

# Louisiana Believes

## Louisiana World Language Standards

Revised 2013

# Louisiana Believes

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[Introduction](#)

[The Status of the French Language in Louisiana](#)

[Connecting World Language Content Standards to Common Core State Standards](#)

[Strands, Standards, Objectives, and Sample Learning Targets](#)

[Measuring Proficiency in Linguistic and Cultural Competencies](#)

[Glossary of Terms and Descriptions](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[References](#)

## Introduction

As daily communication with people around the world progresses more easily, more quickly, and in a more accessible fashion, the need for using languages other than English becomes increasingly evident. The development of appropriate cultural and linguistic skills to navigate the global marketplace is paramount to success in today's world. Global literacy enables citizens to communicate face-to-face or by virtual technology appropriately with people from diverse cultures at home and around the world.

The Louisiana World Language Content Standards were developed based on national and international models including the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL] and *the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages [CEFR, Council of Europe, 2000]*). The World Language Content Standards are proficiency-based and are nationally and internationally benchmarked. They provide a framework of language learning that is rigorous in order to prepare language learners for college and career success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These Standards are intended to be a living document, and can be revised as necessary over the years as new evidence emerges.

The philosophy and principles guiding language education are anchored in language research and supported by practice. Some of the basic principles are:

- All students can learn and experience success in a second or world language.
- Any language can be used to teach academic content at any level or within any educational model.
- Language acquisition is a lifelong process, and learners should be provided a long, articulated sequence of study to ensure best results.
- Language skills increase in listening, speaking, reading and writing as learners acquire proficiency in a language.
- Individuals learn in various ways and acquire proficiency in a language at different rates based on time invested, access to programs, intensity of instruction, type of writing system of language, the learner's age, development level, and student motivation and learning experiences.
- Learning another language enhances the learner's skills in a global society.
- World language learners develop insights into other cultures, as well as their own.
- Language learners make connections with other academic disciplines by incorporating academic topics into language lessons, and reinforcing skills, such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, critical thinking, problem solving, etc.

# Louisiana Believes

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Educational models vary, based on the number of years spent learning a language and the frequency of instruction as well as the type of environment and the unique aspects of the languages themselves. Therefore the Louisiana World Language Content Standards are organized by proficiency levels, rather than grade levels. This change in organization of standards mirrors the changes made in the national world language standards (ACTFL) and the international standards from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Because of various life experiences and the mobility of language learners, the most efficient way to measure linguistic proficiency is to use a proficiency scale.

The Louisiana World Language Content Standards define end-of-year expectations and a cumulative progression of language proficiency. The descriptions of the proficiency levels clearly define what a learner can do at each proficiency level. Although the standards delineate specific expectations in speaking, listening, reading, writing and language, each standard need not be a separate focus for instruction or assessment. Several standards can be addressed by a single integrated performance task. Learners can develop mastery of standards for reading and writing across a range of texts and academic disciplines.

The Louisiana World Language Content Standards are provided for language programs from kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They focus on results rather than means, and define the learner's linguistic and cultural competencies. Learners in world language programs also develop research and technology skills. The Louisiana World Language Content Standards provide the overall goals and language objectives and include sample learning targets to guide users in an appropriate learner-centered instructional environment. To ensure that language learners are provided the best learning opportunities available, it is advised that a well-developed, content rich curriculum aligned to the Standards be used.

## **The Status of the French Language in Louisiana**

French has been a native language in Louisiana since its establishment as a French colony in 1699; a cornerstone of the state's history, culture, and identity, the French language continues to play an important role in this very unique place within the United States.

From the descendants of the first Native Americans to inhabit these lands to successive waves of colonists and immigrants from the four corners of the globe, these French, Creoles of Color, European Creoles, Cajuns and Indians who now speak French or Creole each bring an accent and color to Louisiana, creating a cultural and linguistic mosaic unlike any other in the world.

The State of Louisiana was literally created in French when the *Constitution ou forme du gouvernement de l'État de la Louisiane* was written and adopted in 1812. The French Civil Code sets Louisiana

# Louisiana Believes

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jurisprudence apart from the rest of the United States. Much of the state's one-of-a-kind culture, music, and cuisine was born in French with *lagniappe*, *boudin*, *étouffée*, *gris-gris*, and *zydeco*.

Hardly more than a century after the first state constitution was introduced in French, the State Constitution of 1921 deofficialized and deinstitutionalized the French language, banning it from state agencies and public schools. However, French and Creole somehow managed to survive.

Today, estimates put the number of speakers at approximately 150,000, but it is important to recognize that native speakers of Louisiana's most widely spoken heritage languages are progressively disappearing. Furthermore, due to the political tensions and social stigmatization attached to French in the early and middle 20<sup>th</sup> century, very few of them passed their native language on to the next generation.

In 2013, the situation is very different. Through the ongoing efforts of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL : Office of Francophone Affairs, the only state agency of its kind in the United States), the Louisiana Department of Education, and Louisiana's unique international cultural and educational cooperative accords with the governments of France, the French Community of Belgium, the Province of Québec and others, what was not possible in Louisiana for decades is now achievable. The State is a leader in the teaching of French as a second language, touching more than 50,000 Louisiana students in elementary through high school; and 30 schools in 10 parishes offer French immersion pathways where nearly 4,000 children spend the majority of their school day learning math, science, social studies, art, and other subject matter *en français*.

These educational pathways allow young Louisianians from very diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds to receive their education in French. In so doing, they benefit from the opportunity to achieve their intellectual capacity while at the same time being prepared to fully participate as citizens of the world in the language that links them to Louisiana's history, to Louisiana's future, to her culture and to the larger Francophone world.

## **Connecting World Language Content Standards to Common Core State Standards**

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) documents form the foundation of elementary through secondary education in Louisiana. According to the Council for Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, the CCSS are, "(1) research and evidence based, (2) aligned with college and work expectations, (3) rigorous, and (4) internationally benchmarked." (p. 1, CCSS) Likewise, the Louisiana World Language Content Standards are research based as evidenced by the large body of studies documenting the success of proficiency oriented instruction collected by the world language professional community. The Louisiana World Language Content Standards' alignment

# Louisiana Believes

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with college and work expectations is marked by their support in advancing Louisiana citizens to compete and participate in the global marketplace. The World Language Content Standards are rigorous, setting proficiency expectations based on the type of educational model, frequency, and intensity of study. The Louisiana World Language Content Standards are nationally and internationally benchmarked, guided by principles found in the Proficiency Guidelines of the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages and in the Common European Framework of Reference (a measure used to describe second language learner's performance throughout Europe and several other countries).

An overall expectation of the English Language Arts CCSS is that students be able to read and understand grade-level complex text independently and proficiently and write and speak clearly about the text. The CCSS document includes descriptions of literate college and career ready students. Such students are described in the following manner.

- They demonstrate independence.
- They build strong content knowledge.
- They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

An overall expectation of the Louisiana World Language Content Standards is that students be able to understand and read proficiency -level complex text independently and proficiently and speak and write clearly about the text. For World Languages, this intimates that students who meet the standards function in the same manner as students working toward the CCSS. Each of the bulleted points listed above applies equally to world language students.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed a document explaining the alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the CCSS. Since the Louisiana World Language Content Standards were guided by ACTFL standards, the description below of the alignment with CCSS is grounded in the ACTFL document.

The four strands of the *CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* include Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. These strands are represented in Louisiana World Language Content Standards by the communication standards: Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational and their targeted proficiency levels. The Interpretive Standard applies to the use of literary and informational texts in reading, viewing, and listening. Writing in the CCSS (for purposes of explanation, argumentation, or narration) is similar to writing for

the same purposes in a world language. Mastery increases as language proficiency grows. The World Language Strands align with the Common Core by focusing on language literacy, connections to core content, and culture.

ACTFL describes the connection between the Common Core State Standards and Language Standards in the following proficiency level descriptions from the document

*Alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards, ACTFL, 3 April 2012.*

## **Interpersonal Communication:**

Below you will find examples of how learners of each proficiency level support the Language Arts Common Core State Standards

**Novice Proficiency Level World Language Learners** can interact by using basic words, phrases, and sentences on very familiar topics in highly predictable situations. They can share likes and dislikes, give and follow simple instructions and ask and answer questions about topics, such as family, school events, and celebrations. They can interpret visual and auditory cues such as gestures and intonation.

**Intermediate Proficiency Level World Language Learners** express themselves using sentences and connected sentences. They can compare, contrast, and express preferences, opinions, and perspectives on events, experiences, and other familiar subjects. They can give and follow multi-step instructions and ask for clarification as needed. The intermediate learner can exchange information about personally meaningful events and experiences and can propose solutions to common real life problems.

**Advanced Proficiency Level World Language Learners** can discuss or narrate in connected discourse. They can exchange, support, and discuss opinions and individual perspectives on a wide variety of topics. They can analyze or give personal reactions to informational and literary texts. The advanced learner can develop and propose solutions to issues and concrete problems that are common while respecting cultural norms of the target culture.

## **Interpretive Reading, Listening or Viewing:**

Below you will find examples of how learners of each proficiency level support the Language Arts Common Core State Standards.

**Novice Proficiency Level World Language Learners** meet the Common Core State Standards for Reading and Listening as follows. The novice level learner can identify main ideas in developmentally

# Louisiana Believes

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appropriate oral/visual narratives based on familiar themes and highly predictable contexts with visual and graphic support. They can interpret informational texts with text features that support meaning, such as graphs and charts. Novice Learners can identify people and objects in their environment or from other school subjects, based on oral and written descriptions. They can recognize that cognates and previously learned structures enhance comprehension of spoken and written language. They can also identify and appreciate differences in cultural perspectives within a defined a range of topics. The novice learner can use content knowledge in other disciplines to comprehend spoken and written messages in authentic texts on familiar topics and can understand the basic message in various forms of media.

**Intermediate Proficiency Level World Language Learners** can identify the main ideas and significant details on familiar topics from authentic multimedia and print sources, both narrative and informational. They can determine meaning by using vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, and some contextual clues. The intermediate learner can interpret messages in increasingly complex texts and can understand the relationship among languages based on their awareness of cognates, idioms, and parallel structures. They can identify and appreciate differences in cultural perspectives in a broader range of topics and begin to appreciate such differences. The intermediate language learner can begin to integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information in order to collaborate or problem solve.

**Advanced Proficiency Level World Language Learners** can analyze main ideas and significant details of discussion, lectures, and presentations on current and past events from the target culture. They can interpret the main elements of technical, informational, and literary texts on topics of current and historical importance. They can interpret the cultural nuances of meaning in authentic written and spoken texts. The advanced learner can identify and appreciate cultural differences in a broad range of topic areas, well beyond what has formally been presented in curriculum.

## **Presentational Writing or Speaking:**

Below you will find examples of how learners of each proficiency level support the Language Arts Common Core State Standards

**Novice Proficiency Level World Language Learners** begin to write with words and memorize phrases and move toward simple sentences on very familiar topics. They can write or present orally short notes, messages, and stories about themselves, people and things in their surroundings. Their language contains a limited range of vocabulary on previously studied topics. They can develop a simple presentation on familiar topics keeping audience, context, and purpose in mind.



**Intermediate Proficiency Level World Language Learners** create explanations, comparisons, descriptive texts, and summaries using a series of sentences on familiar and some unfamiliar texts. They can state an opinion and produce stories on topics related to personal interest or study. Intermediate learners develop creative products by using a wide variety of multi-media tools both print and digital. They use an expanding number of phrases, idiomatic expressions and culturally appropriate vocabulary. They can develop a presentation on an academic or cultural topic keeping audience, context, and purpose in mind.

**Advanced Proficiency Level World Language Learners** produce detailed texts on a broad variety of concrete social and professional topics. They can present lengthy narratives across time frames and reference a variety of sources and genres. They can summarize texts intended for native speakers to support analysis, reflection and research. They write demonstrating control of an extensive vocabulary and use complete syntax and paragraph structure. They can develop an extended presentation on an academic, cultural, or professional topic keeping audience, context, and purpose in mind.

*Alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards, ACTFL, 3 April 2012*

[http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Aligning\\_CCSS\\_Language\\_Standards\\_v6.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Aligning_CCSS_Language_Standards_v6.pdf)

## **Strands, Standards, Objectives, and Sample Learning Targets**

Since language programs vary, based on the type of learning environment and the unique aspects of the languages themselves, they are as diverse as the learners who study them. The Louisiana World Language Content Standards are grounded in the national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and are informed by the international *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, and the performance and proficiency guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). The Louisiana World Language Content Standards' organization by proficiency levels (as opposed to grade levels) permits students to enter into the language learning process at any time during their school career. This change mirrors national and international developments.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency scale describes 11 tiers of language learning.

1. Novice Low (NL)
2. Novice Mid (NM)
3. Novice High (NH)

# Louisiana Believes

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4. Intermediate Low (IL)
5. Intermediate Mid (IM)
6. Intermediate High (IH)
7. Advanced Low (AL)
8. Advanced Mid (AM)
9. Advanced High (AH)
10. Superior (S)
11. Distinguished (D)

The Louisiana World Language Content Standards proficiency levels vary from Novice Low to Advanced High. Just like the ACTFL scale, each proficiency level serves as an indicator that describes what learners can do with a language in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learners' skills progress at different paces, due to in-school factors like continuity and quality of instruction, class size (optimum > 20), classroom opportunities for communication; and other factors such as learner motivation, informal exposure to the language through experiences in target culture communities or travel abroad, and accessing online resources for individual practice.

**The Louisiana World Language Content Standards** include three (3) strands, three (3) standards, and corresponding objectives. The strands are the focus areas, and the standards are the general goals for language learning. The objectives provide details about what learners are expected to do at each proficiency level. Sample learning targets associated with each objective (found in the supplemental guide) offer sample activities to provide evidence that a learner can fulfill the stated objectives. Other learning targets that link to instructional themes and topics can and should be developed locally.

## **World Language Strands:**

The following is a brief description of the three strands:

### **Connections to Language and Literacy (CLL)**

The goal of this strand is to help learners develop a greater understanding into the nature of language, including their native language (first language) as well as any additional languages studied. These comparisons among languages, along with the three communication modes, blend together to focus learners on language and literacy.

### **Connections to Other Disciplines (COD)**

This strand's goal is to generate student awareness that learning another language opens additional doors to knowledge in and of other academic disciplines. This knowledge may or may not be directly

available in English. Mathematics, social studies, science, arts, physical education, career and technical skills all take on a different meaning when studied through the prism of different linguistic or cultural lenses.

## **Intercultural Competencies (ICC)**

The Intercultural Competencies strand focuses on the ability of students to use information they have accessed from other cultures and communities to communicate and understand diverse viewpoints, ways of life, and patterns of behavior. An essential part of this strand concerns student understanding of cultural nuances associated with practices (patterns of social interactions), perspectives (beliefs, attitudes, values), and products (creations including books, art, laws, foods, etc). Intercultural understanding will enable learners to interact appropriately with people from the target culture.

## **World Language Content Standards:**

The following is a brief summary of the three standards:

### **Interpersonal Communication: (Person to Person Communication)**

Person to person communication is used in informal, one-on-one or small group conversations. Learners interact with others, request and exchange information, and ask for clarification when needed. They express emotions, viewpoints, and negotiate with one another during conversations. Most interpersonal interaction involves everyday dialog, including greetings, instructions, directions, current events, class discussions, news about family and friends, social events, and academic discourse.

### **Interpretive Communication: (Listening and Reading for Understanding)**

Interpretive skills concern the reception of information in situations where there is no opportunity for negotiation or clarification. Learners hear or see messages and respond based on their own interpretation. These messages refer to any topic and come from a variety of sources to include but not limited to radio announcements, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, live or recorded programs, authentic materials, and presentations. Learners make connections through listening to and reading about everyday topics, current events, academic subjects, news about family and friends, social events, personal viewpoints, and social media. Background knowledge acquired through listening and reading for understanding is later used to enrich interpersonal and presentational communication.

### **Presentational Communication: (Spoken and Written Production)**

Presentational skills involve preparing information for oral or written sharing with an audience. Presentations may be formal or informal. Learners prepare, revise, and may practice for presentations

via classroom productions, school newspaper articles, broadcast productions, website announcements, or other demonstrations.

## **World Language Learning:**

### **American Sign Language**

American Sign Language (ASL) is the natural language of the Deaf community in the United States and Canada. ASL is a visual, gestural language with its own grammar and syntax and has its roots in French Sign Language, not English. The goal of an American Sign Language class is to provide language learners with the skills needed to communicate comfortably in a wide variety of situations in the Deaf community. Learning to communicate requires learning about the culture, making connections with other disciplines, drawing comparisons within and outside the language, and using language in communities.

The general standards for world languages and the descriptions of what learners can do are applicable to learners of American Sign Language with slight adaptations according to each mode of communication. The interpersonal mode includes grammatical features such as facial expressions, body movements, classifiers, and spatial awareness. The interpretive mode refers to how different signed messages, stories, or videos are understood. The presentational mode allows the language learner to demonstrate understanding in the form of live or recorded signed messages.

**Immersion Language Learning** refers to an environment in which students spend between 60% and 100% of the day in the target language, French, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish learning academic content. The target language acts as the vehicle for instruction in math, science, social studies, and other subjects. Immersion language settings aim for students to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Students enter an immersion language track in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten and continue their education in that track through at least grade 8. Two-way immersion (TWI) refers to language settings in which balanced numbers of native English speakers and native speakers of a partner language (often Spanish) are integrated for instruction. Both groups of students serve in the role of language model and language learner at different times. It is recommended that students spend about 90% of their pre-K, Kindergarten, or first grade in the partner language, gradually transitioning to an environment of 50% English for both groups.

**Modern Language Learning** refers to the traditional study of languages such as American Sign Language (ASL), French, German, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, and Spanish. These language courses are frequently identified as world language or second language programs. Additional modern languages could be added to this list at any time and they would use the same set of standards and

objectives. High school modern language programs typically meet about 133-150 hours per school year. FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) modern language programs meet at least 90 minutes per week during the school year in order for students to gain proficiency in the language. Programs that offer fewer than 90 minutes per week of language instruction do not lead to significant increases in proficiency.

## **Classical Languages**

Classical Languages standards for languages such as Latin and Greek are not included in this document because specific Louisiana Classical Language Standards were adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2005.

## **Measuring Proficiency in Linguistic and Cultural Competencies**

Measurement of proficiency focuses on the examination of language learning progression over time. Individual competencies in communication skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) can be matched to the descriptions provided on the next five pages of this document. Proficiency level achievement is directly related to the amount of time and the intensity of hours spent learning a language as well as the quality of standards-grounded, proficiency-based instruction provided. In addition, informal learning experiences outside of a structured setting influence the rate at which a learner advances through the stages of language learning. Exit outcomes for logographic languages (such as Mandarin Chinese and Japanese where a character writing system is used) vary from alphabetic languages (where each letter corresponds to a particular sound) in that progress through proficiency levels will move more slowly for native English speakers, especially for reading and writing.

As students progress through sequences of language instruction, their exposure to the language increases, dependent upon the type of learning model, class size, and class schedule provided. Elementary school settings as well as immersion environments offer learners the opportunity to begin language study as early as kindergarten. Other programs begin while students are in middle school and are designed to help students acquire the skills necessary to articulate fully to a high school program. High school level language courses promote college and career readiness by developing language and intercultural proficiency for students entering an increasingly competitive global market. Immersion environments offer high levels of language intensity over long periods of time, leading to native-like skills in some competency areas.

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The following charts indicate the exit proficiency expectations for various types of language programs offered in Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> The expectations are based on an approximate proficiency level reached by at least 66% of students in each level or grade span.

## Visual Languages such as ASL Language Exit Proficiency Expectations

Level and Total Hours	I or 133-150 hours	II or 266-300 hours	III or 399-450 hours	IV or 532- 600 hours	V or 667- 750 hours
MODE & SKILL					
INTERPERSONAL Interactive	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low		Intermediate Mid
INTERPRETIVE Receptive	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid		Intermediate High
INTERPRETIVE Receptive fingerspelling	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low		Intermediate Mid
PRESENTATIONAL Expressive	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low		Intermediate Mid
PRESENTATIONAL Glossing	Novice Low	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid

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## Modern Language High School Exit Proficiency Expectations for Alphabetic Languages: such as French, German, and Spanish

Level and Total Hours	I or 133-150 hours	II or 266- 300 hours	III or 399- 450 hours	IV or 532- 600 hours	V or 667- 750 hours	VI or 800 – 900 hours
MODE & SKILL						
INTERPERSONAL Person –to-Person	Novice Mid	Novice High	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High
INTERPRETIVE Listening	Novice High	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High	Advanced Low
INTERPRETIVE Reading	Novice Mid	Novice Mid	Novice High	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid
PRESENTATIONAL Speaking	Novice Mid	Novice High	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid
PRESENTATIONAL Writing	Novice Mid	Novice High	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid

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## Immersion Programs Exit Proficiency Expectations

Grade Span and Exit Level for Assessment	K	1-2 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	3-5 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	6-8 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	9-12 12 <sup>th</sup> grade
MODE & SKILL					
INTERPERSONAL Person –to-Person	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High Advanced Mid
INTERPRETIVE Listening	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate High	Advanced Low	Advanced Low-High
INTERPRETIVE Reading	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High	Intermediate High Advanced Low
PRESENTATIONAL Speaking	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High Advanced Mid
PRESENTATIONAL Writing	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High Advanced Low



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## Modern Language Programs 90 minutes/week or more (K-5) and 50 minutes daily (grades 6-8)

Proficiency Assessment	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	End of 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	End of 8 <sup>th</sup> grade
MODE & SKILL			
INTERPERSONAL Person –to-Person	Novice Low- Mid	Novice Mid-High	Intermediate Low
INTERPRETIVE Listening	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low
INTERPRETIVE Reading	Novice Low-Mid	Novice Mid-High	Novice High
PRESENTATIONAL Speaking	Novice Low-Mid	Novice Mid-High	Intermediate Low
PRESENTATIONAL Writing	Novice Low-Mid	Novice Mid-High	Novice High

<sup>1</sup> To compare the ACTFL descriptors with the *Common European Framework of Reference*, use the results of the 2008 study carried out by University of Granada researcher, Alfonso Martinez Baztán. In his work, Baztán determined the following ordering of ACTFL and CEFR levels:

NL\_\_ NM\_\_ A1\_\_ NH\_\_ A2/IL\_\_ IM\_\_ B1\_\_ IH\_\_ B2\_\_ AL\_\_ AM\_\_ C1\_\_ AH\_\_ C2\_\_ S\_\_

Note that higher levels are placed further to the right. Corresponding abbreviations are below.

### ACTFL Proficiency Scale (abbreviations)

NL     Novice Low  
 NM     Novice Mid  
 NH     Novice High  
 IL     Intermediate Low

# Louisiana Believes

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IM	Intermediate Mid
IH	Intermediate High
AL	Advanced Low
AM	Advanced Mid
AH	Advanced High

## **Common European Framework of Reference (abbreviations)**

A1	Breakthrough or Beginner
A2	Waystage or Elementary
B1	Threshold or Intermediate
B2	Vantage or Upper Intermediate
C1	Effective Operational Proficiency or Advanced
C2	Mastery or Proficiency

# Louisiana Believes

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## Glossary of Terms and Descriptions

**Authentic text:** Oral and written communication produced by native language users and directed to an audience of native language users in the target culture, such as a newspaper article. This contrasts with a text that is created for learners in the target language solely for instructional or assessment purposes, such as a textbook reading passage.

**Abstract language:** Expression that signifies a concept, quality, or idea rather than material or physical reality. (Opposite of concrete language)

**Circumlocution:** The use of language that one does know in order to explain a specific word that one does not know.

**Cognates:** Words between languages that have a common origin and are therefore readily understood. For example, the French word “leçon” and the English word “lesson.”

**Connected discourse:** Coherent, sequential speech or writing.

**Connected sentences:** A series or string of sentences or text that is topically related. Unlike paragraphs sentences are interchangeable; altering the order of the sentences does not affect the meaning of the message.

**Concrete language:** Language that is used to refer to particular persons, places and objects.

**Contextual clues:** Hints within the communication or its context that facilitate the comprehension of unfamiliar words.

**Cultural competence:** Refers to the appropriateness of a response or reaction within a particular social context.

**Cultural framework:** A term used to describe traditions, value systems, myths, and symbols that are common in a given society.

**Cultural references:** Allusions to shared ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge of a particular culture/society.

**Description:** The verbal representation of a person, place, thing, event, or process.

**Discourse:** Unit of structured speech or writing.

# Louisiana Believes

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**Fluency:** The flow in spoken or written language as perceived by the listener or reader. Flow is made possible by clarity of expression, the acceptable ordering of ideas, use of vocabulary and syntax appropriate to the context.

**Formal correspondence:** such as business letter, professional report, etc.

**Formal settings:** such as academic conferences, the professional workplace.

**Formal/informal writing:** Features of writing (format, punctuation, choice of vocabulary) that reflect different audiences and purposes for communication.

**Functional language ability:** A language user's ability to accomplish real world communicative tasks such as handling a simple social transaction or resolving a situation with a complication.

**Generic vocabulary:** Words and expressions that serve equally well in a variety of categories and contexts. Such vocabulary is readily intelligible to most people, but does not normally deepen meaning. See also specialized vocabulary.

**Genre:** Any category of art, music, film, literature, etc., based on a set of stylistic criteria.

**Grammatical:** Correct linguistic form or structure.

**Hypothetical discourse:** Language used to speculate or express conjecture.

**Idiom:** A common figurative expression separate from the literal meaning of the component words.

**Informal settings:** Such as in the home, with friends, with family, casual everyday situations.

**Intercultural competence:** Understanding the cultural nuances associated with practices (what people do, their patterns of social interactions), perspectives (the way people perceive things, their beliefs, attitudes, values), and products (what people create, their books, tools, laws, foods etc).

**Interpersonal Communication:** Interaction with others in informal, one-on-one or small group conversations with opportunities for negotiation, such as face-to-face conversations, online discussions, instant messaging or text messaging, exchanging personal letters or emails.

**Interpretive Communication:** Reading, listening or viewing authentic cultural context when the author or speaker is not available for communication. Cultural interpretations can include print, video, and online texts, movies, live or digital broadcasts and speeches.

# Louisiana Believes

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**Intonation:** The rise and fall in pitch of the voice in speech.

**Level-appropriate:** When content, process, skill, or materials described requires students to function at the level they have attained. The same instructional materials, such as culturally authentic text or digital or live media clip or broadcast may be used at various levels of instruction simply by making the linguistic task appropriate for the level of language proficiency of the learner.

**Meme:** An idea, behavior, style, or usage that has spread (or spreads) from person to person within a culture

**Mode of Communication:** Language modes such as Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational place the main emphasis on the purpose of communication and the context in which it happens, rather than on any one skill in isolation.

**Narrative:** The relating of a story or account of events, experiences, etc., whether true or fictitious, told in a logical and chronological order.

**Nuance:** A subtle or slight degree of difference, as in meaning, feeling, or tone; a gradation.

**Oral discourse:** Spoken communication.

**Paragraph:** A self-contained, cohesive unit of spoken or written discourse that generally consists of multiple sentences linked by internal organization and connectors.

**Paraphrase:** An alternative way of communicating a similar message.

**Performance:** The ability to use language that has been learned and practiced in an instructional setting. Performance refers to language ability that has been practiced and is within familiar contexts and content areas.

**Persuasive discourse:** Language that attempts to convince the reader or listener to adopt an idea, attitude, or action.

**Presentational Communication:** Spoken and/or written presentations about information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers with whom there is no immediate interaction, such as a presentation to a group, posting an online video or webpage, creating a podcast and writing an article.

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**Proficiency:** The ability to use language in real world situations in a spontaneous interaction and non-rehearsed context in a manner acceptable and appropriate to native-speakers of the language. Proficiency demonstrates what a language user is able to do regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired.

**Reflective writing:** Written material that is planned and organized through the entire writing process. This type of writing is generally necessary to produce texts at high proficiency levels.

**Register:** The level of formality or informality used in a specific context for a specific audience.

**Rephrasing:** To restate or rewrite in a new, clearer or different way.

**Scaffolding:** Providing contextual support for meaning by using simplified language, teacher modeling, visuals and graphics, and other strategies to facilitate understanding.

**Specialized vocabulary:** Words, expressions, technical terms, etc., that are meaningful to members of a specific group or field of study or endeavor.

**Spontaneous writing:** Writing that is produced when preparation and production need to occur at the same time. It does not allow sufficient opportunity for revision, rewriting, or editing.

**Target culture:** The culture of the people who speak the target language including their history, literature, and arts.

**Target language:** The language being learned

**Time frames:** General periods of time, past, present, or future, however, these may be indicated in a particular language.

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Should users reference this document in reports or publications, please use the following citation:

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