentences.</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmark Stages 1-3, plus:</p> <p>Simple stories Personal correspondence</p>	<p>Proficient Level:</p> <p>Written presentations are characterized by the students' ability to create with the language by combining and recombining learned vocabulary and structures into a range of sentences and strings of sentences on familiar and some unfamiliar topics.</p> <p>Writing is primarily in the present tense, but may exhibit the use of past and future tenses.</p> <p>Writing, regardless of existing errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation, is understood by a sympathetic reader. Re-reading may be necessary occasionally for comprehension of the message.</p>

### Benchmark Stage 5

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Writing: Write/ compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/ videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Creates, initiates and writes on a widening variety of familiar and some unfamiliar communicative tasks (e.g., wide variety of social transactions).</p>	<p>Strings of sentences in paragraph form.</p>	<p>Everything from Benchmark Stages 1-4, plus:</p> <p>Short literary texts Current events Abbreviated stories (Paraphrase) Poems Simple plays</p>	<p>Proficient Level:</p> <p>Written presentations are characterized by the students' ability to create with the language by combining sentences into paragraph form on familiar and some unfamiliar topics.</p> <p>Writing exhibits control of the present tense with some use of another timeframe. Interference from the first language appears when the student attempts more complex structures (e.g., compound sentences and subordinating clauses).</p> <p>Writing continues to exhibit errors but do not require re-reading to understand the message.</p>



## Benchmark Stage 6

Common Curricular Goals	Content Standards	Functions	Text Type	Content Context	Minimum Performance Standard Level Descriptor
<p>Writing: Write/ compose effectively for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Communicate information to express ideas in written/ videotext form for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p>	<p>Writes information, messages and ideas for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reproduces the symbols of the language so that the writing is understood by others.</p>	<p>Writes on simplified topics related to other content areas.</p>	<p>Short, simple paragraphs that are linked by connectors and transitions.</p>	<p>Variety of stories Summaries Short reports Simple compositions Supported opinions</p> <p>PASS Topics: Mathematics English The Arts Science Social Studies</p>	<p>Proficient Level:</p> <p>Writing shows some elements of organization (e.g., sequencing, sufficient details). Errors continue to be evident when venturing beyond simple constructions and vocabulary. Writing creates a mental image and is comprehensible to the reader. Writing exhibits control of present tense and some control of one other time frame.</p>



## Content Strand: Culture

Understand the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and products of a culture. Acquire information & recognize distinctive viewpoints and make comparisons with own culture to interpret in ways that result in sensitive & meaningful interaction.

# Culture

## Recognized foundations of this strand

Culture and language are intertwined. One cannot truly be understood without an understanding of the other. It encompasses values, ideas and attitudes beyond the common stereotypes. Culture is best understood through its practices, products, and perspectives.



Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
<p>Comprehend and use appropriate verbal and nonverbal practices in common situations occurring within a second language culture.</p> <p>Compare and contrast cultural practices of the first and second language cultures.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.</p> <p>Demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.</p>	<p>Reacts to and uses appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave takings and common classroom interactions.</p> <p>Participates through imitation of patterns of behavior in age-appropriate cultural activities such as games, songs, birthday celebrations, story telling and dramatizations.</p> <p>Recognizes some tangible products of the culture being studied.</p>	<p>Initiates, comprehends, and uses a few polite behaviors, appropriate gestures and oral expressions of the target culture in rehearsed, limited situations.</p> <p>Models and sometimes initiates patterns of behavior in age-appropriate cultural activities such as games, sports, and entertainment (e.g., music, dance, and drama).</p> <p>Identifies tangible products of the culture such as dress, types of dwellings and food.</p>	<p>Initiates, comprehends, and uses polite behaviors, appropriate gestures and oral expressions of the target culture in daily activities.</p> <p>Demonstrates with greater ease and enthusiasm patterns of behavior typical of age/grade level peers in the target culture in guided situations.</p> <p>Identifies a wider range of tangible products of the culture such as clothing, food, sports equipment and household products.</p>	<p>Comprehends and uses some common social conventions, social courtesies, and nonverbal cues in limited social situations.</p> <p>Compares and contrasts patterns of behavior typical of their age/grade level peers in the target culture and their own in guided situations.</p> <p>Searches for, identifies, and compares the use of tangible products (e.g., sports equipment, household items, tools, foods, and clothing) of the culture studied as found within their homes and communities.</p>	<p>Comprehends and uses a variety of common social conventions, social courtesies, and nonverbal cues in limited social situations.</p> <p>Identifies, compares, contrasts some cultural behaviors from home and target language.</p> <p>Identifies and compares some intangible products of the target culture as social, economic and/or political institutions.</p>	<p>Comprehends and uses common social conventions, social courtesies, and nonverbal cues in a wider range of simple social situations.</p> <p>Identifies and compares some expressive products of the target culture to their own culture.</p> <p>Identifies, discusses, and analyzes such intangible products of the target culture as social, economic, and political institutions, and explores relationships among these institutions and the perspectives of the culture.</p>

(Culture cont.)

Common Curriculum Goals	Content Standards	Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
		<p>Begins to identify some common expressive products of the culture.</p> <p>Begins to identify a few basic cultural practices of the target language culture such as traditional celebrations.</p> <p>Identifies where the target language is spoken within the United States.</p>	<p>Identifies some common expressive products of the culture such as songs, stories, games, and art.</p> <p>Identifies a few basic cultural practices of a second language culture such as traditional celebrations within the culture being studied.</p> <p>Identifies where the target language is used outside the United States.</p>	<p>Identifies expressive products of the culture from a wider range of topics such as songs, stories, games, and art.</p> <p>Identifies and uses some basic cultural practices from a wider range of a second language culture such as traditional celebrations.</p> <p>Identifies historical origins of why the target language is spoken in different locations.</p>	<p>Identifies and describes some expressive products (e.g. stories, poetry, music, artwork, dance, film or drama) of the target culture.</p> <p>Compares and contrasts themes, ideas, practices or perspectives (e.g., gender roles and family traditions) of own and target culture.</p> <p>Demonstrates awareness of regional/dialectal differences among speakers of the target language.</p>	<p>Identifies and compares some expressive products of the target culture to their own culture.</p> <p>Identifies, compares and contrasts themes, ideas, or perspectives (e.g., social, economic and/or political institutions) of the target cultures</p> <p>Compares and contrasts regional/ dialect differences, similarities and origins of the target languages.</p>	<p>Identifies, discusses and analyzes expressive products including level appropriate selections such as various literary genres and the fine arts of the target culture..</p> <p>Identifies, discusses and analyzes themes, ideas, and perspectives related to the products being studied.</p> <p>Identifies, discusses and analyzes differences and similarities among language use in speakers of the target language and culture.</p>















# Example Activity

## **Performance Task: The Telephone “Dr-r-ring Dr-r-ring” ; Number, Please !**

Adapted from: Grammar & McCullough: NTC Contemporary Publishing

**Performance Level:** Benchmark Level 1-2. It can be spiraled to 3-4

### **Functional Objective:**

Within a short telephone conversation, students will use telephone courtesies, maintain a simple conversation, and ask and answer questions.

### **Benchmark stage 1-2 Speaking/Listening:**

Comprehends isolated words and everyday expressions.

Comprehends simple phrases, short sentences and questions with some repetition.

Mimics simple commands and or requests

Reacts to simple commands and requests.

Exchanges memorized greetings and very simple information about self.

Exchanges memorized greetings, introductions, leave takings and simple personal information.

Expresses quantities in numbers.

Expresses number in time, dates, currency, phone numbers and addresses.

### **Benchmark Stage 1-2 Writing:**

Copies basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases.

Writes basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases from familiar phrases.

Forms the symbols/characters of the language from written models.

Demonstrates awareness of print protocol.

Writes from memory some familiar words and phrases. Employs print protocol.

### **Benchmark Stage 1-2 Culture:**

Reacts to and uses appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave takings and common interactions.

Initiates, comprehends and uses a few polite behaviors, appropriate gestures, and oral expressions of the target culture in rehearsed limited situations.

### **Materials Needed:**

For each student you will need one telephone diagram photocopied on thick paper stock and steps for making the telephone.

### **Lesson One: “Dr-r-ring, Dr-r-ring” (primary sub-strand Listening/Speaking)**

#### **Procedure/Time**

This activity will take 30-40 minutes and is presented over two to three days.

Introduction: (10 minutes) Teacher models target language and behavior in a basic telephone call.

Hands on Activity: (10 minutes) Students make a telephone prop. Students use a telephone prop to make a telephone call.

Practice: (15 minutes) Students practice basic conversation with a partner.

Teacher models target language. Depending on students Benchmark stage level, students repeat, or practice independently the telephone conversation.

### **Lesson Two: Number, Please! (primary sub-strand Writing)**

#### **Procedure/Time:**

This activity will take 30-40 minutes and is presented over two to three days.

Introduction: (10 minutes) Teacher review and extension of target language.

Hands on Activity: (15 minutes) Students practice by selecting a telephone number to be used for the lesson. Each student writes his or her number on his or her telephone prop. Students receive a blank telephone directory. They are to write down the names and telephone numbers of their classmates in their directories.

Practice: (10 minutes) Students are paired with classmates and engage in short telephone conversations to verify each other’s telephone numbers.

**Evaluation:** An informal evaluation of this lesson can happen while students are practicing. Teacher monitors the student conversations and the telephone directories. A performance assessment of this task begins with the creation of scoring guide based of performance descriptors. Students then carry out the telephone conversation.

**Extra Extension:** Teacher may enrich this lesson with the addition of a cultural component unique to cultures of Spanish speaking countries. Have students use two last names, just as people in Spanish speaking countries do. Students may be shown how to combine their own parent’s last names and use those names, e.g., Garcia-Lorca. Garcia was father’s name and Lorca was mother’s name. Adding this extension hits additional cultural benchmarks, specifically, begins to identify a few basic cultural practices of the target language culture.

**Suggested Language:**  
(For Benchmark Stage 1-2)

A: Hello?	B: Hello, this is ____ speaking. Is _____ there?
A: Hi _____, this is _____.	B: Oh Hello, How are you?
A: I’m fine, How are you?	B: Very well thanks.
A: What is your telephone number?	B: My telephone number is ____ - _____
A: Goodbye _____.	B: Goodbye.

(For Benchmark Stage 3-4)

A: Are you busy tomorrow afternoon? Do you want to study?	B: No, I’m not busy. I want to study tomorrow afternoon.
A: Good. See you at 4 o’clock.	B: Where do you want to meet?
A: Lets meet at the park.	
A: What is your telephone number at work?	B: My telephone number is ____ - _____
A: Can I call you next Tuesday at work?	B: Yes, you can. I work until 6:00.
A: I will talk to you later. Goodbye.	B: Goodbye. See you later.

**Performance Descriptors**

- Y/N Content/Vocabulary: has at least 10 words related to the topic and enough support vocabulary to carry out the situation.
- Y/N Function: can carry out the transaction implicit in the situation.
- Y/N Question: can ask 1 predictable question related to the topic.
- Y/N Text Type/sentences: can speak in simple sentences and in phrases where appropriate with subject/verb agreement more than half the time.
- Y/N Comprehensibility: can make oneself understood with pronunciation and accuracy that does not interfere with the message.

# Curriculum Alignment

## Unit Alignment

This sheet allows an instructor to compile information for a unit and align its activities to the benchmark stages. Assessments should be included. It informs the instructor where there are opportunities in a unit to further align and enhance teaching to the Content Standards.

To complete the sheet, fill in the Benchmark Stage under each sub-strand and the Culture strand. Identify the Content Standard in the second column and under Student Evidence, write what the students will do that will demonstrate the knowledge & skills in the Content Standard. See the example below based on the Example Activity.

Benchmark Stage	Content Standard	Student Evidence
<b>Listening &amp; Speaking</b> B1-2	Comprehends simple phrases, short sentences and questions with some repetition.  Reacts to simple commands and requests.  Exchanges memorized greetings, introductions, leave takings and simple personal information.  Expresses number in time, dates, currency, phone numbers and addresses.	
<b>Reading</b>		
<b>Writing</b> B1-2	Writes basic autobiographical information, high frequency words, and memorized phrases from familiar phrases.  Writes from memory some familiar words and phrases. Employs print protocol.	
<b>Culture</b> B1-2	Reacts to and uses appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave takings and common interactions. Initiates, comprehends and uses a few polite behaviors, appropriate gestures, and oral expressions of the target culture in rehearsed limited situations.	

## Curricular Framework Alignment

This allows an instructor to compile information about Content learned at particular Benchmark Stages. It informs students, parents & administrators where the opportunities are afforded for students to meet and even exceed the Content Standards. It includes a brief synopsis of keywords at each Benchmark Stage for both strands & each sub-strand. Two pages are provided to allow ample space.

To complete the Alignment, fill in a Content or Unit Name, and list underneath which strands & sub-strands are targeted skills for the unit.

Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
L-Limited to some high frequency words  S-Isolated words & high frequency phrases  R-Understanding is limited to some isolated, high frequency words, cognates, borrowed words with contextual support.  W-Reproduces memorized, high frequency words & phrases, numerous errors.  C-Great reliance on stereotypes & misconceptions	L-Some words & phrases from simple questions, statements, high frequency commands, long pauses & repetition  S-memorized, isolated, high frequency words on basic needs, some courtesies  R-Short phrases, begins to pick out main idea with strong contextual support  W-Reproduces memorized, high frequency words & phrases on familiar topics, some errors, lists.  C-Stereotypes persist, identifies some basic practices, behaviors & traditions.	L-Increased words & phrases, short sentences with contextual clues  S-Some spontaneity, but mostly learned phrases, simple or incomplete sentences, sentences more than 1/2 of the time  R-Continued reliance on contextual cues, simple statements, questions, high frequency words & phrases  W-Consists of combining & recombining memorized words & phrases on familiar topics, lists of simple sentences, some strings  C-Within context of daily activities, uses some appropriate behaviors & expressions.	L-Strings of sentences of recombined learned elements, most personal topics, understanding is often uneven.  S-Can create with the language, strings of sentences, by recombining learned elements, ask questions, initiate, minimally sustain a communicative task  R-Comprehend main ideas & some details from simple texts on basic topics.  W-Can create with language, combines & recombines learned language into simple sentences & strings of sentences, primarily present tense, errors don't interfere  C-Compares & contrasts behaviors & perspectives, uses appropriate practices, misconceptions begin to break down.	L-Strings of sentences within face to face conversation on familiar topics, comprehends main idea & few significant details  S-Functions in a variety of tasks, organized strings of sentences, multiple info-gap questions, partial control of present time.  R-Understands most details of who, what, when in familiar contexts, other details rely on background knowledge  W-Creates, strings of sentences in paragraph form on familiar & some unfamiliar topics, interference present on more complex structures  C-Demonstrates awareness of cultural influences between 2 cultures, recognizes differences & similarities, applies some norms to accomplish simple tasks.	L-Strings of sentences within spontaneous face to face conversation on various topics, comprehends main idea, some significant details, & theme of familiar topics  S-Functions in a wide variety of tasks, organized strings of sentences with few connectors, multiple info-gap questions & follow up questions, good control of present time.  R-Understanding of main idea, some significant details & theme in familiar contexts, begins to infer gist of words  W-Elements of organization, some connectors, short, simple paragraphs, control of present tense & some control of 1 other time frame, errors on complexities  C-Demonstrates understanding of 2-way cultural influences, recognizes differences & similarities, appropriately negotiates most simple social situations, interprets using knowledge of culture, begins to show respect for cultural diversity.
	Telephone LS, W, C  House LS, R, W, C  Clothing LS, W, C	Travel LS, R, W, C  ↑↑↑↑	<b>L&amp;S= Listening &amp; Speaking</b> <b>R= Reading</b> <b>W= Writing</b> <b>C= Culture</b>		Health Occupations LS, R, W, C  Art & Communication LS, R, W, C

# Unit Alignment Cover Sheet

**Second Language Unit:**

**Instructor:**

**Date:**

<b>Benchmark Stage</b>	<b>Content Standard</b>	<b>Student Evidence</b>
Listening & Speaking		
Reading		
Writing		
Culture		

# Curricular Framework Alignment

Instructor:

Language:

Location:

Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6
<p>L-Limited to some high frequency words</p> <p>S-Isolated words &amp; high frequency phrases</p> <p>R-Understanding is limited to some isolated, high frequency words, cognates, borrowed words with contextual support.</p> <p>W-Reproduces memorized, high frequency words &amp; phrases, numerous errors.</p> <p>C-Great reliance on stereotypes &amp; misconceptions</p>	<p>L-Some words &amp; phrases from simple questions, statements, high frequency commands, long pauses &amp; repetition</p> <p>S-memorized, isolated, high frequency words on basic needs, some courtesies</p> <p>R-Short phrases, begins to pick out main idea with strong contextual support</p> <p>W-Reproduces memorized, high frequency words &amp; phrases on familiar topics, some errors, lists.</p> <p>C-Stereotypes persist, identifies some basic practices, behaviors &amp; traditions.</p>	<p>L-Increased words &amp; phrases, short sentences with contextual clues</p> <p>S-Some spontaneity, but mostly learned phrases, simple or incomplete sentences, sentences more than 1/2 of the time</p> <p>R-Continued reliance on contextual cues, simple statements, questions, high frequency words &amp; phrases</p> <p>W-Consists of combining &amp; recombining memorized words &amp; phrases on familiar topics, lists of simple sentences, some strings</p> <p>C-Within context of daily activities, uses some appropriate behaviors &amp; expressions.</p>	<p>L-Strings of sentences of recombined learned elements, most personal topics, understanding is often uneven.</p> <p>S-Can create with the language, strings of sentences, by recombining learned elements, ask questions, initiate, minimally sustain a communicative task</p> <p>R-Comprehend main ideas &amp; some details from simple texts on basic topics.</p> <p>W-Can create with language, combines &amp; recombines learned language into simple sentences &amp; strings of sentences, primarily present tense, errors don't interfere</p> <p>C-Compares &amp; contrasts behaviors &amp; perspectives, uses appropriate practices, misconceptions begin to break down.</p>	<p>L-Strings of sentences within face to face conversation on familiar topics, comprehends main idea &amp; few significant details</p> <p>S-Functions in a variety of tasks, organized strings of sentences, multiple info.-gap questions, partial control of present time.</p> <p>R-Understands most details of who, what, when in familiar contexts, other details rely on background knowledge</p> <p>W-Creates, strings of sentences in paragraph form on familiar &amp; some unfamiliar topics, interference present on more complex structures</p> <p>C-Demonstrates awareness of cultural influences between 2 cultures, recognizes differences &amp; similarities, applies some norms to accomplish simple tasks.</p>	<p>L-Strings of sentences within spontaneous face to face conversation on various topics, comprehends main idea, some significant details, &amp; theme of familiar topics</p> <p>S-Functions in a wide variety of tasks, organized strings of sentences with few connectors, multiple info.-gap questions &amp; follow up questions, good control of present time.</p> <p>R-Understanding of main idea, some significant details &amp; theme in familiar contexts, begins to infer gist of words</p> <p>W-Elements of organization, some connectors, short, simple paragraphs, control of present tense &amp; some control of 1 other time frame, errors on complexities</p> <p>C-Demonstrates understanding of 2-way cultural influences, recognizes differences &amp; similarities, appropriately negotiates most simple social situations, interprets using knowledge of culture, begins to show respect for cultural diversity.</p>

L&S=Listening & Speaking

R=Reading

W=Writing

C=Culture



## Curricular Framework Alignment pg. 2

Benchmark Stage 1	Benchmark Stage 2	Benchmark Stage 3	Benchmark Stage 4	Benchmark Stage 5	Benchmark Stage 6

# How is Proficiency to be Verified?

In the proficiency-oriented classroom clear performance standards are established and students are assessed in relation to these standards. There is a variety of assessment instruments that are used to verify students' proficiency. The following describes some of these, which are most relevant to the proficiency-oriented classroom.

## **Classroom Assessment**

Formative assessment is embedded in the daily classroom activities. It provides feedback on the students' degree of control of the instructional content.

Benchmarks are a part of the process of assessment. No longer are discrete points of grammar and isolated components of knowledge and skill the only part of the assessment, but now more emphasis is given on what the student can do with the language. This type of assessment uses scoring guides, which describe the characteristics of the expected student performance. Curriculum is developed around set functions and topics. Students are given the opportunity to perform authentic tasks after guided practices in individual or group situations. With a shift to proficiency assessment, teachers are redesigning units/courses to prepare students to meet the minimal standards through these situations and tasks.

## **Benchmark Stage Assessment**

The Benchmark Stage Assessment is an assessment that elicits a performance sample for the strands culture & communication, under which are the sub-strands of listening and speaking, reading, writing. The sample is used to indicate the student's minimal performance on the continuum of levels 1-6. Just as Benchmark Stages are not tied to any specific grade level or amount of seat time neither are Benchmark Stage Assessments. These assessments are used for diagnostic, placement, summative assessment and articulation purposes.

## **Student Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) Test**

Anne LaViertes Mueller developed the SLIP test. It has been used in numerous school districts in Oregon and Idaho as a tool for baseline data collection and student placement. The SLIP is a group-administered test, which utilizes technology to record student responses. The SLIP simulates a face to face oral interview that provides students an open-ended prompt based on content standards. This assessment is being used to establish PPS baseline data and subsequent assessments. The benefits of this test are that it shows a numerical score on a continuum. Numerous students can be assessed at the same time. The SLIP test can be used as a verification of Benchmark IV for the PASS admissions. There is also a SLIP writing assessment, which is group administered.

## **Oral Proficiency Interviews**

Oral assessment has grown in importance with the increased popularity of the "Proficiency Movement". More emphasis is being placed on what the student can do in communicating in the target language. Teachers are encouraged to become trained and certified in these assessing procedures so these types of methods can be incorporated in their curriculum. Many types of assessment have been designed with the one of the more popular assessments having been developed by the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching (COFLT). This assessment is administered by trained and certified teachers.

American Council on the Foreign Language (ACTFL) has created another interview called the Oral Proficiency Interview. The speaker is ranked according to a rating from Novice to Superior level. A set way is used to warm-up, check the level, probe, use situation cards to get the student to ask questions, level check again, and finally wind down.

**Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) Assessment**

The Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) represents the knowledge and skill students can demonstrate and master before leaving high school. While the Oregon Department of Education has general standards for CIM requirements in Second Language, the level and assessment tool of student proficiency for the CIM is determined by the district school board.

Portland Public Schools is in the process of developing a district CIM Assessment. This assessment tool measures to a full control of performance to one set of descriptors, and is based on the District Content Standards. The CIM Assessment evaluates whether the student meets the proficiency standard or does not meet the standard.

**Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) Assessment**

The Certificate of Advanced Mastery goal is to broaden and deepen the knowledge and skills demonstrated by students as they earn the CIM. CAM is earned in part by demonstrating mastery of career-related learning standards. CAM assessment is still in the process of being created.

**Proficiency-based Admission Standards System (PASS) Assessment**

PASS is the Proficiency-based Admission Standards System for admission of students into public universities of Oregon. The PASS admission requires that the students meet or exceed admission performance standards. Student scores are determined by a certified-trained teacher in the methods of assessments where the student is judged by a set of criteria. There are multiple pathways to reach the PASS, but only one verification is necessary. (For a current Verification Methods and Score Requirement contact PASS office or refer to page 25 in the Second Languages Guide to Teaching and Assessing Proficiency for University Admission.)

## **Further Suggestions for Second Language Teachers of PPS**

What should a professional Teacher do to prepare the students to meet these new requirements of assessments? (Start now by selecting one or two areas of improvement)

- Get trained to use these assessing methods through the proper professional Second Language organizations (COFLT or ACTFL)
- Join your local, state and national Second Language Organization to receive newsletters, professional publication, and reduced rates to attend conferences and workshop dealing with assessment
- Become personally involved on the district, and state level to keep abreast to the latest decisions and policy being developed on assessment
- Go to the university or professional library to obtain texts, professional publications and articles to seek out the best practices in assessment
- Attend workshops, conferences, university courses and increase your own oral proficiency by travel/study abroad
- Redesign units of curriculum to specifically teach these new proficiency methods
- Join with colleagues and share ideas and units that espouse these methods
- Join established groups already meeting or establish sharing groups among your specific language to more fully education and inform and share with fellow colleagues

Seek help from colleagues, District CIM workshops, and other professional organizations that can help you become proficient in these methods.



## Second Language Learning: Everyone Can Benefit

**Kathleen M. Marcos**

The 1990s have been a decade of renewed interest in language learning. As always, political and economic concerns play a major role in the nation's perception of the value of learning a second language (Met and Galloway, 1992). In addition, there is now a growing appreciation of the role that multilingual individuals can play in an increasingly diverse society, and there is also a greater understanding of the academic and cognitive benefits that may accrue from learning other languages. During the past five years in particular, researchers, policymakers, educators, employers, parents, and the media have reexamined the advantages of foreign language learning.

In 1989, a presidential resolution declaring the 1990s the "decade of the brain" was announced. An increased level of research on brain development has been under way throughout the 1990s. Some of this research has analyzed the effect of language acquisition on the brain. The results of these studies have generated media interest in how early learning experiences--including first and second language acquisition--promote cognitive development. *Newsweek* magazine, for example, devoted a special edition to the critical first three years of a child's life and indicated that there is a window of opportunity for second language learning that begins when a child is one year of age (Lach, 1997). A recent article in *Time* magazine suggested that foreign languages should be taught to children as early as possible (Nash, 1997). And the television newsmagazine *Dateline NBC* aired a segment on first and second language acquisition in November 1997.

This article summarizes findings from numerous sources on the benefits of studying second languages and offers suggestions to parents and educators for encouraging language learning at home and at school.

### Benefits of Second Language Learning

#### Personal Benefits

An obvious advantage of knowing more than one language is having expanded access to people and resources. Individuals who speak and read more than one language have the ability to communicate with more people, read more literature, and benefit more fully from travel to other countries. Introducing students to alternative ways of expressing themselves and to dif-

### Is Earlier Always Better?

Although people can learn languages at any age, some studies suggest that children who learn a language before adolescence are more likely than older learners to attain native-like pronunciation (Harley, 1986; Patkowski, 1990). A number of researchers have found that children have an innate ability to acquire the rules of any language, and that this ability diminishes by adulthood (Curtiss, 1995; Johnson and Newport, 1989).

Older language students should take heart, however, in the results of other studies that report that although young children acquire pronunciation easily, they are not particularly efficient learners of vocabulary or other aspects of language structure (Genesee, 1978; Swain and Lapkin, 1989). Of course, the more years devoted to learning a language and the more opportunities available to use it in everyday situations, the greater the proficiency achieved (Curtain, 1997).

ferent cultures gives greater depth to their understanding of human experience by fostering an appreciation for the customs and achievements of people beyond their own communities. Ultimately, knowing a second language can also give people a competitive advantage in the work force by opening up additional job opportunities (Villano, 1996).

#### Cognitive Benefits

Some research suggests that students who receive second language instruction are more creative and better at solving complex problems than those who do not (Bamford and Mizokawa, 1991). Other studies suggest that persons with full proficiency in more than one language (*bilinguals*) outperform similar monolingual persons on both verbal and nonverbal tests of intelligence, which raises the question of whether ability in more than one language enables individuals to achieve greater intellectual flexibility (Bruck, Lambert, and Tucker, 1974; Hakuta, 1986; Weatherford, 1986).

#### Academic Benefits

Parents and educators sometimes express concern that learning a second language will have a detrimental effect on students' reading and verbal abilities in English. However, several studies suggest the opposite. For example, a recent study of the reading ability of 134 four- and five-year-old children found that bilingual children understood better than monolingual children the general symbolic representation of print (Bialystok, 1997). Another study analyzed achievement test data of students in Fairfax County, Virginia, who had participated for five years in immersion--the most intensive type of foreign language program. The study con-

cluded that those students scored as well as or better than all comparison groups on achievement tests and that they remained high academic achievers throughout their schooling (Thomas, Collier, and Abbott, 1993). Finally, a study conducted in Louisiana in the 1980s showed that regardless of race, sex, or academic level, students who received daily instruction in a foreign language (taught as a separate subject rather than through immersion) outperformed those who did not receive such instruction on the third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade language arts sections of Louisiana's Basic Skills Tests (Rafferty, 1986). Numerous other studies have also shown a positive relationship between foreign language study and English language arts achievement (Barik and Swain, 1975; Genesee, 1987; Swain, 1981). All of these results suggest that second language study helps enhance English and other academic skills. Some studies have found that students who learn foreign languages score statistically higher on standardized college entrance exams than those who do not. For example, the College Entrance Examination Board reported that students who had averaged four or more years of foreign language study scored higher on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than those who had studied four or more years of any other subject (College Entrance Examination Board, 1992; Cooper, 1987). These findings, which were consistent with College Board profiles for previous years (College Entrance Examination Board, 1982; Solomon, 1984) and with the work of Eddy (1981), suggest that studying a second language for a number of years may contribute to higher SAT scores.<sup>1</sup>

#### Societal Benefits

Bilingualism and multilingualism have many benefits to society. Americans who are fluent in more than one language can enhance America's economic competitiveness abroad, maintain its political and security interests, and work to promote an understanding of cultural diversity within the United States. For example, international trade specialists, overseas media correspondents, diplomats, airline employees, and national security personnel need to be familiar with other languages and cultures to do their jobs well. Teachers, healthcare providers, customer service representatives, and law enforcement personnel also serve their constituencies more effectively when they can reach across languages and cultures. Developing the language abilities of the students now in school will improve the effectiveness of the work force later.

### **Getting Started**

#### At School

Parents who are interested in enrolling their children in elementary school foreign language

programs should first inquire about existing programs in the school district. If the neighborhood school does not offer foreign language instruction, it is possible that immersion programs or language-focused schools exist elsewhere in the school district. Enrollment information will be available at individual schools or at district administrative offices. If there are no foreign language schools or programs offered in the school district, then private language classes may be the only option.

Although second language classes are not always readily available, many resources exist to help parents and educators establish a program in their school or school district.<sup>2</sup>

#### At Home

Long before their children begin school, parents can begin to facilitate second language learning. Children can learn elements of a second language from a babysitter, a nanny, a family member, or a friend; they can also attend a multilingual preschool or a preschool with a language program. If a child has a number of positive experiences with another language, he or she can become quite receptive to learning other languages.

Throughout the school years, parents can show their children that the ability to speak a second language is valued by encouraging an interest in other languages and cultures. Parents can show their respect for other cultures and ways of speaking by inviting people who speak other languages into their homes and by attending cultural events featuring music, dance, or food from other countries. They can also provide their children with books, videos, and similar materials in other languages, and they can send their children to foreign language camps.

To supplement language classes, parents of older children might also wish to explore the possibility of enrolling them in international exchange programs. Students normally live abroad with a host family, which provides them with a safe and sheltered environment where they can practice their language skills. These experiences offer valuable opportunities to complement second language study with firsthand exploration of a different culture.

#### Conclusion

Research has shown that second language study offers many benefits to students in terms of improved communicative ability, cognitive development, cultural awareness, and job opportunities. Society as a whole also profits economically, politically, and socially when its citizens can communicate with and appreciate people from other countries and cultures. Parents and educators would be wise to take advantage of the many available opportunities and resources for second language learning for the benefit of children coming of age in the 21st century.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Although the College Board studies show a correlation between studying a foreign language and achieving higher scores on the SAT, it is difficult to prove causality. It may be that the SAT scores of students who take several years of a foreign language are also influenced by other variables, such as their socioeconomic class, the educational level of their parents, or the resources available in their secondary school.

<sup>2</sup> Suggestions on advocating for second language study, developing a coherent rationale, and establishing a school program can be found in Curtain and Pesola (1994); de Lopez, Lawrence, and Montalvo (1990); and Lipton (1995).

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Available online:  
<http://www.accesseric.org/resources/ericreview/vol6no1/langlern.html>

# Print & Internet Resource List

## National Associations:

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

6 Executive Plaza

Yonkers, NJ 10701-6801

Phone: 914-963-8830

Fax: 914-963-1275

Email: [actflhq@aol.com](mailto:actflhq@aol.com)

Web: <http://www.actfl.org>

American Association of Teachers of French (AATF)

Web: <http://www.aatf.utsa.edu>

American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)

Web: <http://www.aatg.org>

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP)

Web: <http://www.aatsp.org>

American Council of Teachers of Russian

Web: <http://www.actr.org>

Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ)

Web: <http://www.colorado.edu/ealld/atj>

Chinese Language Teachers Assn. (CLTA)

Email: [chu@kzoo.edu](mailto:chu@kzoo.edu)

Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages (COTSEAL)

Email: [compton@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:compton@facstaff.wisc.edu)

American Sign Language Teachers Assn (ASLTA)

Web: <http://www.nad.org/aslta.htm>

National Foreign Language Resource Centers (NFLRC)

Web: <http://nflrc.msu.edu>

National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)

Nancy Rhodes, Executive Secretary

1118 22nd St. NW

Washington DC 20037

Web: <http://www.cal.org/public/nnell.html>

## Regional and State Associations:

PNCFL

Pacific NW Council on Foreign Languages

Email: [jmagoto@oregon.uoregon.edu](mailto:jmagoto@oregon.uoregon.edu)

COFLT

Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching

Oregon International Council

Executive Secretary: Bob Willner

P.O. Box 111

Salem, OR 97307

Phone: 503-375-5447

Email: [ouc@willamette.edu](mailto:ouc@willamette.edu)

[http://www.open.org/~coflt/coflt\\_homepage\\_index.htm](http://www.open.org/~coflt/coflt_homepage_index.htm)

## Advocacy Groups:

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)

Web: <http://www.cal.org>

Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA)

Web: <http://carla.acad.umn.edu>

Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL)

Web: <http://www.languagepolicy.org/>

### Reference Books:

*Standards for Foreign Language Learning*

Available through:

National Standards Report

P.O. Box 1897

Lawrence, KS 66044

Phone: 913-843-1221

Toll free: 1-800-627-9629

Hadley, A.O. , *Teaching Language in Context*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1993.

Hadley, A.O. (Ed.) 1993. *Research in Language Learning: Principles, Processes, and Prospects*. Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.

Curtain, H.A., and C.A. Pesola. 1994. *Languages and Children: Making the Match*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group.

*Bringing the Standards into the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide*. National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 1997

*K-12 Foreign Language Education*. The ERIC Review, Vol. 6, Issue 1, Fall 1998.  
Web site: <http://www.cal.org/ericcll>

Genesis, Fred. 1996. *Articulation & Achievement: Connecting Standards, Performance, and Assessment in Foreign Language*. The College Entrance

Examination Board, New York

### Useful Web Sites:

Agora Language Marketplace

Web: <http://agoralang.com>

FLTEACH

Web: [http://www.cortland.edu/www\\_root/flteach/flteach.html](http://www.cortland.edu/www_root/flteach/flteach.html)

Foreign Language Resources on the Web

Web: <http://www.itp.berkeley.edu/~thorne/HumanResources.html>

Montgomery County Public Schools

Web: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/lang/>

Spanish Embassy Education Web Site

Web: <http://www.spainembedu.org/>

Tennessee Bob's Famous French Links

Web: <http://www.utm.edu/departments/french/french.html>

Irasshai Japanese Links:

Web: <http://www.peachstar.org/irasshai/>

Asia Society

Web: <http://www.asiasociety.org>

\* Annotated bibliography of pertinent research available through the Professional Library