

Wauwatosa Catholic School

Language Policy--MYP

Wauwatosa Catholic School believes that language is critical to the development of international understanding. We see it as an essential element across all content areas. We understand that language is one of the most important tools of communication. Communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is key to intercultural understanding. We believe language is transdisciplinary in nature, so all teachers are language teachers. At WCS, language is a vital instrument for learning, communication and expression.

The Language Program at Wauwatosa Catholic is designed to assist students as they acquire and refine the linguistic skills necessary to succeed. We use the MYP Language Aims and Objectives, as well as the Archdiocesan exit outcomes, along with the Common Core Standards. The ways students express themselves and communicate with their peers, teachers, and others in the community play an important role in their academic and social success.

Instruction and Assessment in Language and Literature

Beliefs and Practices:

At Wauwatosa Catholic, the Language and Literature curriculum incorporates instruction in written and spoken language. From grammar and vocabulary to listening, speaking and writing, students explore the many ways language can be used as a method of communicating needs and ideas within their community.

To provide students with an authentic, diversified language and literature learning experience, teachers will:

- Use the MYP aims and objectives as best practice
- Facilitate reading in all subject areas
- Provide cross-curricular connections between texts when possible
- Use a variety of texts and media including global works and perspectives
- Use formative assessments to guide instruction
- Design reading/writing instruction with authentic summative assessments
- Participate in archdiocesan-mandated assessments
- Provide opportunities for students to take action within the larger community
- Focus on multiple learning experiences
- Provide opportunities to increase intercultural awareness through language instruction

Instruction and Assessment in Language Acquisition

Beliefs and Practices:

The WCS community realizes that knowledge of English is essential. We also recognize that learning another language can provide students with an enriched academic and cultural experience. This second language helps students develop an intercultural awareness of countries other than the United States. Through the study of Spanish -- which begins in our PYP program -- students will come to know that different languages have different structures and rules. Students will connect with other Spanish-speaking cultures while gaining a deeper understanding of their own culture.

To provide students with an authentic and diverse language acquisition learning experience, teachers will:

- Use the MYP aims and objectives as best practice
- Set goals based on an outcome of proficient communication
- Include aspects of culture as part of the curriculum
- Employ an interactive approach to language learning
- Integrate the skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing
- Embed grammatical structures and vocabulary development within instruction
- Design instruction for authentic summative assessment

Mother Tongue Support

The mother tongue of the majority of the students at WCS is English, which is also the language of instruction at the school. However, within our student body there are a few students who are bilingual. Even among the students who are bilingual, English is a predominant language in the home.

The library/media center supports the languages spoken in our students' homes. It houses a growing selection of books written in Spanish, available for circulation from the library. These books range from picture books to fiction and nonfiction books and cover a wide range of interests and reading levels. Our parents are encouraged to donate books from their native countries. The library houses a wide selection of online and hard-cover resources in Spanish. The media center has an online subscription for World Book which includes online research in almost any language. The application includes a translator.

Other Support Services in Language Instruction

- The Media Center houses a classroom set of Chrome Books, which can be used for on-line support as needed. Each is equipped with the Dragon Dictate program.
- The online World Book Application is used to assist students with special needs.
- Our small class size in the middle school allows our teachers to offer tutoring during the day. Tutoring is also available after school.