



JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL
LANGUAGE POLICY 2023-2024

JISK Language Philosophy

JISK is a multilingual school where the English language is used as the language of instruction. As a multilingual school, multilingualism and the development of critical literacy are considered important factors in fostering international-mindedness through the promotion of cultural identity, intercultural awareness and global citizenship.

JISK believes that no matter where we come from and no matter who we are, language is the most vital tool for making meaning in the world. Further, JISK reckons the fact that every student is unique and has an individual and a cultural set of experiences, skills and interests, which should be regarded in the process of teaching and learning.

At JISK, all teachers teach language as language cuts across the different curriculum areas. Through the IB language programs, JISK aims to help students become critical and competent communicators as they gain proficiency in another language while maintaining their cultural heritage and mother tongue.

In terms of facilitating language, we at JISK collaborate in making inquiry into the fundamentals of understanding to help students determine the purpose of learning which is always taught meaningfully and in context. Now, these contexts may differ, but would often involve the use of native speakers, real-life scenarios, the local area and a wide range of text types. Also, through inquiry, we allow students to make connections with context, to explore and investigate since the learning of any language is developmental by nature, building constructively on what each individual student knows to help move them forward. As a multicultural and multilingual school in Kinshasa, DRC, we are obligated to providing students with access to learning French language and using the community for language and cultural experiences throughout the curriculum. Recently, JISK celebrated grandparents' day and many grandparents were in attendance using different languages artistically to entertain, to educate, to enlighten, to motivate and to inform the students on the pathway to lifelong learning, international mindedness and success.

Another area which is of great importance to the school is the belief that each student should maintain and develop the mother tongue as the acquisition of many languages allows students to reflect upon and explore different cultural perspectives.

JISK language philosophy is aligned with its mission statement - lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. It recognizes that language is a major means of the thought and communication process. Hence, language is fundamental to teaching and learning as it permeates through the entire curriculum. It is not only about 'learning the language', but more about learning through language and learning about language. We believe that language should be nurtured and that students should develop an appreciation for the richness of language and a love for reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Purpose of Language Policy at JISK

JISK language policy is a working document developed by staff and administration. The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB. This document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the program designed to help our students attain these goals.

This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at JISK which permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment. Our policy is a statement of agreement—one to which the

JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL staff and the JISK community are asked to commit to so our school can actualize its mission.

Language Profile

Language at JISK

At JISK, the language of instruction is English. However, so many of our students do not speak English as their mother tongue. Some students speak French, Lingala, Spanish, Tshiluba, Swahili, Kikongo, Hindi, Arabic or so many other languages. By estimation, our students speak over 350 languages as they are from different ethnicities, countries or continents.

How Language Works in the Middle Years Program

The language skills developed over the years collaboratively in the primary years program ensures a smooth transition to the middle year's program. As a result, students are equipped with lifelong learning skills. Concurrently, students who can read, write, listen, view and represent with intelligence, empathy and respect will develop the five ATL skills which will enable them function as global citizens.

The JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL Language and Literature Program encourages students to explore language, develop and use language skills in a variety of context and purposes and provide an opportunity for enjoyment, creativity, and intellectual stimulation through the knowledge of language and literature. In addition, the language and literature program enables students to learn and use language effectively, appropriately, accurately, and confidently. Also, it encourages students to explore language as a means to understand the differing perspectives of people globally and develop students' awareness of the role of language in other areas of the curriculum.

Lastly, at JISK, writing as a language tool is compulsory at all levels. As a matter of fact, students are encouraged to master this skill bearing in mind that it enables students to organize and carefully create a picture of their ideas through the stimulation of clarity and precision required for communication to be effective.

Language and Literature

In this group, students are made to explore a wide range of non- literary and literary texts, style of writing and techniques, giving them the opportunity to comment on the significance of any context, purpose or situation. Presently, JISK offers the following language courses- English Language and Literature and French Language.

Assessment in Language and literature

This is carried out through the reading and writing of more complex text, through the observation of written and oral works, through self-assessment of project presentation and classroom participation. Here, the assessment objectives are based on an outcome of proficient communication, regardless of a student's starting point or background in the English language or French Language.

Language Acquisition

At JISK, Language Acquisition or Language B is French. The goal is to support students as they become proficient in a second language and can achieve bilingual or multilingual proficiency. To meet the IB requirement of a foreign language, we encourage students to learn a second language. This course will contain the IB pre-described aims and objectives which are: Objective A, B, C and D. These pre-described aims and objectives will be assessed a minimum of three times every academic year.

Placement/ Exit

Placement in the MIDDLE SCHOOL Language acquisition class is conducted by the language acquisition teachers through an oral interview for those entering phase 1, while those entering phase 2, 3 and upwards are given diagnostic tests which comprise reading, writing and listening.

As students transcend from PYP 5, they take a French placement test prior to entering MIDDLE SCHOOL 1. Through this test, the school examines the student's ability to write and comprehend the target language. This assessment will determine if the student can be placed in French for French-speakers classes. However, students in year 1 and year 2 are usually placed in French for French-speakers classes as per their Language Acquisition teachers' recommendation.

Phases

In JISK, Language Acquisition as a subject group is organized in six phases and these are beginners 1 and 2, intermediate 3 and 4 and advanced 5 and 6 level or phase. Every year, students are placed at a different level as each phase is a development continuum. However, placement is not age based and student might be asked to remain in the same phase if the progress is not consistent. Now, since our students are not grouped according to a specific MIDDLE SCHOOL year, there might be situations where students who in MIDDLE SCHOOL 3 or 2 are placed in phase 5 or 6 simply because of the student's ability to speak, understand, read and write in French Language.


Basically, our students are differentiated and managed according to their level and proficiencies as it is pertinent to consider a reasonable differentiation and manageable combination of proficiencies in one class. Our language acquisition students in need of curriculum enrichment are placed in French for the French-speakers courses. This is a course which exposes students to more advanced literature and language skills.

Lastly, our JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL Language Acquisition students who usually continue with the DP curriculum basically have a set of foundation as the classes are built on previous language experiences from the PYP to the MIDDLE SCHOOL and then to the DP.

JISK Language Policy Review

JISK Language Policy Committee is determined to review this policy once a year. Also, the implementation of the Language Policy in all JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL classrooms at JISK will be reviewed by the JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL leadership team which consists of the Principal, the JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL Coordinator, the Language and Literature facilitators, the language acquisition facilitators and all other subject facilitators.

Language Acquisition Instruction: The primary aim of the Language Acquisition course is to gain competence in a language other than one's native tongue, with the long term goal of balanced multilingualism. Knowledge, conceptual understandings, and skills will have been developed through JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL units of inquiry and student reflection. Each year, students will be placed in different phases (from 1-6), according to their ability. Each phase represents a development continuum, which is not age-based.

 : JISK MIDDLE SCHOOL Language Acquisition classes build on previous language learning experiences. Students continuing on to the DP program will have a foundation in at least one Language B that will enable them to continue onto the DP curriculum.

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