

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).

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Essential Questions</b>		
<b>Personal and Public Identities</b>	What makes someone a hero?	How do my actions define who I am?	What is my identity?
	How do I connect with others around me?	What are the important dates on my lifeline?	How is a culture defined by its cuisine?
<b>Contemporary Life</b>	How does modern life affect circadian rhythms?	How do cultures celebrate milestones?	How can I explore another place or culture?
	What does it mean to be healthy in my culture? (How does this differ in other cultures? How is it the same?)	How does my culture affect my values?	What effect do stereotypes have on society?
<b>Family and Communities</b>	What does “being responsible” mean?	How does life differ in urban and rural settings?	How does the idea of “family” differ across cultures?
	What makes my home special?	What does it mean to belong?	How do our communities shape us?
<b>Global Challenges</b>	What causes an interrupted education?	What makes something a necessity?	What is a food desert and what causes it?
	Why can't all children have access to education?	How are clean water and quality of life connected?	What does equality mean?
<b>Beauty and Aesthetics</b>	Why do people collect things?	What makes some people “stand out in a crowd?” (can this be good, bad, or both?)	How is film an art form?
	What can stories, legends, and fables teach us?	What is the difference between music and noise?	Are all forms of art beautiful?
<b>Science and Technology</b>	What role does conservation have in modern society?	What role does technology play in modern life?	Why do humans explore?
	How has technology changed the way people spend their time?	How is recycling a part of one's culture?	Why do people invent?