
Frequently Asked Questions About Early World Language Instruction.

Q: What is Dual Language Immersion Program?

A: A program in which the language goals are biliteracy in English and a partner language, students study language arts and other academic content (math, science, social studies, arts) in both languages over the course of the program, the partner language is used for at least 50% of instruction at all grades, and the program lasts at least 5 years (preferably K-12).

Our programs are 50/50 models: An immersion program model in which English and the partner language are each used for 50% of instruction at all grade levels. Dual Language Immersion students receive 100% of the grade level core curriculum. Our world is rapidly shrinking, and we are increasingly dependent upon communication and understanding among people of diverse beliefs and backgrounds. By choosing an immersion program, you are challenging and stimulating your child's cognitive, social and linguistic development, giving them a unique advantage for tomorrow's world.

Q: What are the advantages of my child participating in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program?

A: Acquiring a second language has major advantages.

- Student acquire full oral, reading and written proficiency in two languages. Chinese is a character-based language and the orthographic system requires a different set of skills.
- In addition to acquiring the literacy skills in a second language, students achieve at levels or higher of their peers enrolled in other programs on standardized tests in reading and math. The most exhaustive longitudinal research done on student achievement in dual language immersion programs was done by Dr. Wayne Thomas and Dr. Virginia Collier, Professors Emeritus at George Mason University. [Executive and full report Thomas and Collier](#)
- The cognitive benefits to bilingualism are multiple and the effects are long lasting. Researchers have found that it can change the neurological processing and structure of the brain as well as protect the brain against age related decline. [The Cognitive Effects of Bilingualism](#)
- The last advantage will impact students positively across other areas and is attitudinal. Bilinguals can easily recognize multiple perspectives, including their own. They can communicate ideas effectively across geographic, cultural, ideological and linguistic barriers. Dual language immersion is an ideal way to prepare students to be globally competent.

Q: Who can apply for the Program?

A: We now offer DLI in PreK-5th Grade at Pueblo. Desert Canyon is in their first year of DLI, starting with Kindergarten and will add a new grade each year. Both programs will continue through middle school and high school. Open enrollment students are encouraged to apply. Reserve you child's space by enrolling early. Parents are asked to commit a minimum of seven years to the program to gain maximum benefit. This dedication is necessary for students to be able to read, write and speak in two languages by 6th grade. Scottsdale's program design is to have students who stay in the DLI pipeline ready for Advanced Placement World Language and the Arizona Seal of Biliteracy in high school. The greater the commitment to language study, the greater the benefit to the student to be future and career ready. This chart shows the correlation between years of language study and oral proficiency in the workplace.

Q: Why should I consider a Language Immersion Program?

A: Research has shown immersion to be the most effective way to learn language. For more than 20 years, research in Canada and the United States has documented the impressive development of second language fluency and academic achievement of children in immersion programs. At the same time, immersion students maintain and enrich their native language and literacy skills. Studies have also shown that bilingual students perform better than monolingual students in

tasks that call for divergent thinking, pattern recognition and problem solving. Research shows that students who learn a second language at an early age meet or exceed state standards.

Q: What can I do as a parent to support my child as a DLI student?

A: Successful students tend to enjoy learning new things and meeting and interacting with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Encourage them as you observe them doing these things, across all contexts and environments. As their language and literacy develops in the second language, expose them to books, movies and cultural experiences.

Successful students tend to have parents who support the DLI program and the teachers. Attend parent meetings and DLI events and keep in regular communication with your child's teacher. Ask questions about their language learning and the process rather than asking a budding language learner to produce the language for you. Trust that language production will come in time and the oral comprehension typically comes first.

If your child experiences frustration or appears to be struggling, keep the following in mind:

- Do not compare your child's language learning experience with others. Just like anything else, language growth and development is individual and different for everyone.
- Encourage your child to have a growth mindset. They may be frustrated at what they don't yet know. Share stories with them about a skill, hobby or maybe even a language you learned and how you struggled but were persistent and learned with time and learned from your errors.
- Communicate early with your child's teacher if you have concerns.

Q: How quickly will my child begin speaking Spanish or Mandarin?

A: There may be an initial adjustment or "silent" period as children begin listening to the new language and discovering the meaningful patterns, sounds, tones and cadence of the target language. A combination of activities, including singing and games, help children feel more comfortable and competent in the target language, and they begin demonstrating their language immediately by repeating familiar words and short phrase. From there, they will expand their language capabilities in accordance with the ACTFL proficiency levels as identified by the grade level performance targets of your child's school.

Q: We actually speak Spanish/Mandarin or some Spanish/Mandarin at home. Is this program the right one for us?

A: Research has shown that Dual language programs are excellent for both English language learners and native English speakers. Dual language is also a great fit for students that speak a third language at home or students that are heritage speakers (a student that is to some degree bilingual, perhaps has extended family members that speak Spanish). These studies showed that overall both English language learners and native English speakers made significant progress in both languages; both groups scored at or well above grade level in both languages by middle school; and both groups performed at comparable or superior levels compared to same-language peers in other educational settings. If your child is classified as an English Language Learner, parents may apply for a waiver for the student to attend a dual language immersion program.

Q: How will mastery of world language skills help my child in the real world?

https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/TLE_pdf/OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf

COLLEGE ADVANTAGES

- Students who complete the World Language Trajectory for DLI students will have many opportunities to continue their language study at any university. Dual Enrollment credits earned during high school allow students to fulfill requirements and place into higher levels. AP / IB test scores will determine how many college credits earned and/or level students can place into.
- For information specific to ASU about AP, CLEP, and IB scores with ASU credit/ course equivalents :
https://catalog.asu.edu/credit_exam#AP
https://catalog.asu.edu/credit_exam#CLEP
https://catalog.asu.edu/credit_exam#IB

Q: What is the Seal of Biliteracy?

A: This is a program designed to recognize high school students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy honors the language skills students attain, and can be evidence of skills that are attractive to future employers and college admissions offices. For more information visit the Arizona Department of Education <<http://www.azed.gov/sealofbiliteracy/>>
