

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR WORLD LANGUAGES

To relate in a meaningful way to another human being one must be able to communicate. Studying world languages, whether modern, classical or Native American, enormously increases one's ability to understand culture and to see connections.

These standards reflect the reality of language offerings in Montana today, and also envision the future of world languages for Montana's students in K-12 language learning programs. All students are capable of learning a second language. Language learning should start early and be a sequential process leading to enjoyable lifelong learning. The earlier a student begins language learning, the more proficient the learner becomes.

Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. [Montana] must educate students who are equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English-speaking backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language. To study another language and culture gives one the powerful key to successful communication: Knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom. (From Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century, EMC Publishing, 1996.)

Classical languages and some American Indian languages will often have a different communication focus than modern languages. The standards and benchmarks, designed to encompass all aspects of language learning, are applied as they fit the recognized purpose of the study of a particular language. Oral proficiency is not the major outcome of studying a classical language nor are reading and writing primary outcomes in learning all American Indian languages.

COMMUNICATION

- Content Standard 1—Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.
- Content Standard 2—Students understand and interpret spoken and/or written language on a variety of topics.
- Content Standard 3—Students convey information, concepts, and ideas to listeners and/or readers for a variety of purposes.

CULTURES

- Content Standard 4—Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the perspectives, practices, and products/contributions of cultures studied, and use this knowledge to interact effectively in cultural contexts.

CONNECTIONS

- Content Standard 5—Students reinforce and increase his/her knowledge of other disciplines through world languages.
- Content Standard 6—Students acquire information and perspectives through authentic materials in world languages and within cultures.

COMPARISONS

- Content Standard 7—Students recognize that different languages use different patterns and can apply this knowledge to his/her own language.
- Content Standard 8—Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the culture studied and his/her own.

COMMUNITIES

- Content Standard 9—Students apply language skills and cultural knowledge in daily life.

Content Standards indicate what all students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area.

Benchmarks define our expectations for students' knowledge, skills, and abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points.

Communication

World Languages Content Standard 1

Rationale

Montana students must be able to interact appropriately with members of other societies to interpret and exchange their ideas and opinions.

Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. express feelings, likes, and dislikes.	1. qualify feelings, likes, and dislikes.	1. exchange personal ideas and support them.
2. respond in one-on-one interactions.	2. exchange information using appropriate gestures.	2. initiate, sustain, and conclude conversations appropriate to the setting on a variety of topics.
3. create simple descriptions of people and things within a context.	3. create detailed descriptions within a context.	3. create more elaborate descriptions and add opinions.
4. express agreement and disagreement.	4. describe a problem and suggest and recommend solutions.	4. collaborate and compromise to develop, propose, and negotiate solutions.
5. express basic needs.	5. elaborate on needs and interact in basic survival situations.	5. manage unforeseen situations.

World Languages Content Standard 2

Students understand and interpret spoken and/or written language on a variety of topics.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. identify people and objects using aural, visual, and contextual cues. 2. comprehend and respond appropriately to simple oral and written communications. 3. read and respond to developmentally appropriate material and identify the main idea.	1. respond appropriately to complex aural, visual, written, or contextual cues. 2. comprehend and respond appropriately to complex oral and written communications. 3. interpret the main idea and significant details from authentic materials and literary samples.	1. analyze information based on complex aural, visual, written, or contextual cues. 2. comprehend and respond appropriately to oral and written communications intended for native speakers. 3. interpret and analyze relationships, sequences, mood, cause and effect, and applied meaning in authentic materials and literary samples.

Communication

World Languages Content Standard 3

Students convey information, concepts, and ideas to listeners and/or readers for a variety of purposes.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. give directions, commands, and instructions. 2. give a description orally and/or in writing using simple phrases. 3. write a personal communication (e.g., note, letter, invitation). 4. summarize main idea of selected authentic and/or contextualized material.	1. explain a process based on prior knowledge and/or experience. 2. give a description orally and/or in writing using complex sentences. 3. produce formal and informal written and/or oral communication. 4. interpret information from authentic material for an audience.	1. explain a complex process incorporating detailed instructions. 2. give a description orally and in writing using complex, detailed paragraphs. 3. produce a written sample to convey a mood, implied meaning, or abstract idea. 4. create an analysis of authentic media or literary samples and present it to an audience.

Cultures

World Languages Content Standard 4

Rationale

Montana students need to develop an awareness of other people's world views, their contributions and their unique way of life. The study of another language enables students to understand a different culture on its own terms.

Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the perspectives, practices, and products/contributions of cultures studied, and use this knowledge to interact effectively in cultural contexts.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. identify significant cultural perspectives and practices.	1. describe cultural characteristics and behaviors of everyday life (e.g., social and geographic factors).	1. analyze the development of different cultural practices (e.g., social and geographic factors).
2. recognize and interpret language and behaviors that reflect the culture.	2. produce language and behaviors appropriate to the culture.	2. apply language and behaviors that reflect the culture in an authentic situation.
3. identify objects, images, symbols, products, and other contributions of the culture.	3. explain objects, images, symbols, products, and other contributions of the culture.	3. analyze and evaluate the cultural significance of objects, images, symbols, products, and other contributions of the culture.
4. identify the expressive forms of the culture (e.g., architecture, music, dance).	4. describe and discuss the expressive forms of the culture (e.g., art, architecture, music, dance).	4. analyze and evaluate the expressive forms of the culture (e.g., art, architecture, music, dance).

Connections

World Languages Content Standard 5

Rationale

Knowledge is power, and extending access to information through the use of a world language increases students' ability to "know and do." Using a world language to acquire information empowers students with knowledge, no matter what the topic or discipline. It also provides learners with skills, interests, and insights beyond the limits of their formal educational experiences.

Students reinforce and increase his/her knowledge of other disciplines through world languages.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. identify and apply, within a familiar context, information and skills shared by the language classroom and other disciplines.	1. transfer and apply, within a designated context, information and skills common to the language classroom and other disciplines.	1. apply, within an unfamiliar context, information and skills common to the language classroom and other disciplines.
2. identify, through world language resources, information for use in other disciplines.	2. analyze information gathered through world language resources for use in other disciplines.	2. locate authentic language resources and synthesize information for use in other disciplines.

World Languages Content Standard 6

Students acquire information and perspectives through authentic materials in world languages and within cultures.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. gather information from sources intended for native speakers of the language.	1. analyze and apply information from sources intended for native speakers of the language.	1. acquire and synthesize information from sources intended for native speakers of the language.
2. use authentic sources to identify perspectives of world cultures.	2. use authentic sources to analyze perspectives of world cultures.	2. use authentic sources to synthesize perspectives of world cultures.

Comparisons

World Languages Content Standard 7

Rationale

Students gain insights into the nature of language and culture by making comparisons.

Students recognize that different languages use different patterns and can apply this knowledge to his/her own language.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. identify sound patterns of the target language and compare them to the student's own language. 2. identify structural patterns of the target language. 3. identify idiomatic expressions of the target language. 4. identify connections among languages.	1. apply, within limited contexts, sound patterns of the target language. 2. apply, within limited contexts, structural patterns of the target language. 3. compare and contrast idiomatic expressions of the target language and the student's own language. 4. explain the changing nature of languages.	1. apply, in a variety of contexts, sound patterns of the target language. 2. use knowledge of structural patterns in both the target language and the student's own language to communicate effectively. 3. use idiomatic expressions of the target language in the correct context. 4. describe how languages influence each other.

World Languages Content Standard 8

Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the culture studied and his/her own.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. recognize similarities and differences, including behavior patterns, among target cultures and students' own cultures using evidence from authentic sources.	1. analyze similarities and differences, including behavior patterns, among target cultures and students' own cultures using evidence from authentic sources.	1. analyze and explain significance of similarities and differences among target cultures and the student's own culture using evidence from authentic sources. 2. use knowledge of similar and different behavioral patterns to interact effectively in a variety of social contexts in target cultures and students' own cultures.

Communities

World Languages Content Standard 9

Rationale

This area combines elements from communication, cultures, connections, and comparisons. Students are highly motivated to excel in their study of a second language when they see immediate applications for the skills they learn. As a result of their ability to communicate in other languages, students realize the interdependence of people throughout the world. Language students develop a keener awareness of cultures and are better equipped to function in the multilingual communities that exist in the U.S. and abroad.

Students apply language skills and cultural knowledge in daily life.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Benchmark I	End of Benchmark II	End of Benchmark III
1. identify the target language in the student's daily life and share that knowledge with others. 2. locate connections with the target culture through the use of technology, media, and authentic sources. 3. locate resources in the community to learn about the target culture.	1. respond to the target language encountered in the students' daily life. 2. establish connections with the target culture through the use of technology, media, and authentic sources. 3. interact with members of the community to research the target culture.	1. interact appropriately in the target language in real-life situations. 2. maintain connections with the target culture through the use of technology, media, and authentic sources. 3. collaborate and use resources in the community to research the target culture.

World Languages Performance Standards: A Profile of Four Levels

The World Languages Performance Standards describe students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in World Languages on a sequential and developmental continuum. These descriptions provide a picture or profile of student achievement at four performance levels: advanced, proficient, nearing proficiency, and novice.

Advanced: This level denotes superior performance.

Proficient: This level denotes solid academic performance for each benchmark. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

Nearing Proficiency: This level denotes that the student has partial mastery or prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient work at each benchmark.

Novice: This level denotes that the student is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for work at each benchmark.

Benchmark I World Languages

Advanced: (1) A student at the end of benchmark I at the advanced level of world languages demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) initiates conversations, on familiar topics, comprehensible to a native speaker;
- (b) comprehends and interprets main ideas from authentic material appropriate for his/her level;
- (c) initiates communication orally and/or in writing for a variety of purposes and audiences;
- (d) identifies significant cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) consistently recognizes culturally embedded behaviors and acts appropriately, within familiar contexts, target language knowledge and skills, and cultural understanding;
- (f) eagerly uses authentic resources to identify culturally relevant information and perspectives;
- (g) identifies sound and structural patterns of the target language and compares them to his/her first language;
- (h) identifies and compares significant similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) identifies and expands understanding and information gained through world language study within and outside the classroom.

Proficient: (1) A student at the end of benchmark I at the proficient level of world languages demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) initiates exchanges of simple information (e.g., likes and dislikes, descriptions, basic needs, familiar topics);
- (b) comprehends main ideas from authentic material appropriate for his/her level;
- (c) communicates orally and/or in writing for an assigned purpose and audience;
- (d) identifies some significant cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) identifies, within familiar contexts, target language information and skills;
- (f) uses authentic resources to recognize some cultural information and perspectives;
- (g) recognizes sound and structural patterns of the target language and makes connections to his/her first language;
- (h) identifies similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) identifies language and culture connections within and outside the classroom.

Nearing Proficiency: (1) A student at the end of benchmark I at the nearing proficiency level of world languages demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficiency in world languages. He/she:

- (a) exchanges simple information, with prompting, (e.g., likes and dislikes, basic needs, familiar topics);
- (b) responds to repeated oral and/or written material appropriate for his/her level;
- (c) communicates orally and/or in writing in limited situations;
- (d) recognizes obvious cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) sometimes identifies, within familiar contexts, target language information and skills;
- (f) uses, with assistance, authentic resources to recognize some cultural information and perspectives;
- (g) sometimes recognizes sound and structural patterns of the target language and, with assistance, makes connections to his/her first language;
- (h) identifies some similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) identifies, with assistance, some language and culture connections within and outside the classroom.

Novice: (1) A student at the end of benchmark I at the novice level of world languages is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in world languages. He/she:

- (a) exchanges basic information, with prompting, (e.g., likes and dislikes, basic needs);
- (b) responds to some oral and/or written cues;
- (c) attempts limited oral and/or written communication;
- (d) recognizes, with assistance, obvious cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) seldom identifies, in any context, target language information and skills;
- (f) has difficulty using authentic resources to recognize cultural information;
- (g) seldom recognizes sound and structural patterns of the target language;
- (h) identifies, with assistance, some similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) seldom recognizes language and culture connections.

Benchmark II World Languages

Advanced: (1) A student at the end of benchmark II at the advanced level of world languages demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) initiates and sustains conversations, on a variety of topics, comprehensible to a native speaker;
- (b) consistently comprehends and interprets main ideas and supporting details from authentic material above his/her level;
- (c) independently and routinely communicates verbally and/or in writing and easily elaborates on familiar topics in a variety of situations;
- (d) analyzes and describes, in detail, significant cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) consistently analyzes and applies target language information and skills to other contexts;
- (f) thoroughly examines and applies information and perspectives of world cultures using authentic sources;
- (g) applies, in limited contexts, sound and structural patterns and idiomatic expressions of the target language, and compares target language to his/her first language;
- (h) observes, analyzes, and explains significant similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) enhances classroom activities by independently seeking new information and illustrating language and culture connections.

Proficient: (1) A student at the end of benchmark II at the proficient level of world languages demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) exchanges information on familiar topics in survival situations verbally and/or in writing and usually understands and produces speech at normal speed;
- (b) comprehends and interprets main ideas from authentic material appropriate for his/her level;
- (c) communicates verbally and/or in writing and elaborates on familiar topics in survival situations;

- (d) describes significant cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) analyzes and applies target language information and skills to designated contexts and other disciplines;
- (f) investigates and applies information and perspectives of world cultures using authentic sources;
- (g) applies, in limited contexts, sound and structural patterns and idiomatic expressions of the target language, and compares target language to his/her first language;
- (h) observes and describes significant similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) contributes to classroom activities by finding and sharing language and culture connections.

Nearing Proficiency: (1) A student at the end of benchmark II at the nearing proficiency level of world languages demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficiency in world languages. He/she:

- (a) often exchanges information on familiar topics in survival situations verbally and/or in writing and usually understands and produces speech at near-normal speed;
- (b) identifies main ideas from material appropriate for his/her level;
- (c) communicates verbally and/or in writing and sometimes elaborates on familiar topics in survival situations;
- (d) describes some significant cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) applies limited target language information to other disciplines;
- (f) investigates and applies information and common perspectives of world cultures;
- (g) applies, in limited contexts, sound and structural patterns and idiomatic expressions of the target language, but has difficulty comparing target language to his/her first language;
- (h) provides limited explanation of similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) sometimes contributes to classroom activities by finding and sharing language and culture connections.

Novice: (1) A student at the end of benchmark II at the novice level of world languages is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in world languages. He/she:

- (a) exchanges predictable information verbally and/or in writing, and relies on questions or prompts to produce understandable language;
- (b) identifies main ideas from familiar material appropriate for his/her level;
- (c) describes familiar topics, but rarely elaborates on these topics in survival situations;
- (d) describes some significant cultural contributions of the target language culture;
- (e) seldom applies limited target language information to other disciplines;
- (f) has difficulty applying information of world cultures;
- (g) seldom applies, even in limited contexts, sound and structural patterns or idiomatic expressions of the target language to his/her first language;
- (h) has difficulty identifying similarities and differences among target cultures with his/her culture; and
- (i) rarely contributes to classroom activities.

Benchmark III World Languages

Advanced: (1) A student at the end of benchmark III at the advanced level of world languages demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) confidently initiates, sustains, and concludes conversations, in a variety of contexts, comprehensible to a native speaker;
- (b) comprehends and responds to oral and/or written communication intended for a native speaker;
- (c) adeptly uses a variety of language strategies to convey meaning in the target language;
- (d) thoroughly analyzes and evaluates significant cultural contributions to effectively interact in authentic situations;
- (e) integrates and consistently applies information and skills to familiar and unfamiliar contexts;
- (f) independently acquires and integrates world culture perspectives from authentic sources, and communicates new understanding;

- (g) confidently applies, in a variety of contexts, sound and structural patterns and idiomatic expressions of the target language and his/her first language to communicate effectively;
- (h) analyzes and explains significant similarities and differences among target cultures to interact effectively in a variety of contexts; and
- (i) independently and enthusiastically extends classroom learning by seeking out language and culture connections and thoroughly communicating his/her findings.

Proficient: (1) A student at the end of benchmark III at the proficient level of world languages demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) initiates, sustains, and concludes conversations, in a variety of contexts, comprehensible to a native speaker;
- (b) comprehends and responds to oral and/or written communication intended for a native speaker;
- (c) consistently uses a variety of language strategies to convey meaning in the target language;
- (d) analyzes and evaluates significant cultural contributions to effectively interact in authentic situations;
- (e) integrates information from authentic sources and applies that information and skills to familiar and unfamiliar contexts;
- (f) acquires and integrates world culture information and perspectives from authentic sources;
- (g) confidently applies, in a variety of contexts, sound and structural patterns and idiomatic expressions of the target language and his/her first language to communicate effectively;
- (h) analyzes and explains significant similarities and differences among target cultures to interact effectively in a variety of contexts; and
- (i) extends classroom learning by seeking out language and culture connections and by communicating his/her findings.

Nearing Proficiency: (1) A student at the end of benchmark III at the nearing proficiency level of world languages demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficiency in world languages. He/she:

- (a) initiates, sustains, and concludes limited conversations comprehensible to a native speaker accustomed to non-native speakers;
- (b) usually comprehends and responds to oral and/or written communication intended for a native speaker;
- (c) uses some language strategies to convey meaning in the target language;
- (d) identifies and analyzes significant cultural contributions, but needs assistance to effectively interact in authentic situations;
- (e) sometimes integrates information from authentic sources and applies the information and skills to familiar contexts;
- (f) acquires and integrates world culture information and perspectives from authentic sources;
- (g) applies, in limited contexts, sound and structural patterns, and idiomatic expressions of the target language and his/her first language;
- (h) explains significant similarities and differences among target cultures, but has difficulty interacting effectively; and
- (i) sometimes extends classroom learning by locating and sharing language and culture connections.

Novice: (1) A student at the end of benchmark III at the novice level of world languages is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in world languages. He/she:

- (a) engages in limited conversations;
- (b) usually comprehends and responds to familiar oral and/or written material;
- (c) seldom uses language strategies to convey meaning in the target language;
- (d) identifies significant cultural contributions, but seldom interacts in authentic situations;
- (e) sometimes integrates predictable information from authentic sources but has difficulty applying the information;
- (f) sometimes acquires, but seldom integrates world culture information or perspectives from authentic sources;
- (g) recognizes, in limited contexts, sound and structural patterns, and idiomatic expressions of the target language and his/her first language;
- (h) explains predictable similarities and differences among target cultures and seldom interacts effectively; and
- (i) rarely makes language and culture connections to extend classroom learning.