



Assessment Policy

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme

Thomas Jefferson Middle School

Last Revised November 2019

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.

Jefferson Mission Statement:

Learning together to understand and improve ourselves, our futures, and our world.

Purpose and Philosophy

At Thomas Jefferson, the purpose of assessment is to support student learning. In the Middle Years Programme, it is critical that students receive regular, specific and meaningful feedback on their learning. We believe in educating with the “end in mind” and the principles of backward design (Wiggins and McTighe)¹. Teachers use the IB MYP objectives for all subject-areas and align content with the Virginia Standards of Learning. Then each content team develops a range of common, summative assessments based on these IB criteria to determine student understanding of subject concepts, skills and content. Every summative task is assessed using a rubric of four achievement levels with specific descriptors. Rubrics are shared with students from the beginning of the unit. Once a summative assessment is completed, daily lessons are planned, and regular formative assessments are put in place. This ensures that to help students learn and develop the skills they need to achieve at the highest level.

¹ Wiggins, Grant P., and Jay McTighe. Understanding by design. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.

Principles of Assessment

- Assessments are authentic, rigorous and student-centered.
- Give meaningful, timely feedback on student learning
- Improve teaching through coaching and reflecting on instructional practices
- Transfer skills across subject areas
- Foster a positive attitude toward learning
- Promote deep understanding through creative and critical thinking
- Reflect the international-mindedness of the programme by allowing assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts

Practices in Assessment

Summative Assessments

Assessment of learning (it determines grades). These are performances or open-ended tasks directly linked to the statement of inquiry (the one sentence description of the unit) that demonstrate student understanding of IB subject criteria. According to MYP: From Principles into Practice, “They are based on the theory that understanding is not something we have—like a set of facts we possess—but rather is something we can do. The MYP uses the term “performance” in its widest sense to describe all forms of assessment.” Types of summative assessments include: Compositions, creation of solutions to problems or products, essays, examinations, questionnaires, investigations, research, performances and presentations. Teachers must have at least two summative assessments per quarter, though it could be two different tasks. If a summative task, is graded on more than 1 criterion, then the same task could be graded for two different summative grades like in the example above. The table below shows the MYP subject criteria summarized for every subject including the community project and interdisciplinary units and the complete list is posted at: jefferson.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2019/11/IB-MYP-Assessment-Objectives-and-Strands-1.pdf

Subject	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Arts	Knowing and Understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Design	Inquiring and analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
Individuals and societies	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Language acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating in response to texts	Using language in spoken and/or written form
Language and literature	Analysing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Mathematics	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-life contexts
Physical and health education	Knowing and Understanding	Planning for Performance	Applying and Performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Sciences	Knowing and Understanding	Inquiring and Designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Interdisciplinary	Disciplinary grounding	Synthesizing	Communicating	Reflecting
Community Project	Investigating	Planning	Taking action	Reflecting

Task-Specific Clarifications

Each summative assessment must include a rubric based on at least one of these criteria with a task-specific clarification. The MYP publishes assessment criteria in rubric form that is holistic, in that they offer general, qualitative value statements about student achievement. Task-specific clarifications require teachers to write

the value statements in a rubric in terms of given assessments. It must be completed at the beginning of each unit and shared with students.

Achievement levels

Each criterion is divided into various achievement levels (numerical values) that appear in bands, and each band contains general, qualitative value statements called level descriptors. The levels 1 and 2 appear as the first band, levels 3 and 4 as the second band, and so on. Level 0 is available for work that is not described by the band descriptor for levels 1 and 2. All criteria have four bands and a maximum of eight achievement levels. All MYP subject groups have four assessment criteria divided into four bands, each of which represents two achievement levels. MYP criteria are equally weighted.

The level descriptors for each band describe a range of student performance in the various strands of each objective. At the lowest levels, student achievement in each of the strands will be minimal. As the numerical levels increase, the level descriptors describe greater achievement levels in each of the strands.

Each rubric so a summative assessment includes specific command terms or specific words used to give students directions in summative tasks. The MYP give common definitions for these terms that teachers use across grade levels and subject areas.

See the example below:

Achievement Level	Level Descriptor
	<p>red denotes command term bold black denotes qualifier bold blue is the wording to match the task (task-specific clarification)</p>
0	The student does not reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates a limited action plan or does not follow a plan to investigate a research question about the industrial revolution. Collects and records limited or sometimes irrelevant information about the industrial revolution.
3 - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates and occasionally follows a partial action plan to Investigate a research question about the industrial revolution. Uses a method(s) to collect and record some relevant information about the industrial revolution.
5 - 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates and mostly follows a sufficiently developed action plan to investigate to investigate a research question about the industrial revolution. Uses methods to collect and record appropriate relevant information about the industrial revolution.
7 - 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates and effectively follows a consistent action plan to investigate a research question about the industrial revolution. Uses methods to collect and record appropriate and varied relevant information about the industrial revolution.

We aim for at least two summative tasks per quarter and to assess every strand of every IB objective at least twice during the school year.

Formative Assessments

Assessment for learning (not for grading). This can and should be done before and during learning. Effective formative assessment can help personalize learning and provide opportunities for students to refine or rehearse performances for summative assessments. Peer and self-assessment are powerful tools for learning. These formative assessments, checks for understanding, should take place every class period. Examples of effective formative assessments include: 1-minute essay, Google forms, 1-sentence summary, exit tickets, hand signals, quick write, think-pair-share, peer interviews, analogy prompt or 1-word summary.

Differentiation

Modifying teaching strategies to meet diverse learning needs. Allow students to pursue appropriate and personal learning goals. Teachers consider each student's language profile. They apply these principles: 1) Affirming identity and building self-esteem, 2) Valuing prior-knowledge, 3) Scaffolding (supports), 4) Extending learning. We differentiate in terms of content, process and product. By content: What should students know? By process: What activities will help students make sense of the knowledge, skills and understanding? By product: What tasks will provide evidence of what the student knows, understands and is able to do?

Internal Standardization

If more than one teacher is involved teaching the same subject group, the process of internal standardization must take place at least once a quarter. The process involves teachers meeting to come to a common understanding on the criteria and achievement levels and how they are applied. It can start by standardizing grades with an example of high, mid and low-level student work. It can also work by teachers coming to agreement about examples of student work at each achievement level. Finally, teachers have found it helpful to meet about outliers in student work.

Grade Descriptors and Grade Equivalencies

Our grade reports of student achievement communicate the student's achievement level for each assessment criteria. It allows students and parents to know how students are performing on each objective. Teachers analyze student summative scores paying attention to patterns in the data, including increasing performance, consistency and mitigating circumstances to determine the student's final achievement level. In the two examples below, determining a final score by looking at patterns gives a better sense of what a student understands at the end of the grading period rather than simply averaging. Since formatives don't count toward the final grade, students aren't penalized for not scoring well while they are learning.

Student	Formative* Homework Max 8	Formative* Quiz Max 8	Formative* Exit-ticket Max 8	Criterion A Unit Test Max 8	Criterion A Project Max 8	Criterion A DBQ Max 8	Criterion A Slide-deck Max 8	Criterion A Essay Max 8	Final score Criterion A Max 8
Sophia	8	3	4	5	6	8	8	8	8
Jose	1	1	2	1	5	4	5	5	5

**Formative scores may be reported, but are not used in the determination of a final grade.*

To arrive at a criterion level total for each student, Synergy runs an algorithm that is the equivalent of the sum of each student's final achievement levels in all four criteria of the subject group. For example, if Maria has the following criterion level totals scores in Sciences then final achievement level would be a score of 27.

Class	Final Score Criterion A	Final Score Criterion B	Final Score Criterion C	Final Score Criterion D	Final Score
Sciences	7	5	8	7	27

Then any students end of term final score is matched with the following the grade level boundaries to determine at final letter grade. For Maria, a score of 27 falls in the boundaries of a B+, which determines her grade. Please note the MYP grade descriptions for each letter grade.

Scale	Boundaries	Alignment of Arlington Public School Grades with MYP Grade Descriptions
A	28-32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.
B+	24-27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence .
B	19-23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and context. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations, and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
C+	16-18	Produces good quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
C	10-15	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and context, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classrooms situations.
D+	8-9	Produce work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and context. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
D	6-7	
E	1-5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge and skills.

Only distinct the APS letter grades of a “D” and “D+” share the same grade levels description. Every other APS letter grade has a distinct MYP grade level description.

Practices in Assessment Reporting

Late or missing work is a problem with student work habits. Good work habits are very important and should be regularly reported to parents or guardians. If students are missing work, that should be reported as soon as the problem is evident. Missing work, however, should not be represented as a zero and averaged into a final score. In Synergy, it is simply left blank. If a student does not complete sufficient evidence (by not completing multiple summative assessments), a failing grade will result.

Retake Policy

How should we address retakes?

-Whole school policy or by department?

-General guidelines or specific requirements?

Student Report Card

This is the student's current grade.

This column allows for APS standard comment

This column allows for teacher free form comments.

Area		Mark	Comment	Notes
Overall Class Grade		B		
Criterion A: Knowing and understanding; i. select appropriate mathematics when solving problems in both familiar and unfamiliar situations; ii. apply the selected mathematics successfully when solving problems; iii. solve problems correctly in a variety of contexts.		5		This row is the Criterion A strands and overall score.
A-Unit 1 Test (Criterion A)	11/15/2019	4		These are summative assessments of criteria A.
A-Unit 3 Parallel Lines Knowledge (Criterion A)	11/15/2019	5		
Criterion B: Investigating patterns; i. apply mathematical problem-solving techniques to recognize patterns; ii. describe patterns as relationships or general rules consistent with correct findings; iii. verify whether the pattern works for other examples.		6		This row is the Criterion B strands and overall score.
B-Unit 3 Parallel Lines Discovery (Criterion B)	11/15/2019	6		These are summative assessments of criteria B.
Criterion C: Communicating; i. use appropriate mathematical language (notation, symbols & terminology) in both oral & written statements; ii. use appropriate forms of mathematical representation to present information; iii. communicate coherent mathematical lines of reasoning; iv. organize information using a logical structure.		6		This row is the Criterion C strands and overall score.
C-Unit 2 Test: Proof # 1 (Criterion C)	11/15/2019	6		
C-Unit 2 Test: Proof # 2 (Criterion C)	11/15/2019	7		These are summative assessments of criteria C.
C-Unit 3 Proof (Criterion C)	11/15/2019	6		
Criterion D: Applying mathematical reasoning in real-life contexts; i. identify relevant elements of authentic real-life situations; ii. select appropriate mathematical strategies when solving authentic real-life situations; iii. apply the selected mathematical strategies successfully to reach a solution; iv. explain the degree of accuracy of a solution; v. describe whether a solution makes sense in the context of the authentic real-life situation.		6		This row is the Criterion D strands and overall score.
D-Logic Project (Criterion D)	11/15/2019	6		These are summative assessments of criteria D.

These reports are available any time on ParentVue for students and student parents or guardians. **These reports are automatically sent home via email every two weeks.**

Calendar

Key dates for report cards, tests and community project

-Assessment maps posted

-Summatives in the report card

Frequently Asked Questions

What about homework?

Isn't it subjective?

Policy Review

Leadership Team, Admin Team, Teach Committee, Parents and Students

Bibliography

Wiggins, Grant P., and Jay McTighe. Understanding by design. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.