

To develop proficiency in another language, the Louisiana Department of Education supports the use of essential questions to spark relevant conversation and develop biliteracy.

An essential question...

- is open-ended, intellectually engaging, and sparks further communication such as analysis, inference, evaluation, or prediction.
- points toward important, transferable ideas within and across disciplines.
- requires support and justification to develop a deeper understanding of interculturality.
- Recurs over time, i.e., the question can, and should be revisited again and again.

Essential questions meet all or most of the above criteria. When teachers use essential questions to guide student learning, students are more engaged, and are allowed to *uncover* new and richer aspects of a topic rather than simply *cover* it, thus the material becomes relevant and meaningful to students. When using essential questions to guide student learning, teachers choose relevant vocabulary, grammatical structures, and authentic materials, aligned with the [Louisiana World Language Learning Standards](#), to facilitate student learning.

Teachers should choose from the examples provided, or create essential questions based on student interests, being careful to address each of the following themes: Personal and Public Identities, Contemporary Life, Family and Communities, Global Challenges, Beauty and Aesthetics, and Science and Technology.

Guidance adapted from:

Essential Questions: Opening Doors to Student Understanding, by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins, Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (April 9, 2013).

The Keys to Planning for Learning: Effective Curriculum, Unit, and Lesson Design, by Donna Clementi and Laura Terrill, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2017).

Theme	Sample Essential Questions		
Personal and Public Identities	How do I become independent?	How is one’s identity created over time?	What does it mean to be honest?
	What does it mean to “better one’s self?”	How do I acquire the skills I will need in the future?	What does it mean to have integrity?
Contemporary Life	How do world events shape people’s opinions?	How does daily life differ around the world?	How does the media shape people’s opinions?
	How do food choices affect one’s health?	What roles do charitable organizations have in modern life?	How has modern travel changed the world?
Family and Communities	Why are love and friendship important?	How do communities reflect the society they are a part of?	How has the idea of “family” evolved?
	What do communities need to grow and prosper?	What does it mean to be a global citizen?	How are strong family relationships built?
Global Challenges	What energy sources power the world?	What causes conflict?	What effect does overpopulation have on the world?
	What does the phrase “freedom isn’t free” mean?	What are the causes of war?	What effects do famine and water shortages have on the world?
Beauty and Aesthetics	How do art and music reflect society and history?	What defines something as a “national treasure?”	What makes something “a classic?”
	What sparks creativity and innovation?	How is a society reflected in its architecture?	In what way is literature the voice of a society?
Science and Technology	What impact does climate change on the planet and its inhabitants?	How important is access to technology?	What is the purpose and importance of biodiversity?
	How does science impact daily life?	How has exploration changed the world?	How is a society advance through technology?