

# The learner

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# Primary Years Programme

## The learner

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## IB mission statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.



# IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

## INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

## KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

## THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

## COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

## PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

## OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

## CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

## RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

## BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

## REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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# The learner

## Summary

- Students have voice, choice and ownership for their own learning.
- When students' have agency, the relationship between the teacher and students becomes a partnership
- Students with a strong sense of self-efficacy bring a stronger sense of agency to the learning community.
- The learning community supports agency and fosters self-efficacy.

## Our understanding

Our understanding of the learner is the foundation of our approach to learning and teaching. Children inquire, question, wonder and theorize about themselves, others and the world around them. They are keen observers and explorers. Through their experiences and interactions, they naturally develop intricate, multi-layered perceptions and understandings. Throughout the PYP, a student is an agent for their own and others' learning through the concept of learner agency. Learner agency is connected to a student's belief in their ability to succeed (self-efficacy).

## Agency

Conceptualized by Bandura in social cognitive theory, agency "enable[s] people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times" (Bandura 2001).

PYP students with agency use their own initiative and will, and take responsibility and ownership of their learning. They direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others, thereby building a sense of community and awareness of the opinions, values and needs of others.

Figure LA01: Agency



When learners have agency, the role of the teacher and student changes; the relationship between a teacher and a student is viewed as a partnership.

Students take initiative, express interest and wonderings, make choices and are aware of their learning goals. They are actively engaged, and monitor and adjust their learning as needed. Students offer feedback to others and consult on decisions that affect them. In school, students take responsibility for their learning and collaborate with teachers and other students to plan, present and assess learning needs.

Teachers recognize students' capabilities through listening, respecting and responding to their ideas. They make thoughtful considerations and decisions with an emphasis on relationships, dialogue and respect for one another.

## Self-efficacy

Efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their "capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura 1997). This belief is integrally connected to agency because the stronger the sense of self-efficacy, the greater likelihood that the individual will exercise agency (Bandura 1997). Self-efficacy influences the choices students are confident in making, which, in turn, influences the degree of ownership and impact they have in their lives.

When teachers acknowledge learner agency and the importance of self-efficacy, students become partners in the learning process. In this partnership, teachers work alongside students, meet with small groups and individuals as needed, and monitor learning and provide feedback.

Students demonstrate agency when they:

- influence and direct their own learning
- make choices



- voice opinions
- ask questions and express wonderings
- communicate understandings
- construct new meanings
- participate in and contribute to the learning community.

## Agency and the learning community

The learning community recognizes that agency and self-efficacy are fundamental to learning. A learning community that supports agency offers opportunities for students to develop important skills and dispositions, such as critical and creative thinking, perseverance, independence and confidence. These are vital to the learning process and the development of self-efficacy. The learning community further offers students multiple opportunities to experience the impact of their choices and opinions, which support their evolving perceptions of their identity. In return, students with a stronger sense of self-efficacy bring a stronger sense of agency to the learning community.

A school with a focus on agency considers its perceptions of how children learn, children’s capabilities and the overall value of childhood. When teachers consider their beliefs around children’s identities and rights, they are examining personal beliefs, theories, cultural backgrounds and values. For example, the teachers’ beliefs and values will influence their choices of how to allocate time, how to set up learning spaces, choose and arrange materials and foster relationships within the classroom and the broader community.

## Supporting learner agency and self-efficacy

### Teachers who support agency

When teachers support student agency, they:

- notice, and reflect on the students’ existing capabilities, needs and interests in order to personalize learning
- actively listen to students’ opinions, wonderings, perspectives and aspirations to extend student thinking and action
- foster authenticity for students to explore their interests by giving them open-ended tasks
- offer opportunities for students to demonstrate creativity and take risks
- reflect on when students need help, and when not, by using assessment evidence to inform learning and teaching
- listen and respond to each student’s activities to extend their thinking.

### Strategies to support agency

Students learn by doing. Teachers create opportunities for agency in the classroom by involving students in the following activities.

- Establishing a respectful and welcoming culture. Collaborate with students to create shared agreements about how to interact with others to create a culture of respect and trust where all students feel welcomed, significant and emotionally safe.
- Creating shared routines. Ask for students’ input into developing routines around arrival, transitions, communication signals, meetings, clean up and dismissal.
- Setting up the learning spaces. Ask students to help set up and arrange learning spaces that make them feel safe physically and where they can access learning materials, make choices and take risks.
- Making decisions about learning. Involve students in making decisions about what, why and how they learn—as co-collaborators in the learning community. Allow time to respond to students’ ideas about action.

- Communicating expectations. Clarify what knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and dispositions the students are learning, and why.



## Strategies to foster self-efficacy

Students with a strong sense of self-efficacy bring a stronger sense of agency to the learning community. The key to supporting and sustaining agency and self-efficacy is to give students as many opportunities as possible to develop and demonstrate the approaches to learning and attributes of the learner profile.

To foster self-efficacy, teachers strive to:

- model behaviour and language use, considering implicit and explicit messages to students
- offer opportunities for reinforcement and mastery
- give timely, specific and well-considered feedback on learning
- create a learning environment where students can set their own learning goals and success criteria, and monitor and adjust their learning against them
- give students the chance to provide feedback to each other
- build in time for reflection to enhance students' awareness about the success of their efforts and ways to improve in the future
- carefully group and regroup students in different ways—ability grouping, social grouping, self-chosen grouping—to foster students' perceptions of intelligence and ability as fluid
- encourage students to monitor their own emotional and physical well-being so they can be more sensitive participants within the learning community.

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## The PYP learner in the early years (3–6 years old)

### Summary

- The PYP transdisciplinary framework offers young students authentic opportunities to focus on key developmental abilities.
- The learning community values the early years as a time in which play is the primary driver for inquiry.
- Play involves choice, promotes agency and provides opportunities to inquire into important concepts and personal interests.
- The following features are central to learning in the early years: play, relationships, learning spaces, symbolic exploration and expression.

## Laying the foundation

Experiences during the early years lay the foundation for all future learning. A rapid rate of development during the early years occurs in the physical, emotional, social and cognitive domains. The brain and body develop faster than at any other point in a child's life. Social development also takes shape in these early years as children are naturally inclined to explore, to discover, to play and to make connections between self, others and their entire surroundings. Through these interactions, children form their perception of themselves and others in the world (Rushton, Juola-Rushton 2010).

Supporting children cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically requires that all members of the learning community value these early years in their own right, as a time in which play is the primary driver for inquiry. Through play, young children develop approaches to learning and connect with key domains of their development.

- Receptive and cognitive abilities (for example, listening, remembering, thinking, analysing, generating theories, the control of attention and working memory)
- Representational abilities (for example, using symbolic systems—such as oral and written language, drawing and mathematical symbols—to construct and represent meaning)
- Relational abilities (for example, the ability to play with peers, sharing and taking turns, and respecting others)

The PYP transdisciplinary framework is highly relevant for all learners during this period. It offers authentic opportunities to focus on the key developmental abilities that are acquired during this crucial time and that support young students to be self-regulating learners. The transdisciplinary themes offer authentic contexts for students to learn increasingly complex ideas about themselves and the world around them. Central ideas related to “Who we are” support young children to learn about identity, relationships, well-being and what it means to be part of a community. “How we express ourselves” relates to discovery, creativity and the expression of ideas and feelings.

## Early learning and development

Young children's development proceeds in a complex, and often non-linear, trajectory where individual children follow different pathways simultaneously. Teachers create learning environments and experiences that are both adaptable and appropriate to young students, and they understand the important influence of their sociocultural contexts. As a result, teachers adapt learning goals and intended learning experiences accordingly, based on their observations of young students' learning and development.

## The role of the teacher

In the PYP early years, teachers take on many roles and identities, including:

- facilitator
- researcher
- participant
- provocateur
- navigator
- observer
- documenter
- reflective practitioner.

Through these flexible lenses teachers plan, facilitate and scaffold, as well as reflecting on students' learning and their own teaching. Teachers carefully balance the planning and documenting of the learning and progress of the group by monitoring and responding to the learning development of individuals. Moment-by-moment teacher actions, reactions and interactions with children are key to their cognitive development (Copple, Bredekamp 2009).

PYP early years teachers create stimulating learning spaces, listen deeply to students and craft exciting avenues for inquiry. They ensure a balance between listening to individuals, shaping shared investigations and ensuring overall intentions for learning. Using a repertoire of strategies, tools and understandings, teachers work closely with students to co-construct inquiries and reflect regularly on their practice.

Teachers also support children in developing social-emotional competence because this connects to children's emotional well-being and their ability to adapt in new environments and to form successful relationships throughout life (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004). For example, by positioning play as central to children's development, teachers are creating a non-threatening environment for children to learn about the world at their own pace (Rushton, Juola-Rushton 2010).

## Learning in the early years

### Natural inquirers

Children are natural inquirers from birth; they have the capacity to learn about, interact with and interpret the world around them. From birth, children possess all kinds of mental abilities uniquely suited to these early phases of learning and development. They are curious and capable learners with a sense of agency, rich in potential, bringing valid skills, preferences and understandings to the educational process.



There is a sustained, complex and dynamic interplay between learning and development that requires a well-considered early years educational experience for young children and their families. By actively facilitating a student's meaning-making, the physical and social environment engages students in rich and developmentally responsive ways.

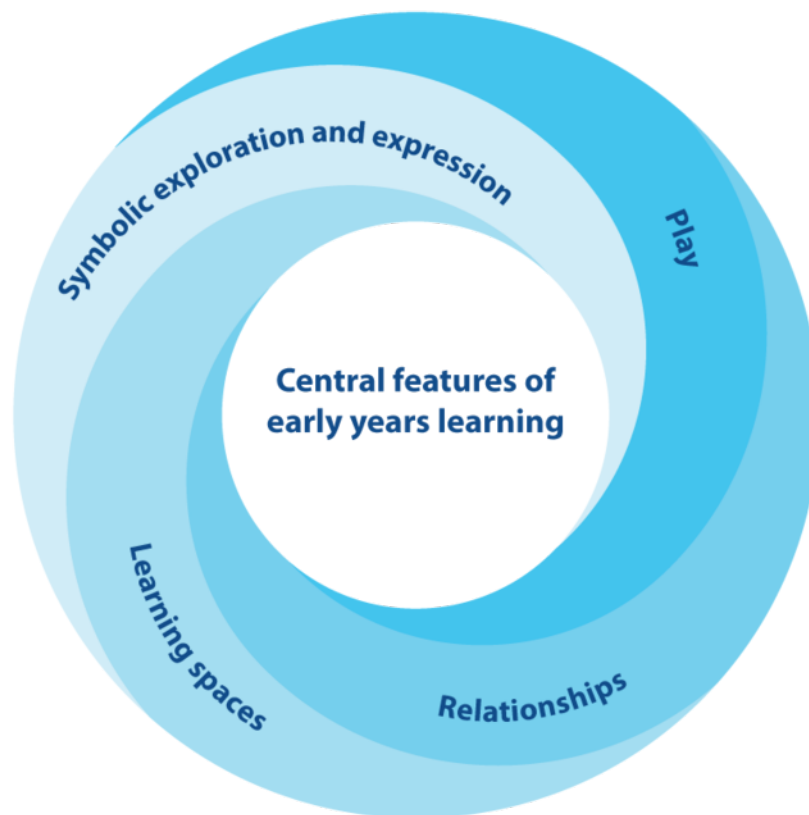
### Central features

The processes of learning and teaching are crafted to support students' individual and emergent pathways of development. Teachers support learning by:

- planning uninterrupted time for play
- building strong relationships with students and their families
- creating and maintaining responsive spaces for play
- offering many opportunities for symbolic exploration and expression.

Each of these elements are mutually supportive and are interwoven with the others in both theory and practice.

Figure EL01: Central features of learning in the early years



## Play

Young students' development is supported when hands-on learning is combined with student-initiated play. A careful consideration exists between student-initiated play and teacher-initiated experiences. Play provides benefits for cognitive, social, emotional and physical development for students from all socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and offers authentic opportunities for students to begin their exploration and development of the IB learner profile.

Play is highly adaptive, involves choice, promotes agency and provides rigorous opportunities to inquire into important concepts and personal interests. Through play, children actively construct meaning from their interactions with their physical and social worlds. These meanings, models or ideas are revisited and revised in light of new experiences and further learning. In play, children construct, test, confirm or revise these ideas by themselves or with their peers, constantly adapting their personal models of how the world works. Teachers interact with students while observing, monitoring and documenting their learning. During uninterrupted time for play, teachers initiate a range of intentional learning experiences, offering support and feedback when needed.

Teachers in the PYP early years support play through:

- creating and maintaining engaging learning spaces
- scheduling uninterrupted time for play in both indoor and outdoor spaces
- noticing students' emerging thinking processes, interests and theories, and responding in ways that extend learning
- monitoring and documenting students' learning and development during play, and offering appropriate scaffolded learning experiences for individual students and small groups.



## Relationships

Children's first experience of a sense of belonging is at home with family, the foundations of which expand significantly when they enter school. Encouraging and nurturing positive relationships between home, family and school provides a strong basis for learning, behaviour, health and well-being. Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships; these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004). The significance of relationships in the early years is a fundamental part of establishing important skills and dispositions that centre on trust, agency and belonging. When the importance of relationships is reinforced, the foundations for an effective learning community are established.

Teachers support the development of relationships through:

- regular conversations with parents and legal guardians
- acknowledging and respecting each student's individuality
- connecting with individual students throughout the day by having conversations, listening to and documenting their evolving questions, and acknowledging their efforts and achievements
- recognizing opportunities for students to learn to self-regulate during play and offer support and feedback when needed
- planning uninterrupted time for play in engaging learning spaces.

## Learning spaces

A fundamental part of effective education in the PYP early years is the creation of safe, stimulating and inviting learning spaces that promote exploration, wonder, creativity, risk-taking and learning through play.

These are spaces where opportunities for authentic learning experiences are of utmost importance, and where students are valued for their knowledge, strengths and competencies as individuals and as part of a larger group. Students who are emotionally invested stay more engaged in their learning (Rushton, Juola-Rushton 2010). Deliberate attention is paid to the structure, purpose and function of these spaces as contexts that support play-based transdisciplinary learning, collaborative learning of knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills, and opportunities to take action.

Teachers create safe, stimulating and inviting learning spaces by:

- offering a range of open-ended materials
- arranging and rearranging materials as invitations for learning
- creating areas for role play, block play, mark-making, expression through the arts, and so on
- considering a range of choices and opportunities for group and individual play
- involving students in the design and construction of play areas
- creating displays that reflect the process of students' learning.

## Symbolic exploration and expression

From an early age, language is the central operating system that generates and supports cognition. Learning language begins at birth and develops exponentially with experience. Teachers understand that becoming literate and numerate are evolving processes that bring students to more sophisticated understandings over time. Effective language and mathematics learning and teaching is based on students' developing ability to listen to and speak with others, and to understand and use symbols. The importance of expanding these skills by transferring learning and experiences to other contexts allows students to re-encounter their thinking, develop symbolic competency, explore new connections and consolidate their understandings.

Language and mathematics teaching follow students' learning pathways that are connected to personal interests and larger concepts. Young learners enter school with no pre-conceived distinctions between subjects; play brings life to transdisciplinary learning. Schools support the way young learners experience the world by providing them with ample time to play with their peers. For example, while playing together



with blocks, students acquire vocabulary, learn about volume and shape, and develop fine and gross motor skills.

The development of understandings in language and mathematics are interwoven and intentionally explored through strategies such as:

- games
- rhymes, poems, stories
- play
- conversations
- mark-making, drawing
- problem-solving, reasoning
- counting, patterning and sequencing.

These interest-based and intentional experiences directly support and influence later formal learning in language and mathematics.

## What does learning look like in the PYP early years?

| Move away from   | Move towards   |
|--|--|
| Predetermined time structures and routines   | Flexible timeframes and routines that are responsive to the needs of the students  |
| Pedagogy that centres around instructional processes for students and is teacher-led   | Play that is co-constructed between students and teachers  |
| Repeated large-group experiences as the basis for all learning   | Whole-group experiences at pertinent learning moments  |
| Literacy and numeracy experiences that develop set skills through memorization and worksheets                                  | Literacy and numeracy experiences that develop a wide range of playful, inquiry-based explorations into symbolic and representational learning                               |
| Development of self-regulation supported through praise and punishment   | Development of self-regulation through play, modelling behaviours, language, group games, and music and movement   |
| Units of inquiry comprising pre-determined learning engagements on concepts that are precursors to later learning              | Units of inquiry that are iterative and flexible, centring on concepts of significance in the lives of young students  |
| Learning spaces that promote dependence on others: where materials are stored, controlled and accessed by teachers for student | Learning spaces that promote high levels of independence, offering students opportunities to access materials and manage learning  |
| Learning spaces where play is timetabled at specific times for specific purposes   | Learning spaces where play and choice are central features of everyday learning  |
| Learning spaces where learning experiences are restricted and timetabled   | Flexible learning spaces that provide for many different learning experiences at all times   |
| Learning spaces where students are asked to engage with particular learning tasks at particular times                          | Learning spaces where students have sustained time to select their learning experiences based on interests and social connections  |
| Assessment that measures pre-determined sets of skills against developmental norms for grouping/ranking purposes               | Assessment that monitors and documents students' learning against individual developmental milestones and celebrates achievements at times that are pertinent to individuals |

| Move away from   | Move towards   |
|--|--|
| Measuring learning solely by tracking the progress of the group against learning goals | Responding to the individual learning and development journey as well as valuing and recording the learning of the whole group |

# Language development and play

## The complexity of language

Children bring with them to school complex language knowledge, experience and meaning-making strategies from their early years at home. Students use language to:

- explore
- examine
- question
- predict
- share
- investigate
- reflect

in a sustained and deliberate manner, within a supportive collaborative setting.

Students use play to make meaning and understandings of the world, and to develop oral language and symbolic competence. They share personal experiences and understandings through talk, play, shared stories and collaborative exploration. By listening attentively, teachers discover students' language expertise and mental models. Using this knowledge, teachers plan and create learning experiences that extend students' language capabilities. This knowledge can then be documented on a student's language portrait.

When young students are involved in dramatic and cooperative play, language becomes more complex as it includes negotiating roles, taking turns, conveying desires and meeting the needs of others. Young students often use inner speech to play with elements of language while consolidating understandings of tasks and relationships with which they are engaged. Teachers support language learning by providing opportunities for physical movement, imaginary and cooperative play.

Young students are naturally curious about the world and, by interacting with different kinds of materials, they develop the language needed to share their understandings of the properties and behaviour of the physical world. Teachers model language around these explorations through talk-alouds, and use observations about students' expressed interests to ensure a responsive learning environment.

Stories provide particular opportunities to develop language comprehension and the foundations of literacy. When young students assume the roles of characters and play with elements of a story, comprehension increases, as do understandings of print media. Songs and rhymes accompanied by actions that support the development of concepts, sentence structure and vocabulary along with phonemic and graphemic awareness and memory. Young students relish play with sounds, voices and funny noises, and also play with grammatical constructions, such as repeating patterns, and substituting words, asking questions, repeating lists of words, numbers and letters.

## Technology and play

### Engaging with technology

Young learners in a play- and inquiry-based environment approach technology in a similar way to how they approach any novel objects. According to Bird and Edwards (2015), they begin engaging with the object/device—digital or non-digital—with exploration in mind to investigate, learn and test their theories about its functionalities. When they believe they have understood its functionalities, they move to the innovation phase where they use the object/device in a new context.

Teachers can support young learners' understanding and use of technology by making appropriate technological devices available in order to appeal to their natural curiosity. Such devices could include an old camera, radio, recorder, colouring applications, and so on. The aim for young learners is not so much about mastering technology, but about using technology to extend their investigations through touching, seeing and hearing. During this exploration process, young children develop thinking skills and learn to make connections in subsequent play activities.

# Approaches to learning in the early years

## How teachers support skills development

| Categories                  | What teachers do:  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Thinking skills</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model the language of thinking, such as “I wonder”, “I noticed”, “I inferred”.</li> <li>• Ask open-ended questions.</li> <li>• Provide sufficient thinking time to respond to questions, and so on.</li> <li>• Offer open-ended materials.</li> <li>• Provide time for reflection at all stages of learning—before, during and after inquiries.</li> <li>• Co-create and reflect on individual learning goals within the zone of proximal development.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Research skills</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure sufficient time for uninterrupted play (in responsive learning spaces) to practise and develop research skills.</li> <li>• Collaborate with, for example, the librarian and technology specialists to build research skills and to help students identify sources of information.</li> <li>• Model academic integrity by acknowledging where materials and ideas came from.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Communication skills</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan opportunities for students to practise and apply these skills in meaningful contexts (including play, class meetings and small-group learning engagements).</li> <li>• Encourage students to consider potential opportunities and challenges arising from shared ideas.</li> <li>• Encourage physical cues.</li> <li>• Model appropriate, respectful and rich language use.</li> <li>• Encourage communication using different languages.</li> <li>• Ask open-ended questions.</li> <li>• Put thinking ahead of knowing.</li> <li>• Have informal conversations.</li> <li>• Encourage students to explore a variety of perspectives and modalities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Social skills</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide explicit opportunities for students to practise and develop these skills, including (dramatic) play and games.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their social skills.</li> <li>• Reflect and provide feedback on different interactions and other moments they observe.</li> <li>• Offer students opportunities for taking perspective.</li> <li>• Use the language of the learner profile in conversations and discussions, and in the development of essential agreements.</li> <li>• Model the social skills and language needed to greet, solve problems, share resources, and so on.</li> </ul>                              |

| Categories                    | What teachers do:  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Self-management skills</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure sufficient time for uninterrupted play.</li> <li>• Support children with transitions by sharing a visual timetable and by counting down reminders.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to meet as members of a learning group.</li> <li>• Involve students in planning and organizing learning spaces (including cleaning up).</li> <li>• Create an atmosphere where learning is viewed as a process of gradual improvement.</li> <li>• Continually reflect on how they are supporting student agency as an intrinsic motivation for participation.</li> <li>• Develop their skills in supporting students with developing their ability to self-regulate (including focus, working memory, managing emotions and making choices).</li> </ul> |

## How students develop approaches to learning

| Thinking skills  |  |
|--|--|
| Sub-skills   | What students do:  |
| <p><b>Critical thinking</b><br/>Analysing and evaluating issues and ideas, and forming decisions</p> | <p><b>Analysing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe carefully.</li> <li>• Find unique characteristics.</li> <li>• Consider meaning taken from materials and events.</li> <li>• Synthesize new understandings by seeing relationships and connections.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize information.</li> <li>• Evaluate evidence.</li> <li>• Test generalizations, strategies or ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Forming decisions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise understandings based on new information and evidence.</li> <li>• Draw conclusions and generalizations.</li> <li>• Apply rules, strategies and ideas from one context to another.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Creative thinking</b><br/>Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives</p>          | <p><b>Generating novel ideas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use discussion and play to generate new ideas and investigations.</li> <li>• Make unexpected or unusual connections between objects and/or ideas.</li> <li>• Practice some “visible thinking” routines (Ritchhart, Church and Morrison 2011).</li> </ul> <p><b>Considering new perspectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek information.</li> </ul>  |

| Thinking skills  |   |
|--|---|
| Sub-skills   | What students do:   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider alternative solutions, including those that might be unlikely or impossible, in play and other situations.</li> <li>Ask “what if” questions.</li> <li>Practise some “visible thinking” routines.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Information transfer</b><br>Using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply skills and knowledge in unfamiliar situations or outside of school.</li> <li>Make connections between units of inquiry.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Reflection and metacognition</b><br>Using thinking skills to reflect on the process of learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify strengths and areas for improvement.</li> <li>Reflect on their learning by asking questions such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What did I learn today?</li> <li>What can I already do?</li> <li>What will I work on next?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

| Research skills  |   |
|--|---|
| Sub-skills   | What students do:   |
| <b>Information literacy</b><br>Formulating and planning, data gathering and recording, synthesizing and interpreting, evaluating and communicating | <p><b>Formulating and planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask or express through play questions that can be researched.</li> <li>Select information sources and digital tools.</li> </ul> <p><b>Data gathering and documenting (audio recording, drawing, photographing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather information from a variety of sources (people, places, materials, literature).</li> <li>Use all senses to observe and notice details.</li> <li>Record observations—drawing, charting, tallying—using emergent writing skills, when possible, to write comments, annotate images, and so on.</li> </ul> <p><b>Synthesizing and interpreting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sort and categorize information and materials; arrange into forms or order, for example, with graphs, marks or symbols using emergent writing skills.</li> <li>Analyse and interpret information.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluating and communicating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice relationships and patterns.</li> <li>Present information in a variety of modalities.</li> <li>Acknowledge sources, for example, from a book, movie or peer.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Media literacy</b><br>Interacting with media to use and create ideas and information  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw connections among media resources.</li> <li>Use media to communicate, share and connect with others.</li> <li>Communicate information and ideas using a variety of media (as their skills progress).</li> </ul>   |

| Communication skills   |  |
|--|--|
| Sub-skills   | What students do:  |
| <p><b>Exchanging information</b><br/>Listening, interpreting and speaking</p>                              | <p><b>Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to information.</li> <li>• Listen actively and respectfully to others' ideas.</li> <li>• Ask for clarifications.</li> </ul> <p><b>Interpreting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret visual, audio and oral communication: recognizing and creating signs, interpreting and using symbols and sounds.</li> <li>• Understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas.</li> <li>• Recognize the meaning of kinaesthetic communication (body language).</li> </ul> <p><b>Speaking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express oneself using words and sentences.</li> <li>• Participate in conversations.</li> <li>• Negotiate ideas and knowledge with peers and teachers.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Symbolic exploration and expression</b><br/>Using language to gather and communicate information</p> | <p><b>Reading, writing and mathematics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take on pretend roles and situations.</li> <li>• Understand symbols.</li> <li>• Access a variety of sources for information and for pleasure.</li> <li>• Make inferences and draw conclusions.</li> <li>• Understand that mark-making carries meaning.</li> <li>• Use mark-marking to convey meaning.</li> <li>• Document information and observations in a variety of ways.</li> <li>• Communicate using a range of technologies and materials.</li> </ul>  |

| Social skills  |  |
|--|--|
| Sub-skills   | What students do:  |
| <p><b>Interpersonal relationships, social and emotional intelligence</b><br/>Developing positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration</p> | <p><b>Interpersonal relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practise empathy and care for others.</li> <li>• Listen closely to others.</li> <li>• Be respectful to others.</li> <li>• Play cooperatively in a group: sharing, taking turns.</li> <li>• Help others.</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional intelligence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of own and others' feelings.</li> <li>• Manage anger and resolve conflict.</li> <li>• Be self- and socially aware.</li> <li>• Be aware of own and others' impact as a member of a learning group.</li> </ul> |



| Self-management skills  |  |
|---|--|
| Sub-skills  | What students do:  |
| <p><b>Organization</b><br/>Managing time and tasks effectively</p>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose and complete tasks independently.</li> <li>• Follow the directions of others.</li> <li>• Follow classroom routines.</li> <li>• Share responsibility for decision-making.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>States of mind</b><br/>Using strategies that manage state of mind</p> | <p><b>Mindfulness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take responsibility for own well-being.</li> <li>• Be aware of body–mind connections.</li> </ul> <p><b>Perseverance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate persistence in tasks.</li> <li>• Use strategies to problem-solve.</li> <li>• Manage own emotions.</li> <li>• Manage feelings and resolve conflict.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resilience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work through setbacks.</li> <li>• Work through disappointment.</li> <li>• Show ability to adjust to new situations.</li> </ul> |

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# The learner profile—The IB mission statement in action

## Summary

- The IB learner profile represents a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that encompass intellectual, personal, emotional and social growth.
- Developing and demonstrating the attributes of the learner profile provides an important foundation for international-mindedness.
- The learner profile supports students in taking action for positive change.

## Develop and demonstrate

The aim of all IB programmes is for students to develop and demonstrate international-mindedness. It is a multifaceted concept that captures a way of thinking, being and acting. Internationally minded students are open to others and to the world, and are cognizant of our deep interconnectedness (IB 2017).

To facilitate students' openness to others and to the world, the Primary Years Programme (PYP) offers opportunities to inquire into human commonalities through the transdisciplinary themes. Being willing to see beyond local boundaries is also essential for intercultural understanding.

Through sustained inquiries, students gain the knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and dispositions to contribute to, and make a difference in, their own lives, their communities and the wider world. They have the agility and imagination to respond to new and unexpected opportunities and challenges. They understand the interconnectedness and interdependence of issues, can see things from multiple perspectives and engage in responsible action. In doing so, students contribute to a better and more peaceful world.

The attributes of the learner profile represent a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that encompass intellectual, personal, emotional and social growth. The development and demonstration of these attributes are foundational to students becoming internationally minded, active and caring community members who respect themselves, others and the world around them.

Figure LP01: IB learner profile



## Developing the learner profile attributes

The learner profile supports students in developing international-mindedness and in taking action for positive change. Exercising their agency, students take ownership of their learning, express their ideas and opinions, and reflect on their development of the learner profile attributes.

Students have a range of opportunities to develop, demonstrate and reinforce attributes of the learner profile in the daily life of the learning community. For example, these opportunities arise:

- as part of the school curriculum—through the transdisciplinary units of inquiry and through subject-specific investigations
- through interactions in a variety of learning spaces—in the library, music room, makerspace through social interactions—break/recess and lunch, sport and interest groups, after school activities during field trips—museum visits, interschool sports events, camps
- through school events—assemblies, drama productions, sports days
- at home and in the wider community—interactions with family, friends, local businesses, sports clubs, interest groups.



## Putting the learner profile into action

When using and ensuring the integrity of the learner profile, the learning community also takes their own unique context and setting into account. The learning community supports and nurtures students in developing and demonstrating the attributes of the learner profile in ways that are relevant to the local context and appropriate for each student's development stage. All members of the learning community play an important part in valuing, appreciating, demonstrating and celebrating the learner profile in action.

The learner profile attributes provide teachers, students and parents with a common language with which to describe and reflect the following.

- School culture—the attributes can be reflected in class agreements, playground guidelines, collaborative planning arrangements, pastoral care processes and social protocols observed by the school (for example, welcome ceremonies). They become part of the language of pastoral care and restorative practices.
- Communications—the attributes can be used to describe learning and school-wide initiatives through newsletters, school websites and displays in the learning spaces. For example, “student librarians” read all the new picture books that arrive in the library in order to identify the attributes of focus; library visitors are invited to engage with the learner profile attributes identified.
- Feedback—students give and receive feedback on their learning using the language of the learner profile attributes. The attributes can also be shared and celebrated in reports. For example, students care for each other in the playground and communicate to work through differences.
- Tools—the attributes can provide a tool for reflecting on local, national and global opportunities and challenges, as well as on international events that are reported in the media. For example, consideration of different perspectives of a news story can be encouraged when students are open-minded inquirers or principled thinkers.



## Connecting to transdisciplinary learning

Learner profile attributes have relevance across the transdisciplinary themes and for all grade/year levels. The attributes are flexibly explored, developed and revisited through units of inquiry and through subject-specific investigations. These are documented on PYP planners and other curriculum documentation as part of the collaborative planning process. For example:

- in a unit of inquiry under the transdisciplinary theme “How we organize ourselves”, students inquire into the central idea “Communities provide interconnected services designed to meet people’s needs”. The students interact with a range of local and extended community members. They demonstrate being caring communicators as they engage responsibly and respectfully in interviews with a range of people of different ages and cultural backgrounds
- children’s literature offers opportunities for discussing and reflecting on the learner profile. For example, particular fictional and real-life characters can provide an insight into how others demonstrate the attributes. Opportunities could also arise to connect and explore the attributes in relation to action when choosing literature portraying children involved in, for example, social action.

Teachers and students reflect on what the attributes look like and how they are developed through different subjects. For example:

- being a principled-risk taker in science could involve designing an innovative renewable energy solution while taking into account the opinions and needs of local people
- an open-minded thinker in arts could engage with and reflect upon artworks that conveyed stories of power and privilege across the world
- a reflective communicator in physical education could choreograph collaborative group dances to investigate identity and mutual understanding.



### **Identifying appropriate and relevant learner profile attributes**

Teachers and students collaborate to identify appropriate learner profile attributes that are relevant and meaningful to specific units of inquiry. Students may choose particular attributes that resonate with them or that which they can further practice and develop. Different attributes may be relevant at different times for each student depending on, for example, personal learning goals, phases of development or skills focus. This may include students:

- developing their own definitions and descriptions of what the different attributes mean to them. For example, photos/drawings of students planning and carrying out demonstrations of action such as engaging in a campaign for equal pay for migrant workers (social justice and participation). These can be accompanied by an individual or collaborative explanation of how this action contributes to the development and demonstration of a principled thinker
- considering how to use attributes as a tool for self-assessment and personal reflection on learning. This may be part of peer feedback and teacher assessment, and may be included as part of school reporting strategies. For example, reflections alongside examples of learning in student portfolios or as pop-up descriptions in reports for teachers, students and parents to reflect upon
- gathering evidence on how they have developed particular attributes, in connection with approaches to learning, as part of ongoing reflection during the PYP exhibition. For example, reflecting on being knowledgeable inquirers while using a range of research skills appropriate for particular aspects during their investigations (such as planning, online survey and graphing tools).



Figure LP02: Learner profile in action



Questions to consider when supporting and developing the attributes of the learner profile.

- Do all members of the learning community have a shared understanding and a common language when talking about the different learner profile attributes?
- How is learner agency connected to the learner profile?
- How do the attributes differ for different students? For example, what does being a thinker look like for a 5-year-old? What does it look like for an 11-year-old?
- How does the school document and monitor the development and demonstration of the learner profile attributes?
- How is the development and progression of the learner profile attributes integrated into the units of inquiry and the programme of inquiry?
- How are the attributes of the learner profile connected to learning? For example, how do the attributes connect to learning goals, action, self-assessment, and so on?
- Is there a relevant connection, wherever possible, between the learner profile attributes, the skills being developed in a unit and the assessment tasks?
- When and how are multiple attributes connected to describe learning and action? For example, opportunities to recognize reflective thinkers, principled inquirers, balanced and caring communicators.

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# Action and international-mindedness

## Summary

- Action is connected to agency, the learner profile and international mindedness.
- Action is student-initiated and can be individual and collective.
- Action is authentic, meaningful and mindful.
- Action can happen at any time; it can be short or long term, revisited or ongoing.
- Action is supported by the learning community.
- Demonstrations of action include participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship, or lifestyle choices.

## Action

Action, the core of student agency, is integral to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) learning process and to the programme's overarching outcome of international-mindedness. Through taking individual and collective action, students come to understand the responsibilities associated with being internationally minded and to appreciate the benefits of working with others for a shared purpose. When students see tangible actions that they can choose to take to make a difference, they see themselves as competent, capable and active agents of change (Oxfam 2015).

Students taking action in response to their inquiries lays a foundation for community service in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and creativity, activity, service (CAS) in the Diploma Programme (DP). Action is a means for students to show that they have linked their learning to real-life issues and opportunities, and that they are developing responsible dispositions and behaviours towards social and physical environments and to the community within and beyond school. Through action, students develop a sense of belonging to local and global communities. They understand and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependence of issues, and consider these from multiple perspectives (Oxfam 2015, UNESCO 2015).

Initiated by students, PYP action is authentic, meaningful, mindful, responsible and responsive. Action could be:

- a change in attitude
- a consideration or plan for action in the future
- a demonstration of responsibility, or of respect for self, others and the environment
- a commitment to leading or participating in a youth advocacy group
- an engagement in school decision-making or an expression of support in community, local and global decision-making.

Students exercise agency by making responsible choices; these choices can sometimes include conscious decisions not to act. It may be that students take time to research and reflect upon possible courses of action and decide against taking action because of the connected consequences and potential impact on others (Boix Mansilla, Jackson 2011).

PYP learning communities engage students individually and collectively with local and global challenges and opportunities through action (UNESCO 2015). All members of the learning community contribute to an open and dynamic environment for engaging with the world. Students feel encouraged to take action as a response to past and present inquiries. They are autonomous in taking action and are confident that their actions will be appreciated and supported (Hart 1992; Nimmo 2008).

## Taking action

Students take action in response to their inquiries or motivation to make a positive difference, bring about positive change (Boix Mansilla, Jackson 2011) or further their learning. As an integral part of the learning process, action can be embarked upon at any point and can take many forms, depending on individual development, learning and experiences.

Action can be short or long term, revisited or ongoing. It may be individual or collective, small or large scale and may take place at home, at school or in local or wider communities. Some actions may not always be visible or immediately impactful; they might appear in the form of impressions left on students, or small things that go unnoticed because they are part of the daily life of the learning community.

For early years students, the foundation of action comes from an understanding of self and a responsibility towards relationships with peers and the wider community. Members of the learning community support this understanding by modelling the appropriate use of language and social behaviors. At this stage of development, action may start with small adjustments of behaviour, which may include the development of responsible dispositions towards themselves and others, and in making appropriate choices. Action is responsive to experiences that are personally meaningful and, as with all action, is authentic, reflective and mindful.

### Personal action

Personal action might be small scale or even private, but it makes a difference in the life of the student and, potentially, the lives of others. These actions are demonstrations of understandings that show personal motivation, interest or commitment. Personal action is connected to a student's sense of agency and self-efficacy.

### Collective action

Collective action makes a difference in the life of the student, the learning community and, potentially, beyond. It is initiated by students—supported by teachers and other members of the learning community—in response to issues and opportunities that would benefit from a collective voice. Collective action calls for collaboration, reciprocity and commitment. Members of the learning community join together with shared understandings and common goals to take action.

Action might come in the form of participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship or life choices. The following table presents examples of how students take personal and collective action as part of their learning, both within and beyond school (in response to local and global challenges and opportunities).

*Figure AC01: Examples of types of action*

| Action  | Evidence   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Participation</b></p> <p>Being actively involved in the learning community and showing commitment to contributing as individuals and as members of a group.</p> | <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making appropriate choices and taking responsibility for personal learning and actions</li> <li>• working collaboratively with teachers and peers to plan, present, reflect upon, adjust and contribute to collective action</li> <li>• contributing to discussions and learning experiences</li> <li>• raising awareness of opportunities for taking action with peers and/or family</li> <li>• getting involved in class, school and community projects</li> <li>• being aware of democratic processes and taking part in decision-making</li> <li>• representing a collective voice in class or school meetings.</li> </ul> |

| Action  | Evidence  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Advocacy</b></p> <p>Taking action individually or collectively to publicly support positive social, environmental or political change.</p>  | <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting peers in the learning community</li> <li>• sharing ideas with others, for example, peers, school leadership, local or global community organizations</li> <li>• presenting reasoned arguments on behalf of others</li> <li>• taking on the role of student representative at class, school, local community level and beyond</li> <li>• initiating, or being part of, a campaign for positive change.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Social justice</b></p> <p>Taking action for positive change relating to human rights, equality and equity. Being concerned with the advantages and disadvantages within society, and with social well-being and justice for all.</p>  | <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring issues of fairness from different perspectives</li> <li>• challenging assumptions and generalizations</li> <li>• being aware of, and inquiring further into, challenges and opportunities in the local and global community</li> <li>• volunteering in response to community needs</li> <li>• reflecting on experiences involving positive social change</li> <li>• reflecting on the ethical consequences of potential decisions and actions.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Social entrepreneurship</b></p> <p>Supporting positive social change through responding to the needs of local, national and global communities; applying prior knowledge and skills to identify and address challenges and opportunities in innovative, resourceful and sustainable ways.</p> | <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• designing, planning and developing models and solutions to address identified issues</li> <li>• initiating and maintaining projects that have a positive impact on the learning community (for example, peer tutoring and mentoring, recycling systems, garden club, walking-to-school route maps, starting and running an initiative)</li> <li>• connecting with businesses, organizations and other community partners to support local and global projects and initiatives</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Lifestyle choices</b></p> <p>Making positive lifestyle changes in response to learning.</p>   | <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considering and acting on factors that contribute to personal, social and physical health and well-being</li> <li>• taking responsibility for interactions and relationships with others</li> <li>• reflecting on the impact of personal choices on local and global environments</li> <li>• engaging in responsible and sustainable consumption (for example, making informed decisions surrounding food, energy, water, materials usage).</li> <li>• addressing issues surrounding consumer activism (for example, reflecting on corporate responsibility, product safety, workers rights, ethics)</li> </ul> |

Sources for figure AC01: Boix Mansilla 2010; Dell'Angelo 2014; Canadian Teachers' Federation 2010; International Baccalaureate Organization 2015; Nimmo 2008; Oxfam 2015; Short 2011, 2015; UNESCO 2015; Vaughn and Obenchain 2015.

## Supporting action

Teachers and other members of the learning community can support student action by:

- acknowledging the various forms of action that occur
- helping students connect action with lived /personal experiences
- engaging students in dialogue around what action is
- analysing the scope of possibilities for action
- encouraging students to consider the appropriateness and impact of their actions
- guiding students to reflect on their actions and adjust their course of action when necessary
- planning for inquiry that supports making informed choices
- providing opportunities for skills development that facilitates action
- collaborating as needed, to plan and carry out action
- allotting time for students to apply their learning about action
- supporting students in establishing and maintaining connections to local and wider communities by providing service learning opportunities, in response to need, such as volunteering.

Sources: Bandura 2010; Boix Mansilla 2010; Canadian Teachers' Federation 2010; Mashford-Scott and Church 2011; Nimmo 2008; Oxfam 2015; Short 2015; UNESCO 2015.

### Questions to consider when supporting action

- How is learner agency connected to student action?
- How do members of the learning community encourage, support and acknowledge individual and collective action?
- How does action look different for early-years students, lower primary and upper primary students?
- How are opportunities created within the unit of inquiry for action to arise naturally?
- How are students encouraged to consider the multiple forms of action: participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship, lifestyle choices?
- How can we build on prior learning to support student-initiated action?
- How are students supported in planning and carrying out action within and beyond the learning community?
- How are students supported in reflecting on the appropriateness and impact of action?
- How are students supported in making connections to self and others? What connections and collaborations do students have in the learning community and beyond?

This tool can be used to reflect on the nature of action in the learning community.

**Figure AC02: Reflecting on the nature of action**

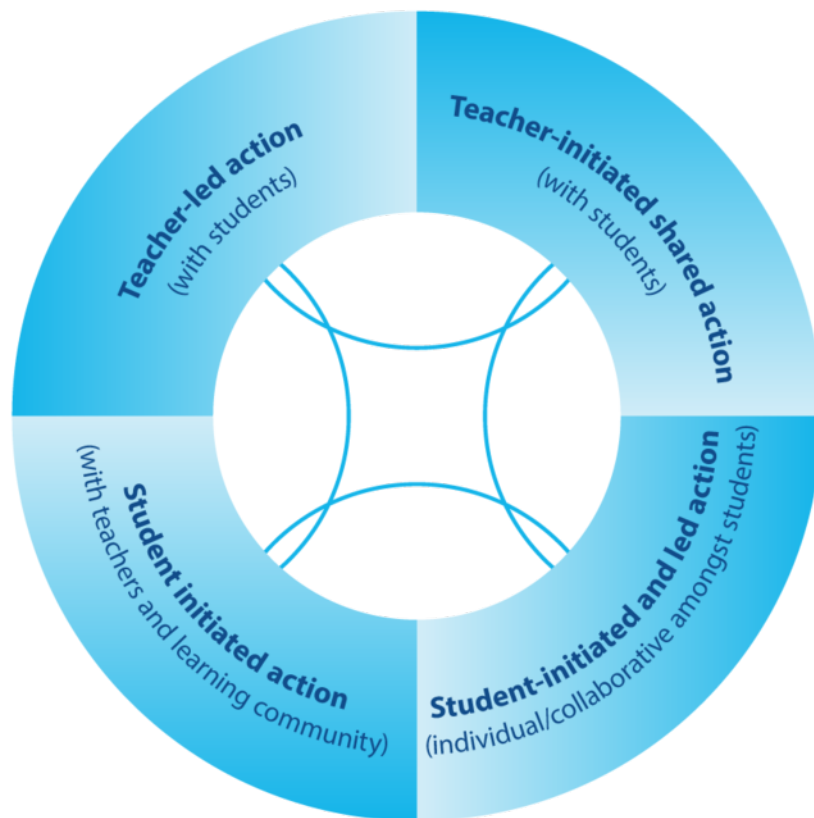
| Move away from                                    | Move towards   |
|---|--|
| Teacher-led decision making                       | Collaborative decision making involving all stakeholders                             |
| Teacher-guided participation                      | Student-facilitated participation as an individual or collective endeavour           |
| Teacher planned action in advance of learning     | Action that emerges as part of the learning process involving inquiry and reflection |
| Action that occurs in isolation of other learning | Action that utilizes and builds on students' prior learning                          |
| Action that concludes a unit of inquiry           | Action that happens at any time, is short or long-term, revisited or ongoing         |

| Move away from                                  | Move towards   |
|---|--|
| Action as an expectation                        | Action that is voluntary and demonstrates student agency                   |
| Action that is a singular event                 | Action that is sustainable   |
| Action that is visible and measurable           | Recognition that action may not always be visible or immediately impactful |
| Cooperation in planning and carrying out action | Reciprocal collaboration in designing, planning and carrying out action    |

The learning community is responsive in recognising, appreciating and supporting action. The following figure “supporting action” can be used, in a flexible way, to reflect on the appropriateness of support provided at different times, in different ways and to varying degrees. This support depends on the context of individual and collective learning and experiences, which could include (but is not limited to) the timing, planning, scope, sustainability, scale and types of action.

**Figure AC03: Supporting action**

| Teacher-guided action (with students)  | Teacher-initiated shared action (with students)                                    | Student-initiated and led action (individual/collaborative amongst students)                | Student-initiated shared action (with teachers and learning community)  |
|--|--|---|---|
| Teacher-guided decision making   | Shared decision making   | Collaborative shared decision making  | Collaborative shared decision making with students, teachers and the learning community   |
| Teacher-guided participation (students as consulted and informed participants)     | Teacher-facilitated participation (students as active and reflective participants) | Student-facilitated participation (students as active, curious and reflective participants) | Student-facilitated participation involving students, teachers and the learning community (students as co-constructors of appropriate action)             |
| Teacher and student planned action carried out by teachers and students            | Teacher and student designed and planned action carried out collaboratively        | Student-designed, -researched and -planned action carried out individually and collectively | Student-driven informed, intentional and sustainable action for personal and collective positive change (students as active and capable agents of change) |
| Teacher-guided action with consultation, student involvement and shared intentions | Teacher-facilitated action for positive change and to make a difference            | Student-driven informed action for personal and collective positive change                  | Transformative action to make a difference and to improve conditions  |



Adapted from Harts Ladder of Participation, Hart, 1992 and informed by Stepping back from the ladder (Hart 2008).

## Connecting action and the learner profile

Through developing attributes of the learner profile, students grow in their ability to make informed, reasoned, ethical judgments and to exercise the flexibility, perseverance and confidence they need to bring about positive change in the learning community and beyond.

For example, internationally-minded students demonstrate action in the following ways.

### **Students synthesize and apply their conceptual understandings, knowledge and approaches to learning to take action on issues—knowledgeable**

Central idea: Humans make choices that have an impact on the environment.

Students may identify the problem of air quality on the road adjacent to their school as something for which they propose possible solutions.

Actions might include:

- lifestyle choices—walking-to-school days, “switching off engine” campaigns for stationary cars
- advocacy— seeking local press support in publicizing a tree-planting scheme to help compensate for air pollution.

### **Students use creative- and critical-thinking skills—thinkers**

Central idea: People create messages to target or influence specific audiences.

Students might identify the issue of climate change as being one where different messages are presented.

Action might include:

- participation—using critical-thinking skills to assess the differences of opinion on climate science



- advocacy—sharing their learning in class or with the wider school community.

### **Students communicate effectively, valuing other perspectives—communicators**

Central idea: Physical and virtual public spaces provide people with opportunities to make connections and establish a sense of community.

Students might carry out data collection within the community to discover the range of views and opinions about how a piece of unused land nearby could be used.

Action might include:

- participation—representing the views from their data collection at a community council meeting to influence decisions.
- social justice—putting forward ideas surrounding issues of fairness reflecting an understanding of inclusion.

### **Students demonstrate empathy, compassion and respect—caring**

Central idea:

#### **Children worldwide experience challenges in protecting their rights to survive and thrive.**

Students might decide to raise awareness that in some local and global communities, people have difficulty accessing healthy food and clean water.

Action might involve:

- social entrepreneurship—making contact with a range of local and global organizations that address the issue of food insecurity and offer possible solutions
- social justice—learning more about local food banks and services that provide meals
- social entrepreneurship—developing a system within the learning community for collecting and distributing foodstuffs and organizing a meal service in response to community need.

### **Students seek well-being of self and others—balanced**

Central idea: People's relationships with each other have an impact on well-being.

Students might hold discussions about the responsibilities associated with being good friends and peers.

Action might include:

- participation—seeking out different children to play with during breaks and sharing stories of meeting new peers.
- lifestyle choices—interacting with people in local communities and beyond to cultivate relationships, appreciating similarities and differences.

### **Students act with integrity and honesty—principled**

Central idea: Human migration is a response to challenges, risks and opportunities.

Students might explore refugee crises. Students might consider media coverage, issues relating to citizenship and first-hand stories to investigate the reasons people leave their homes.

Action might include:

- participation—identifying the implications of actions taken by different groups (for example, governments, international non-governmental organizations, and local and national charities) and considering the effectiveness of their actions.
- social entrepreneurship—reflecting on and organizing community support given to people moving from one place to another and considering how this could be improved.

During the course of and after the inquiry, if there are refugee families moving into the learning community, students could consider revisiting their inquiry. The students could explore ways to support these new students and their families making the transition to life in their new community.

## Reflection statements for students

The collection of student statements, shown in figure AC04, may be used by students to reflect on action and how their actions connect to the learner profile.

*Figure AC04: A PYP student who takes action for a better and more peaceful world*

|                                   |  |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Statement</b>                  | I know myself well and see myself as belonging to local and global communities.            | I am actively part of communities: my family, my home, my learning community and beyond.  | I am developing and demonstrating attributes of the learner profile that support me in becoming internationally-minded. | I am confident in my ability to participate and contribute to positive change.  |
| <b>Learner profile attributes</b> | <b>Reflective</b>  | <b>Caring</b>   | <b>Balanced, open-minded</b>  | <b>Reflective risk-taker</b>  |
| <b>Statement</b>                  | I demonstrate motivation, willingness and commitment in taking action for positive change. | I can recognize and understand the interconnections and interdependence of opportunities and challenges of local, global significance and use critical and creative thinking to address them. | I can connect local action to global action and vice versa.   | I can challenge assumptions and see things from multiple perspectives.  |
| <b>Learner profile attributes</b> | <b>Caring, principled</b>  | <b>Knowledgeable thinker</b>  | <b>Thinker</b>  | <b>Open-minded thinker and risk-taker</b>   |
| <b>Statement</b>                  | I am curious and reflective and act with integrity and honesty.                            | I make informed and ethical decisions.  | I can confidently and creatively plan, carry out and reflect on action.   | I engage in meaningful experiences with peers, teachers and the learning community that lead to action for positive change. |
| <b>Learner profile attributes</b> | <b>Principled inquirer</b>   | <b>Principled thinker</b>   | <b>Communicator</b>   | <b>Balanced</b>   |
| <b>Statement</b>                  | I can reflect on action and modify courses of action when necessary.                       | I can consider the appropriateness and impact of action taken and reflect on possibilities to improve present and future action.  | I take responsible action for a more peaceful and sustainable world.  | I see myself as a competent and capable agent of change.  |

|                                   |                   |                           |  |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>Learner profile attributes</b> | <b>Reflective</b> | <b>Reflective thinker</b> | <b>Reflective, balanced and caring</b> | <b>Reflective</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--|-------------------|

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## Culminating learning experiences

### Summary

- The exhibition is the culminating, collaborative experience in the final year of the PYP.
- The exhibition is an authentic process for students to explore, document and share their understanding of an issue or opportunity of personal significance.
- All exhibitions are student-initiated, designed and collaborative.
- The degree to which students are engaged with planning and implementing their exhibition depends on the students and schools' experience with the PYP.

## Demonstrating understanding

Learning in the Primary Years Programme (PYP) provides many formal and informal opportunities for students to demonstrate how they have developed and applied their knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and learner profile attributes through the inquiries they undertake. The PYP exhibition is a notable example of these opportunities.

All IB programmes include a culminating or consolidating learning experience in their final year: the exhibition in the PYP; the personal project in the Middle Years Programme (MYP); the extended essay in the Diploma Programme (DP); and the reflective project in the Career-related Programme (CP).

In the PYP exhibition, students demonstrate their understanding of an issue or opportunity they have chosen to explore. They undertake their investigation both individually and with their peers, together with the guidance of a mentor. Through the exhibition, students demonstrate their ability to take responsibility for their learning—and their capacity to take action—as they are actively engaged in planning, presenting and assessing learning.

The exhibition is a powerful demonstration of student agency, as well as the agency of the community that has nurtured them through their years in the PYP. The learning community participates in the exhibition, supporting and celebrating the development of internationally minded students who make a positive difference in their lives and the lives of others.

## Features of the exhibition

The exhibition may be one of the six units of inquiry during the final year or it may stand outside of the programme of inquiry to explore a global issue or opportunity that may cross all transdisciplinary themes. It may run concurrently with other units or be contained within a specific time frame during the year.

All exhibitions are student-initiated, designed and collaborative.

**Student-initiated:** Students have a role in choosing the issue or opportunity to be explored; the transdisciplinary theme(s); the development of the central idea; the lines of inquiry; and identification of the key and related concepts that will drive their inquiries. They identify what knowledge they will need to acquire, and what skills they will need to develop.

**Student-designed:** Students design their learning goals and establish the criteria of what success will look like for them. They co-design strategies and tools with teachers, mentors and peers to document and self-assess their learning, and evaluate the success of the exhibition.

**Collaborative:** Students collaborate with their peers, teachers and mentors throughout the exhibition process. There is a genuine sense of participation and engagement through regular sharing of progress and

feedback. As students are diverse, some will engage with the exhibition in groups while others will engage individually, supported by mentors.

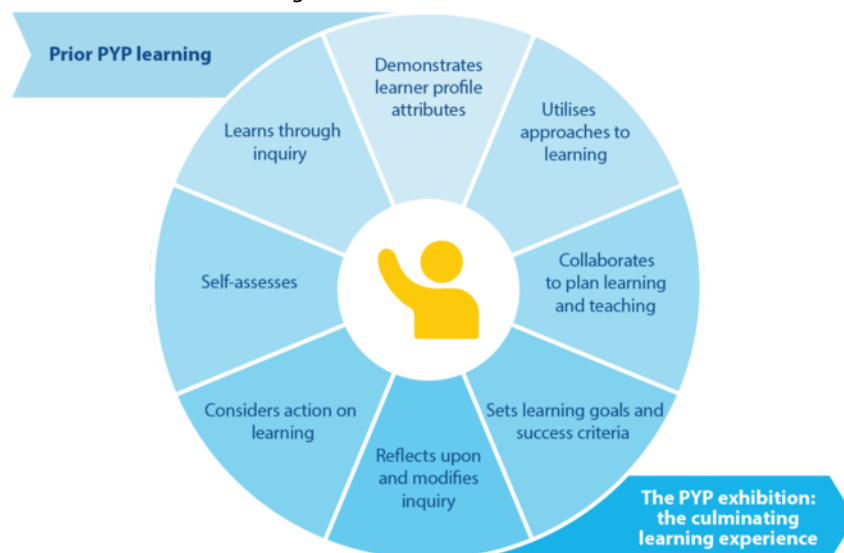
All students take an active role in all aspects of planning, inquiring, investigating, communicating and assessing their learning in the exhibition. All students will benefit from guidance and collaboration with teachers, peers and mentors to facilitate, direct and adjust their learning.

## The purposes of the PYP exhibition

The key purposes of the exhibition are:

- for students to engage in an in-depth, collaborative inquiry
- to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate agency and responsibility for their learning
- to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate the attributes of the learner profile in authentic contexts
- to provide students with an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives
- to provide an authentic process for students to monitor, document and present their learning
- to provide students with an opportunity to synthesize and apply their learning
- for students to take action as a result of their learning
- to unite the students, teachers and other members of the learning community in a collaborative experience
- to provide an authentic context for students to reflect on their PYP education
- to support the well-being of students by celebrating their transition to the next stages of their education
- to provide an authentic task for the community to evaluate its implementation of the PYP
- to provide students with an opportunity to engage with the broader learning community and celebrate their achievements.

Figure EX01: The PYP exhibition



## The exhibition participants

### The students

For all PYP schools\*, the exhibition will be different, and the degree to which students have the capacity to be fully engaged with planning and implementing their exhibition may reflect the experience of the school, its students and its staff. As a school's experience with the PYP deepens, the expectation for student independence increases. Therefore, learning communities may start from a guided exhibition and move to a student-led exhibition.

\*For schools that offer the PYP only in the early years, an exhibition is not required. Only authorized IB World Schools offering the PYP are required to participate in the exhibition, although candidate schools may choose to do so.

Figure EX02: Progression of student-led exhibition (from guided to independent)



All exhibition students aim to:

- understand the purpose and requirements of the exhibition from the outset of the process
- participate in selecting a real-life issue or opportunity for the exhibition
- develop their inquiry by collaborating on the central idea, lines of inquiry and student questions with teachers
- determine key and related concepts for exploration
- demonstrate an understanding of concepts through questions in the inquiry process
- explore knowledge and conceptual understandings that are significant, relevant, challenging and engaging
- inquire across and within transdisciplinary themes
- demonstrate the attributes of the learner profile through their learning
- engage in action: the exhibition could begin with action, or emerge throughout
- use and demonstrate the approaches to learning
- select and use a variety of strategies and resources to develop their inquiries, including first-hand experiences, interviews, surveys, field visits, artifacts, science investigations, working models
- engage in a collaborative, student-led, in-depth inquiry facilitated by teachers and mentors
- co-construct success criteria and reflection opportunities that include self-assessment of their learning and an evaluation of the exhibition process
- be academically honest
- celebrate their learning by sharing the exhibition with the learning community.

Students and mentors may choose to use a PYP exhibition journal to document questions, reflections and actions throughout the process of their exhibition. The journal provides a tool for collaborating, planning, setting and revising learning goals, self-assessing and peer feedback against success criteria and rubrics, as



well as recording and reflecting on feedback from regular meetings with mentors. The journal is owned by the student and can be shared with the learning community.

## The classroom teacher

The classroom teacher support students in a number of ways. The teacher:

- understands the purpose and requirements of the exhibition
- provides clear guidelines for the exhibition
- initiates, facilitates and guides the exhibition process
- plans collaboratively with other teachers and mentors
- supports student inquiries and ensures individual participation and well-being by considering student interests, needs and prior knowledge
- communicates regularly with students, mentors and the learning community
- develops essential agreements with students regarding academic honesty to ensure they show responsibility in learning and are principled in using resources
- encourages students to use a balance of primary and secondary sources
- evaluates the exhibition process
- documents the process, including ongoing reflection
- enables students to feel able to take action as a result of their exhibition inquiry
- acts as a mentor when required or appropriate
- celebrates the exhibition with students.

## The learning community

The exhibition is a shared learning community responsibility. The community supports students in their development of all elements of the PYP at every year level, as these elements will be drawn upon during this final learning experience. The learning community encourages and actively supports the well-being of students and teachers throughout the process of the exhibition.

**Students**, as agents of their own learning, are responsible for contacting and organizing meetings with their mentor. Mentors balance their involvement with encouragement of student responsibility and independence.

**Teachers** support the development of knowledge, skills, conceptual understandings, learner profile attributes and considerations for action at every year level. They act as mentors when needed.

**The pedagogical leadership team** additionally supports the exhibition by providing relevant professional development for the teachers involved. They promote the exhibition to their learning community and, if possible, in the wider network of PYP schools. The leadership team allocates time for teachers to plan collaboratively on the exhibition and allocates funds to provide appropriate resources.

**Mentors** may be drawn from all members of the learning community. Mentors help students set and meet their goals by asking questions, suggesting resources, helping to interpret difficult information and facilitating interviews or contacts outside the school. They may also contribute as subject area experts.

**Parents/legal guardians and older students** in a school are informed and encouraged to contribute their expertise and feedback. They may act as mentors where appropriate.

The entire learning community is involved in the exhibition, either in the organization and timing, in accessing resources (including primary resources in the wider community) or as mentors throughout the process. The community celebrates with students at the exhibition celebration.

## The exhibition process

### Identifying globally significant issues

The exhibition is based on a local or global issue or opportunity, from which teachers and students develop central ideas. These issues or opportunities are open to perspectives across the transdisciplinary themes. The issues or opportunities are complex enough to be addressed through a range of subject knowledge and skills. At the beginning of the exhibition process, students and teachers extensively discuss local or global issues and opportunities that have meaning to them and connect to the school or local contexts. These discussions spark ideas, interests and directions for student inquiries. A global issue or opportunity:

- is accessible across subjects
- is accessible across transdisciplinary themes
- has local significance that students can connect to
- is of sufficient scope and significance to warrant a detailed investigation by all students
- is responsive to students' experiences and abilities with the PYP
- supports students of differing abilities, passions, talents, interests and strengths.

There are a range of ways to group students in developing the scope or purpose of exhibition inquiries. For example:

- the whole grade level/year group selects one issue or opportunity and develops the same central idea
- the whole grade level/year group selects one issue or opportunity and each class, group or individual develops their own central idea based on interest
- each class, group or individual selects a different global issue or opportunity and corresponding central idea.

Whichever grouping strategies are applied, the students are aware that the exhibition is a collaborative inquiry involving all students in the grade level/year group. They regularly share work in progress and demonstrate a genuine sense of participation in a collaborative effort.

Students or schools, new to the PYP, might initially choose a guided exhibition. As the learners'—and the learning community's—experience with the PYP matures, an increasing depth of understanding of the PYP framework is demonstrated through the exhibition. Over time, there is more evidence of students' agency in the exhibition.

### Determining timing and time frame

The timing of the exhibition is at the discretion of the school. However, the learning community appreciates that the exhibition is a culminating experience of the programme demonstrating the highest development of knowledge, skills and conceptual understandings. It is therefore important to provide students with sufficient time in the school year to thoroughly plan and execute the exhibition. In preparation for the exhibition, students will need both structured and unstructured time to learn collaboratively over an extended period.

This time frame includes:

- collaboration to develop central ideas
- identification of group or individual lines of inquiry and student questions
- designated class time to focus on ongoing exhibition inquiries
- designated "check-in" times with mentors to monitor and document progress, and to provide feedback on the process.

### Engaging support from the learning community

In the initial stages of planning, the teachers and students:

- review the previous year's exhibition reflections to act on any past recommendations

- set a time frame for the inquiry process, which includes sharing the process and learning products with the learning community
- collaborate with others to establish mentors across the school and the learning community
- inform the learning community of the purpose of the exhibition and the differing roles and responsibilities of everyone involved
- anticipate and source any resources or budget required
- review any sample exhibition materials.

## Organizing learning

In starting the inquiry process, students, in collaboration with their teachers and mentors, might consider the following questions.

- What can we learn from previous exhibitions?
- What kind of experiences might inform the scope of the inquiries?
- What specific knowledge and skills might be needed that the students do not already have?
- What type of materials and resources will contribute to the inquiries?
- Where can we source these materials?
- Who might the students learn from inside and outside of school?
- How will the learning community be informed about the exhibition?

## Monitoring the exhibition

Mentors support students by monitoring individuals and groups throughout the exhibition process through regular check-in times and by documenting feedback in the student's PYP exhibition journal. As part of PYP assessment practices, monitoring and documenting the exhibition includes decisions on learning made in collaboration with students and mentors.

## Sharing the exhibition

While the exhibition is expected to culminate in a final product or experience, value is placed upon the exhibition learning process and journey. Students are not expected to prepare a large event or production. There are many formats a sharing event could take; the culmination of the exhibition could be a planned sharing of the learning process, feedback and reflections with the learning community. Events do not have to be complex or expensive to be effective. Schools are encouraged to consider the environmental impact of the exhibition.

The exhibition could include:

- PYP exhibition journals by students, with the opportunity to articulate and present their learning processes and progress
- learning products, such as dioramas, songs, poems, dramatic performances, and so on
- learning through a variety of languages and modalities.

There are also infinite possibilities to make the learning process visible. Students, in collaboration with mentors, may use existing—or develop new—tools, artifacts and strategies to further explore and present issues and opportunities.

*Figure EX03: Example of exhibition artifacts and strategies*

| Inquiries                      | Artifacts and strategies  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Entrepreneurship and economics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business plans, reports and oral presentations</li> </ul>  |
| Social action                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document experiences in community action, social justice or volunteer service through images, recordings or mixed media</li> </ul> |

| Inquiries              | Artifacts and strategies  |
|------------------------|---|
| The arts               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Performances, literature or examples of visual arts</li></ul>   |
| Science and technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop flow charts, models, coding scripts, technical drawings, algorithms or experimental procedures.</li></ul> |

## Reflection on the exhibition process

Reflections on the exhibition from different members of the learning community support the review of the exhibition process. They enrich the self-assessment experience for students. Examples of reflections, recommendations and artifacts are collected and archived to provide evidence of student learning and inform decisions for future exhibitions.

Student and mentor reflections may be documented through the ongoing development of a PYP exhibition journal. Students and the learning community use the co-constructed success criteria to provide feedback on the learning that occurred during the exhibition. They use this information to take a wider view of the success of the exhibition process, noting areas of strength and areas for improvement.