

An Informational
Guide to the MYP at
Westlake Academy



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Welcome

We hope you find this a useful guide to better understand the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IB MYP) here at Westlake Academy. We appreciate how difficult it is for parents and students to develop a good picture of the IB MYP.

The MYP was designed specifically for students in this critical age group who are transitioning into their teenage years. Most of them have a strong need to ask questions and understand how what they learn in school matters in the “real world.” Therefore, the MYP focuses on the relevance of each subject, how they connect to each other and how they apply to the world outside. WA students take English, Math, Science, Art, Humanities, Technology, Phys Ed and Spanish. The MYP difference is delivered through the program’s five Areas of Interaction and guided by three Fundamental Concepts that support and strengthen all areas of the curriculum.

The MYP programme ends with a Personal Project, which each student must complete over the tenth grade. Every student who successfully completes the five-year program will receive an MYP certificate at the end of tenth grade.

The IB MYP is a continuous program that is developmentally appropriate and that respects the quality and requirements of the Texas Education Agency.



An Informational Guide to the MYP at Westlake Academy

Teaching Approach at Westlake Academy

The teaching style at Westlake Academy follows the IB methodology in its approach and delivery. Students in the MYP learn through an inquiry-based method, with the teacher playing the role of facilitator. Students do not gather all of their knowledge from a book; they learn from each other, themselves and through experience. Students do have textbooks, but these are used primarily as resource materials. It is through an investigative approach that students play a proactive role in the attainment and, ultimately, retention, of knowledge and information.

To help understand the strategies used at Westlake Academy, I have included an essay written by the Head of Primary, Mr. Jaime Schmitz, on the inquiry-based methodology that is used in the PYP, and the school as a whole.

Inquiry based pedagogy-a comparison

Overview- To begin with, I need to give you my definitions of the three models. In my opinion, subject based models are often textbook led, with the teacher definitely the 'sage on stage,' in-charge of transmitting knowledge.

Theme based teaching is driven by activities, as opposed to outcomes and assessment opportunities that lead to development. It does attempt to link activities around a theme (often superficial, as opposed to significant and relevant), but the connections are frequently forced, and at times, even tenuous.

Inquiry is all about questions. Questions that are positioned around significant content, shaped to really engage and focus students' inquiry. Inquiry is moving away from an emphasis on 'coverage', and is more interested in the development of understanding, in other words 'uncoverage' (please don't try and look this up in a dictionary). Inquiry is about building-up conceptual understanding, and the development of skills that are useful across many disciplines. It still contains rigor with regard to scope and sequence (discipline standards), but it leans towards delivering 'enduring understandings', not just things that are 'interesting'. The teacher, who is more of a 'guide on the side', scaffolds the inquiry with his or her questions.

Focus- In my experience, subject based (knowledge) teaching is focused on the concrete and discrete, instead of the conceptual and abstract. It is often about gathering and memorizing specific facts, data and knowledge from textbooks, and giving the 'right' answer.

Thematic teaching has the students participating in a wide range of pre-planned activities across many disciplines. The activities are usually justified by criteria such as skill promotion and integration. The students are

encouraged to share what they know, their goals and what they have discovered, and they are involved in problem solving as they investigate topics and prepare presentations. All of the above undoubtedly engages the children, but they often fail to see meaningful links between the theme and the activities because it is the activities that drive the unit, not a bigger picture or a greater understanding.

Inquiry based learning focuses on the collection of resources, sharing observations and, of course, questions. It has students and teachers collaborating to design activities to support inquiry. The children are encouraged to really 'see through the eyes' of, for example, historians, geographers and scientists. They are given the time to tell stories, to browse, to wander and wonder, developing tools, as they go, to keep track of findings. Everything leads towards understanding a significant, engaging and relevant central idea (big idea), and the development of trans-disciplinary skills (thinking, research, communication, social and self management), which will be instrumental on their journey as 'life-long learners'.

When asked to research- Up until this point, I have been focusing more on summarizing the models with regards to philosophy and practice. I will now turn to the more practical and concrete side of the coin, and discuss what the students actually do. Researching, finding out, investigating, discovering and inquiring, these are all words that are commonly bandied about in the world of education. This is one area that I feel clear distinctions can be made between the three models.

Subject based models tend to have the students copying, albeit sometimes in their own words, from sources such as encyclopedias. This information is then recorded in exercise books, and then presented to the teacher or the class. While the information itself may be of high quality, I can't help but wonder how much understanding is really taking place.

Theme based models appear to take this further by having students exercise choice about how they present their findings. For example, they may choose posters, oral presentations, dioramas and the like.

Inquiry based models, I feel, really start to excel in this area, as they encourage and educate students to look for meaningful connections and coherence. They use a wide range of resources, and the inquiry is focused by guiding questions. Focuses on perspective, empathy and self-knowledge invariably bring greater insight, and they also ask the students to think about how they could explain, interpret and apply their findings.

Learning emphasis- A rather important section, I'm sure you'll agree. So, what are these models really all about? What are they really trying to do?

Subject based models are definitely focused on coverage of content. This, in turn, leads to superficial knowledge and sometimes an interest in the topic covered. In my opinion, this superficial knowledge is often mistaken for understanding. We must investigate further to truly measure understanding and, as I have already mentioned in part 1, ask students to explain, interpret, apply flexibly and illustrate insight with regards to perspective, empathy and self-knowledge. Quoting directly from IBO's own Making the PYP happen, 'coverage is the enemy of understanding'.

Theme based models also aim to cover content to large degree, but they also emphasize the gathering and sharing of information/facts in more interesting and creative ways.

Inquiry based models are all about the students making their own meaning through carefully designed activities and experiences. The assessment tasks are meaningfully linked to learning experiences, and 'learning through' disciplines, such as language and math, to communicate understandings and reflections is promoted, as well as 'learning' and 'learning about'.

Knowledge- Knowledge, undoubtedly one of the most talked about areas when dealing with teaching models. How does one define knowledge through the context of each model?

In subject based teaching, I feel that knowledge is actually the acquisition of objective facts. If this is the case, and I believe it to be so, then knowledge doesn't equal understanding.

Theme based teaching takes this one step further, by also focusing on the attainment of discipline (subject) specific skills.

Inquiry based teaching sees knowledge as something along the lines of ‘someone else’s answer to prior questions’. Inquiry though, focuses on understanding, which equates to the forming of new questions which continually leads to the creation of more compelling theories. Knowledge is most definitely respected, but it is viewed as something that is there to be challenged and expanded, it is organic and ever changing.

Assessment- So, what happens next? How will we know what we have learned?

Subject based models assess by focusing on recall and memorization. They test about facts, dates, events and the like. Students can appear to be very knowledgeable after one or more of these tests, but keep in mind the difference between superficial and deep understanding.

Theme based models definitely expand upon the aforementioned, by focusing on process and presentation skills. They are interested in completion and sharing of some form of ‘product’.

Inquiry models see assessment as something that is integral to all teaching and learning. They look at assessment as something that identifies what students know, understand and can do. Assessment is there to promote student learning, not merely as a means to record progress and development.

What is the International Baccalaureate Programme?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers high quality programmes of international education to a worldwide community of schools. The three programmes for students aged 3 to 19 help develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world. There are more than 566,000 IB students at 2,122 schools in 125 countries.

The Three International Baccalaureate Programmes

The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) has three programmes, the Primary Years Programme (PYP) for children aged 3–12, the Middle Years Programme, (MYP) for students aged 12–16, and the Diploma Programme (DP), an internationally recognized pre-university course for students between the ages of 16 and 19 years. Westlake Academy is authorized to offer all three IBO programmes.

What is the Middle Years Programme?

It is a programme of international education designed to help students, aged 11/12 to 16. develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world.

This period, encompassing early puberty and mid-adolescence, is a particularly critical phase of personal and intellectual development and requires a programme that helps students participate actively and responsibly in a changing and increasingly interrelated world. Learning how to learn and how to evaluate information critically is as important as learning facts.

Curriculum documents are published in English, French, Spanish and Chinese but schools may offer the programme in other languages. The MYP at Westlake Academy is offered in English.

The MYP within the IBO Continuum

The three IBO programmes share many educational principles. Each programme is intended to promote the education of the whole person, emphasizing the importance of a broad and balanced education. The three programmes aim to promote:

- i. international understanding
- ii. responsible citizenship
- iii. the importance of learning how to learn, of student-centred inquiry communication.

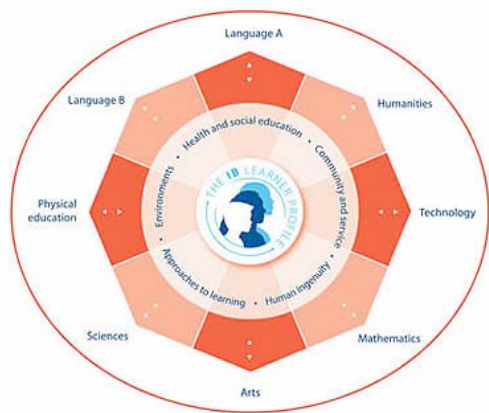
The MYP is a coherent and comprehensive curriculum, which provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills appropriate to this age group. As part of the IBO's continuum of programmes, the MYP naturally follows the PYP and can serve as excellent preparation for the Diploma Programme.

What does the curriculum contain?

The curriculum model of the MYP places the student and the way the student learns at its centre, as the child's development is the basis of the whole educational process.

The curriculum contains eight subject groups together with a core made up of five areas of interaction. This is illustrated by means of an octagon with the five areas of interaction at its centre. This areas provide a framework for learning within and across the subject groups. They allow connections among the subjects themselves, and between the subjects and real-life issues.

Middle Years Programme model:



Students study subjects from each of the eight subject groups through the five areas of interaction: approaches to learning, community and service, homo faber, environment, and health and social education. These subjects are studied in every grade from 7th to 10th. The Arts offered at Westlake Academy are Visual Arts and Drama.

Language A is English, and Language B is Spanish. Science is offered as an Integrated subject in Grades 7 & 8. In Grades 9 & 10, students will study three trimesters of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students are required to complete all courses. Students finding difficulties in certain subjects will be required to attend tutorials in those subjects. All course descriptions can be found online.

What are the five areas of interaction?

The five areas of interaction are:

Approaches to learning (ATL)

How do I learn best? How do I know? How do I communicate?

Through ATL teachers provide students with the tools to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning, thereby developing an awareness of how they learn best, of thought processes and of learning strategies.

Community and Service

How do we live in relation to others? How can I contribute to the community? How can I help others?

This component requires students to take an active part in the communities in which they live, thereby encouraging responsible citizenship.

Human Ingenuity

Why and how do we create? What are the consequences?

Students explore in multiple ways the processes and products of human creativity, thus learning to appreciate and develop in themselves the human capacity to influence, transform, enjoy and improve the quality of life.

Environments

Where do we live? What resources do we have or need? What are my responsibilities?

This area aims to develop students' awareness of their interdependence with the environment so that they understand and accept their responsibilities.

Health and social education

How do I think and act? How am I changing? How can I look after myself and others?

This area deals with physical, social and emotional health and intelligence - key aspects of development leading to complete and healthy lives.

These provide the main focus for developing the connections between the disciplines, so that students will learn to see knowledge as an interrelated, coherent whole.

More particularly, the five areas of interaction:

- i. are embedded in the subjects and developed naturally through them
- ii. provide both an organization and an extension of learning within and across the subjects, through the exploration of real-life issues
- iii. inspire special activities and interdisciplinary projects
- iv. form part of the framework for student inquiry and take investigative learning further than subject boundaries
- v. are a vehicle for refining conceptual understanding through different perspectives
- vi. guide reflection and lead from knowledge to thoughtful action.

Community and Service

How do we live in relation to others? How can I contribute to the community? How can I help others?

Community and service starts in the classroom and extends beyond it, requiring students to take an active part in the communities in which they live.

Giving importance to the sense of community throughout the programme encourages responsible citizenship as it seeks to deepen the adolescent's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The emphasis is on developing community awareness and concern, and the skills needed to make an effective contribution to society.

Students are encouraged to make connections between their intellectual and social growth thereby refining their affective, creative and ethical as well as cognitive development. This is achieved through a process of discovery of self and community, and reflections inside as well as outside the classroom.

Students at Westlake Academy are required to complete 30 hours of community service every year. The activities need to be confirmed with the Community & Service Leader. They are required to document their hours and provide reflections. An example of the documentation is included overleaf.

Westlake Academy MYP Community Service Record

Student name: _____

Name of activity or project: _____

Number of hours: _____

1. Summarize what you did in this activity /project and how you interacted with others.

2. Explain what you hoped to accomplish through this activity/project.

3. How successful were you in achieving your goals? What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

4. What did you learn about yourself and others through this activity/project? What abilities, attitudes and values have you developed?

5. Did anyone help you to think about your learning during this activity/project? If so, who helped and how did they help?

6. How did this activity / project benefit others?

7. What might you do differently next time to improve?

8. How can you apply what you have learned to other real-life situations?

MYP student signature _____ Date: _____

To be completed by the activity/project leader (supervising adult)

Punctuality and attendance: _____

Effort and commitment: _____

Comments:

The activity/project was (please circle)

Satisfactorily completed Not satisfactorily completed

Activity / project leader's name: _____

Activity / project leader's signature: _____ Date: _____

Please place this form in your MYP Portfolio when completed.

Please feel free to add more information / reflection by attaching a separate sheet of paper to this document.

Personal project

In the final year of the programme (Grade 10), each student completes a personal project, a significant piece of work that is the product of the student's own initiative and creativity.

Each project must reflect a personal understanding of the areas of interaction. Students apply the skills acquired through one of these areas as well as approaches to learning.

Students are expected to choose their project, which can take many forms, and take the process through to completion under the supervision of a teacher in the school. This involves:

- * planning
- * research
- * a high degree of personal reflection.

The personal project is assessed by teachers against a set of IB assessment criteria.

Students in Grade 8 will also attempt a "Mini Personal Project" in preparation for the 10th Grade Project.

The Guide for the Personal Project can be downloaded on the school's website.

How are students assessed?

Teachers organize continuous assessment over the course of the programme taking account of specified criteria that correspond to the objectives for each subject.

The MYP offers a criterion-referenced model of assessment. This means that students' results are determined by performance against set standards, not by each student's position in the overall rank order.

Teachers are responsible for structuring varied and valid assessment tasks that allow students to demonstrate achievement according to the required objectives within each subject group. These may include:

- * open-ended, problem-solving activities and investigations
- * organized debates
- * hands-on experimentation
- * analysis
- * reflection.

Assessment strategies, both quantitative and qualitative, provide feedback on the thinking processes as well as the finished piece of work. There is also an emphasis on self-assessment and peer-assessment within the programme.

Summative assessment is made every six weeks in the form of progress reports; and more detailed report cards every 12 weeks (an example of the report card can be viewed on page 12). Each subject has an individualized format, assessing the subject specific criteria. Although assessment is made using the subject specific grading criteria, students will receive an overall grade based on the IBO's 1 – 7 scale (which can be found on page 13). Student-led conferences are also scheduled twice a year, where students will reflect on their achievements throughout the year. This form of reflection can be seen through the student's self-evaluation report.

This grading scale is one that is used as a final assessment in Grade 10, when examples of students' work are sent to the IBO Assessment Offices in Cardiff, UK (this is something Westlake Academy will not be participating in this year). The 1 - 7 scale is also the same scale used in the IB Diploma Programme. Westlake Academy has chosen to use this system already in Grade 7, as a means of familiarizing the students with this system of grading.

Although the 1 - 7 scale is generic, teachers reach this grade through the use of subject specific rubrics. There are, as a general rule, one set of rubrics used for Grades 7 & 8, and one for Grades 9 & 10, for each subject. All subject and grade rubrics are posted online. New students will need to familiarize themselves with these. An example of the 9th and 10th Grade maths rubrics can be viewed on pages 14 – 17.

In addition to meeting the IBO's requirements, all MYP teachers ensure that the TEKS are addressed in their subjects, satisfying local standards and requirements. Our past TAKS scores have far surpassed State levels, as well as local school districts.

The successful completion of most MYP courses will be equal to a Texas High School Credit for each course. By the end of Grade 10, students will have accumulated at least 16 credits (depending upon when they enrolled into the school). They will be awarded 12 credits in the Diploma Programme, ensuring that all students will graduate from Westlake Academy with sufficient credits for a Texas High School Diploma (students will also need to pass the TAKS Exit exams).

If a student does not pass a course (receives a 1 or 2 on the Final Grade), s/he will be required to attend summer school and take an end of year exam before the start of the next school year. There will be two opportunities to pass the exam. If a student fails the exam both times, s/he will be required to register through Texas Tech for credit by exam (more details of this will be given by the counselor, if and when needed).

If a student attains a grade 2 or below in three or more subjects, he/she will not be promoted to the next grade level of the MYP.

Example of Humanities Report card

Subject:	Humanities					2007/2008
Name: MYP Level: Grade:						
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Final Exam	Final Grade	
Grade						
Criteria	Comments				Achievement	
A - 4 Knowledge & Understanding						
B - 4 Concepts						
C - 4 Skills						
D - 4 Presentation & Organization						
General Comments						

General Grade Descriptors

Grade 1 (Very Poor)	Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives.
Grade 2 (Poor)	Very limited achievement against all the objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills, and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support .
Grade 3 (Mediocre)	Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations with support .
Grade 4 (Satisfactory)	A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
Grade 5 (Good)	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.
Grade 6 (Very good)	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.
Grade 7 (Excellent)	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to demonstrate them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality .

IB Student Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB learners strive to be:

INQUIRERS:

Their natural curiosity has been nurtured. They have acquired the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

THINKERS:

They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and solve complex problems.

COMMUNICATORS:

They receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language, including the language of mathematical symbols.

RISK-TAKERS:

They approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence and independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are courageous and articulate in defending those things in which they believe.

KNOWLEDGEABLE:

They spend time in our schools exploring themes, which have global relevance and importance. In doing so, they acquire a critical mass of significant knowledge.

PRINCIPILED:

They have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning. They have integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice.

CARING:

They show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a sense of personal commitment to action and service.

OPEN-MINDED:

They respect the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures and are accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of view.

WELL-BALANCED:

They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being.

REFLECTIVE:

They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and analyze their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

Subject Groups

The MYP subject guides published by the IBO outline a framework of concepts and skills intended to provide adequate direction and advice to schools, and ensure commonality among MYP schools around the world. This framework allows us sufficient flexibility to organize our curriculum according to our own context. All MYP schools are, however, required to structure their curriculum to allow their students to achieve the aims and objectives of each subject group, expressed by the IBO in terms of final achievement at the end of the programme.

Language A- English- Nature of Subject

At WA Language A is English. In accordance with the MYP guidelines, the study of the language A provides the basic tools of communication by enabling efficient learning and practice of other subjects within the school. Students will examine different pieces and genres of literature that touch on the IB Areas of Interaction in a meaningful way.

Students develop an appreciation of the ways in which writers and speakers express themselves, and learn to construct and convey meaning in their own reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The aims of the teaching and study of Language A are to encourage and enable the student to:

- i. Use the language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning and self-expression
- ii. Use language as a tool for personal growth, social interaction and for developing relationships within the international community.
- iii. Comprehend more clearly aspects of their own culture and those of other cultures by exploring interdependence of human beings through a variety of works
- iv. Explore the many facets of language through the use of media and information technology
- v. Develop the skills involved in reading writing, speaking, listening and viewing in a variety of contexts
- vi. Respond appropriately to a variety of texts
- vii. Read widely to promote a lifelong interest in language and literature
- viii. Develop a critical and creative approach to studying and analyzing literature.
- ix. Develop language skills through interdisciplinary work
- x. Consider the role of literature both culturally and historically
- xi. Reflect on the learning process in various ways and at various stages
- xii. Empathize with real people and fictional characters as and when appropriate

Language B- Spanish- Nature of Subject

At WA Language B is Spanish. Language B is defined as a modern foreign language learned in school. Learning an additional language expands students' cognitive and analytical abilities. It fosters communication with other speakers of the language and appreciation of other cultures. It increases the possibilities of communication beyond a student's own language and culture; as a result it enhances students' self-knowledge and contributes to their knowledge of the world. This reflects the importance that the MYP places on intercultural awareness and on providing students with opportunities to discover that there are multiple ways of viewing the world.

The aims of the study of a modern foreign language are to:

- i. enable the student to use the language effectively as a means of practical communication.
- ii. offer insight into the life and civilization of the communities where the language is spoken, and into the local and standard aspects of language.
- iii. encourage integration with the local community, where relevant.
- iv. encourage positive attitudes towards speakers of other languages and an appreciation of, and empathy for, other cultures.
- v. provide a sound basis of communicative skills necessary for future study, work and leisure.
- vi. develop an appreciation of literature in the target language
- vii. develop understanding of the nature of language and the process of language learning.
- viii. complement other areas of study by providing access to more varied sources of information.
- ix. begin to develop an understanding of the cultural patterns that affect the thinking, feeling and acting of the societies in which the language is spoken.
- x. understand that total language learning comprises the integration of linguistic, cultural and social components.
- xi. develop curiosity, interest and enjoyment in the target language.

Mathematics- Nature of Subject

The IB MYP Mathematics programme at Westlake Academy sets out to give students an appreciation of the usefulness, power and beauty of mathematics. Mathematics is considered both as a means of modeling systems using a universal language and exploring that language for its own sake.

The aims for MYP mathematics are to enable students to:

- i. develop a positive attitude toward the continued learning of mathematics
- ii. appreciate the usefulness, power and beauty of mathematics, and recognize its relationship with other disciplines and with everyday life
- iii. appreciate the international dimensions of mathematics and its varied cultural and historical perspectives
- iv. gain knowledge and develop understanding of mathematical concepts
- v. develop mathematical skills and apply them
- vi. develop the ability to communicate mathematics with appropriate symbols and language
- vii. develop the ability to reflect upon and evaluate the significance of their work and the work of others
- viii. develop patience and persistence when solving problems
- ix. develop and apply information and communication technology skills in the study of mathematics.

Science- Nature of Subject

The aims, objectives and framework of the science course at Westlake Academy are designed to promote science as a cooperative venture between individuals and the international community. The program comprises the traditional subjects of biology, chemistry, and physics (these three areas will become more distinct in grades 9 and 10) as well as the basic topics, concepts and issues from other branches of science, such as earth and health science. The overall objective is to provide a foundation that will make students scientifically literate so they can make informed judgments and decisions about scientific issues and use the acquired scientific process skills for successful problem solving.

MYP sciences aim to provide a worthwhile educational experience for all students. MYP science should enable students to:

- i. develop skills that are relevant and useful to the study and practice of science in everyday situations.
- ii. acquire understanding and knowledge of the concepts, principles and applications of science.
- iii. become confident and responsible citizens in a rapidly changing world, able to take or develop an informed interest in matters of scientific import.
- iv. recognize the usefulness and limitations of a scientific approach and to appreciate its applicability to other disciplines and to everyday life.
- v. develop an awareness of the conditions, which threaten or enhance health.
- vi. develop a positive attitude to the need for the conservation of natural resources and the preservation of the environment.
- vii. develop curiosity, interest and enjoyment in science and its methods of enquiry.
- viii. develop an awareness of science as a cooperative activity between individuals.
- ix. develop an awareness of science as an increasingly international activity involving cooperation at all levels.
- x. develop an awareness of the historical evolution of scientific knowledge and understanding.
- xi. develop and apply their information technology skills in the study of science.

Humanities- Nature of Subject

History is a combination of an account of the past and a study of how and why these past events occurred and their consequences. Students deal with tasks involving the increasing analysis of different types of evidence and the investigation and interpretation of past events. No single aspect should exclude the others. It is hoped that students will enjoy history and realize the relevance of studying and valuing the past for its own sake.

The aims of MYP history are to enable students to:

- i. discover an interest in, and an enjoyment of the past.
- ii. develop a knowledge and understanding of the past.
- iii. develop an understanding of history and culture from a local to a global perspective.
- iv. appreciate the relationship between technology and historical change.
- v. develop the skills necessary for the effective study of history.
- vi. cultivate an enquiring mind.
- vii. develop critical thinking and historical imagination through working with, and understanding, the fragmentary evidence of the past.
- viii. develop the realization that there are many different interpretations of the past.
- ix. develop an awareness of the links between history and geography.

The Arts- Nature of Subject

Students explore a distinctive way of learning where seeing, feeling, hearing, thinking, and creating are combined in a powerful form of visual and tactile affective communication. The art program will establish links between subjects, cultures, and different areas of experience. MYP art allows students to develop the ability to express themselves and their ideas about the world they live in, working both independently and as cooperative members of a group. The program will provide a more sophisticated response to painting, drawing and 3 dimensional works as students explore new mediums, techniques, styles, and subject matters.

Participation in MYP arts should enable students to:

- i. experience and develop curiosity, interest and enjoyment in their own creativity and that of others.
- ii. explore through the processes of visual and performing arts.
- iii. acquire and develop skills needed for the creation of visual and performing artwork.
- iv. use the language, concepts and principles of visual and performing arts.
- v. communicate their thoughts and ideas through visual and performing arts.
- vi. create visual and performing artwork.
- vii. reflect on, appreciate and evaluate their work and the work of others.
- viii. develop receptiveness to visual and performing art forms across time, place and cultures, and perceive the significance of these art forms as an integral part of life.

Technology- Nature of Subject

This course is designed to create in the student the confidence to use computers as an empowering tool on a day-to-day basis. By learning to use website editing software, the student will be able to communicate and express him/herself in a variety of forms (pod casts, pictures, movies ...) in this everlasting and changing world. This is a practical hands-on course based on the design cycle.

The aims of this subject are to:

- i. develop in students an appreciation of the range and power of computer applications;
- ii. foster an interest in, enjoyment of, and confidence in the use of computing;
- iii. develop students' abilities to solve problems using computing techniques;
- iv. develop an awareness in students of the place of computing in society and issues computing raises in society;
- v. provide students with a firm understanding of the basic techniques and knowledge required for computing applications.

Physical Education and Health- Nature of Subject

The aims of the physical education course at Westlake Academy are designed to enable the student to: appreciate and understand the value of physical education and its relationship to a healthy, active lifestyle; develop social skills that demonstrate the importance of teamwork and cooperation in group activities; demonstrate a high level of interest and personal engagement showing initiative, enthusiasm, and commitment; demonstrate the ability to critically reflect upon physical activity in both a local and intercultural context.

The objectives of the physical education course at Westlake Academy are split into five subgroups known as: Knowledge and Understanding, Movement Composition, Performance and Application, Social Skills, Personal Engagement. In grade 9 students will investigate general fitness, nutrition and health; Handball, Gymnastics/ Dance, Frisbee/ Flag Football, Inline skating, aerobics, weight training.

The aims of physical education are to enable the student to:

- i. appreciate and understand the value of physical education and its relationship to a healthy, active lifestyle
- ii. work to their optimal level of physical fitness
- iii. become aware of movement as a creative medium connected to communication, expression and aesthetic appreciation
- iv. develop the motor skills necessary to participate successfully in a variety of physical activities
- v. experience enjoyment and satisfaction through physical activity
- vi. develop social skills that demonstrate the importance of teamwork and cooperation in group activities
- vii. demonstrate a high level of interest and personal engagement showing initiative, enthusiasm and commitment
- viii. show knowledge and understanding in a variety of physical activities and evaluate their own and others' performances
- ix. demonstrate the ability to critically reflect upon physical activity in both a local and intercultural context
- x. demonstrate the ability and enthusiasm to pass on to others in the community the knowledge, skills and techniques that have been learned.

Westlake Academy's Homework Policy

As well as the students' planner, homework assignments are posted on the school's website. Students are responsible for writing up their assignments, making sure they have all the instructions clearly written.

Homework is an important part of the MYP. It plays a role in a prelude to a subject and/or to conclude a topic. The assigned homework at Westlake Academy can be quite demanding on students. It is very important that students complete their assignments on time. Students who fail to submit their assignments will receive a zero and will be required to complete the assignment during their lunch recess. Students who forget their P.E. uniform will also be given a zero and it will count as a missed assignment. Parents will be contacted with every assignment missed.

Failure to submit one assignment will result in the parents being emailed by the subject teacher and the homeroom teacher. If a student fails to submit two assignments, parents will be contacted by the subject teacher, homeroom teacher and the MYP Coordinator. Failure to submit three assignments could result in a one-day suspension from school.

Sample lesson activities in the MYP

Sample 9th Grade English assignment

All Quiet on the Western Front

Examine the following passage

“We agree that it’s the same for everyone; not only for us here, but everywhere, for everyone who is of our age; to some more, and to others less. It is the common fate of our generation”(87).

Construct a well - written essay using information from the text to support your position, and explain how this excerpt illustrates one of the central themes of the novel. Identify what that theme is and examine how this passage represents the thinking of the author.

Guiding questions to help you: What was the “common fate” of the author’s generation? Why did the author feel this way? Is there material in the text that illustrates how the author would compare his generation to the one before his? What did he have to say about them and how has the war affected the younger generation?

Sample 10th Grade English assignment

Walden – written and oral presentation assignment

Throughout Walden, the author uses a number of literary devices to convey his thinking. Your assignment is to find and identify one of these elements as used in a passage in the book. There are two parts to this assignment as follows:

1. You will a short (1 to 2 pages) essay in which you will identify the passage, identify the literary device and write commentary on how it is used and why it is important to understanding the entire work.
2. Prepare a 3 to 5 minute presentation, in which you will relate your findings and explanation to the class –DO NOT READ FROM YOUR ESSAY.

A literary device may be the use of something like a metaphor or an analogy or it may involve diction to create specific imagery or to convey an important meaning. Whatever you find you must be sure that you can CONNECT IT TO THE MAIN THEME OF THE WORK.

Sample 10th Grade Mathematics assignment

Talking Trash

Guiding Question: Is there enough room in the United States for all of our trash? Can we predict how much trash there will be in landfills in the next 20 years, in the next 50 years, in the next 100 years?

Topic: Linear Models (slope, y-intercepts, graphing, finding a line of best fit, using a linear equation to find values, interpolation and extrapolation).

Objectives:

- 1.) To learn how to find a mathematical model from a set of data
- 2.) To use the data to find a line of best fit, to write a linear equation, and to use this equation to find values.
- 3.) To use the calculator to input and analyze data
- 4.) To discuss the reasonableness of answers generated from the models, and to reflect on the methods used
- 5.) To use extrapolation and interpolation to find predicted values

Sample 9th Grade Humanities Assignment

Change & Revolution

Guiding question: What are the causes of political revolutions?

Area of Interaction: Health & Social Education. Through the studying of various revolutions throughout time, students investigate the reasons revolutions occur. Those factors can vary from independence movements to social class movements to a military coup d'état.

Course Outline: The course asks students to explore changes throughout time. The fundamental and reoccurring guiding question will focus on why changes occur in various environments (social, political, economic, technological and environmental) and the impact they have on the world. Through the study of major turning points in world history, students will gain a greater understanding of the world in which they live in, and how it has evolved. Students will study a number of revolutions across time and across the world.

Content Questions:

1. What is a revolution?
2. What are the causes of revolution?
3. Are all revolutions political?
4. What makes a revolution "successful"?
5. What traits are needed for a successful revolution?
6. What were the causes of the revolutions studied?
7. Who were the leaders?
8. Why did those revolutions succeed / fail?
9. If failed, what lessons could be learned?
10. How did the revolution change the country? Were those changes positive or negative?
11. Were the promises given before / during the revolution fulfilled?
12. When are revolutions justified?

Sample 8th Grade Science Assignment

Outbreak!

Guiding question: How can a community protect itself from disease?

Task:

A mystery disease is sweeping through your town! Use the symptoms and lab results (blood work, x-rays, culture plates, etc.) given in the patient profiles, plus information found in your textbooks, internet, and library to:

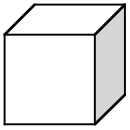
- 1) Determine the cause of the mystery disease
- 2) Explain how the disease has been transmitted
- 3) Develop a plan to protect your community from the spread of this disease. Your plan must include roles for: health care workers, local schools, and local businesses (such as restaurants).
- 4) Create a pamphlet describing how your body recognizes and fights infections. Be sure to include both acquired (specific) and innate (non-specific) immunity.

Sample 7th Grade Maths Assignment

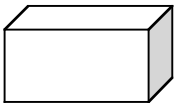
Hidden faces

Investigation

When some cubes are placed together on a surface it is impossible to see all the faces of the cubes, because the faces that lie on the table cannot be seen, nor can those that are connecting with the others. Example: with one cube how many faces can you see?



With two cubes two of the faces are on the floor and two are connected with each other. How many faces can you see?



Investigate the number of hidden faces of cubes placed in a single row. Also investigate the number of visible faces. Can you find a rule linking the number of cubes to the number of hidden faces? Explain how you are conducting your investigation. Include diagrams, tables, algebra, explanations, and reflection. Don't forget to take care with presentation and use your criteria to help you. This piece of work will be assessed using criteria B and C. You may extend your investigation by looking at cubes in a vertical column or cubes placed in some other arrangement.

Schedule

Classes are 1.5 hours in length.

Students have a 15 minutes recess between the 1st and 2nd class, and lunch is between 1pm and 1.40pm.

Westlake Academy's Mission Statement

The Westlake Academy will provide a rigorous curriculum that is international in scope with high expectations by sharing the responsibility of educational development among teachers, parents, community and students.

This will be achieved by providing an innovative approach to education that focuses on the needs of each student to develop a thirst for knowledge, produce positive esteem, encourage good citizenship and maximize individual potential. This will prepare students to be active participants and agents of change in a rapidly changing environment that is global in scope.

IBO's Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Contact Information

Contact	E-mail	Phone
<i>IBMYP Coordinator (Grades 7 through 10) Ms. Daniella Lira</i>	dlira@westlakeacademy.org	(817) 490-5757
<i>IBDP Coordinator (Grades 11- 12) Ms. Claudia Ourthe-Cabale</i>	courthecabale@westlakeacademy.org	(817) 490-5757
<i>MYP Community Service Mr. Mark Garcia</i>	mgarcia@westlakeacademy.org	(817) 490-5757
<i>Head of Secondary Mr. Robert Kai</i>	rkai@westlakeacademy.org	(817) 490-5757
<i>Head of School Mr. Mark Rosevear</i>	mrosevear@westlakeacademy.org	(817) 490-5757
<i>Westlake Academy Website</i>	www.westlakeacademy.org	(817) 490-5757
<i>International Baccalaureate Organization Website</i>	www.ibo.org	

Daniella Lira 2008- 2009



For further information contact Mrs. Daniella , IBMYP Coordinator
Phone: (817) 490-5757 E-mail: dlira@westlakeacademy.org