



Assessment

At Princeton Montessori School, assessment of student performance serves to support students in their learning and to inform instruction. Assessment is not the end of the learning process; it is an integral part of it.

Formative assessment, which takes place while learning is ongoing, may take a variety of forms, including, any combination of traditional tests, presentations, student reflection, peer and/or teacher feedback, observation, etc. As a result of formative assessment, students can identify areas in which they need work, and teachers can help students reach their potential by, for example, changing instruction. Students are challenged to continue working on skills and material until they have shown mastery. A student who has not met that expectation will work with a teacher to identify and practice skills and/or material that need more practice and will take another formative assessment. Students are assessed individually, not in comparison to their peers. Middle school students also learn test-taking and study skills.

Summative assessment is usually at the end of a unit, and is intended to assess what a student knows and can do with that knowledge. Summative assessments may take different forms, but are often “performance assessments” that ask a student to apply skills and knowledge to a new, authentic task.

In the Middle School Program, summative assessments seek to assess students on the IB MYP subject assessment criteria, as shown below. Each area (A, B, C, D) is assessed at least twice during each subject in each year of middle school, and teachers use this information to make a determination about achievement levels of each student for each criteria. These achievement levels are reported on the student’s progress reports and are discussed at the student-parent-teacher conferences.

To determine the final achievement level in each of the criteria for each student, whether at the end of a marking period or the end of a year, teachers gather sufficient evidence from a range of assessment tasks to enable them to make a professional and informed judgment. All units include summative tasks that are assessed according to one or more MYP objective criteria to ensure continuous assessment and feedback of students’ performance against the MYP objectives.

The judgments will reflect the teacher’s professional opinion on the achievement level of each student in each of the criteria at the end of the marking period or year. In gathering the evidence for the judgment to be made, teachers will analyze the achievement levels of students over the course of the marking period or year, which represents their summative performance for that period, paying particular attention to patterns in the data (such as an increasing level of performance), consistency and mitigating circumstances.

Summary of MYP assessment criteria across subject groups:

	A	B	C	D
Language and Literature	Analyzing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Language Acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
Individuals and Societies	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Sciences	Knowing and understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Mathematics	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-world contexts
Arts	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Physical and health education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Design	Inquiring and analyzing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
MYP Projects	Investigating	Planning	Taking action	Reflecting
Interdisciplinary	Disciplinary grounding	Synthesizing	Communicating	Reflecting

At the end of the year, students receive a final MYP grade in each subject group based on the grade boundaries shared below:

Grade	Boundary guidelines	Descriptor
1	1–5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6–9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	10–14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15–18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19–23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	24–27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28–32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

(Adapted from MYP: From Principles into Practice, 2015)

Written in 2017 with help of internal IB MYP team; will be reviewed annually and rewritten every 5 years or as needed.



Academic Honesty

The Learner Profile trait “principled” is at the heart of academic honesty. We strive to help students become principled learners, who value, seek, and recognize fairness, honesty, justice, and a respect for the rights of other people. To principled learners, academic honesty is paramount and is expected at all times.

Academic honesty means that when a student submits work, it is authentic. In an authentic piece of work, all of the ideas in the work are the student’s own, and any ideas taken from others are fully and properly acknowledged. In middle school, students will be taught about MLA and/or APA citations. (For examples of MLA citations, see bottom).

Teachers are happy to assist with any questions about what constitutes an authentic piece of work and how to acknowledge others’ work.

While there are laws protecting some forms of work, a principled learner acknowledges all others’ work, even if it is not protected by law. This includes ideas or work of a classmate, images that are marked as “free” on the internet, songs found on the internet, etcetera. **Intellectual Property** is the original work of creators and is often protected by law through trademarks, patents, and copyrights. The use of someone’s intellectual property *must* be accompanied by citation giving the author credit for the work.

It is expected that learners avoid these forms of academic misconduct:

Plagiarism = the representation, intentionally or not, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgment. Summarizing another’s ideas or words also requires acknowledgement.

Other examples of plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own (for example, having a parent, sibling, or friend do your work for you or using someone else’s paper from another year)
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

(What Is Plagiarism? (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2016, from <http://plagiarism.org/citing-sources/whats-a-citation>)

Collusion = supporting or joining in academic misconduct by another student, such as allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another, asking another student the answer to a question during a test, or submitting work as a group when only one person did the work.

Note: Students may *collaborate*, which is different than *colluding*. In collaboration, students work together to in approved circumstances to create work that students all contributed to. If a student did not do authentic work, a student’s name should not be on the final project.

Duplication of work = the presentation of the same work for different assessment components.

Interference = any other behavior that gives an unfair advantage to a student or that affects the results of another student (falsifying data, misconduct during an examination, creating spurious reflections).

(Adapted from MYP: From Principles into Practice, 2015, p. 94)

Consequences for violating the academic honesty policy:

1st infraction: Teacher and student speak about academic honesty policy and shares infraction with other teachers; student must re-do the work.

2nd infraction: As above, plus: parent is notified

3rd (or later) infraction: As above, plus: meeting with Head of School or Director of Education and determination about whether in-school suspension is appropriate.

Example of MLA citations:

In-text citations:

In the text of a paper or written work, others' property is referenced with in-text citations using the author's name and additional information, depending on the source of the work. For example:

Robert Boyle tried to convince people that matter is made of smaller particles (Challoner 15).

For more information on in-text citations, [click here](#).

Works Cited:

At the end of your work, a "works cited" page must be included on a new page. An example:

Works Cited

Challoner, Jack. *The Intriguing Story of the Elements*. Metro Books, 2012.

For more information on works cited, [click here](#).



Inclusion/Special educational needs policy:

The IB document “Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes” (2016), states:

“Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.

“Inclusion is an organizational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire.

“Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community.”

In the same document, the IB Principles of an Inclusive Education are explained:

“The IB supports the following principles of an inclusive education where:

- education for *all* is considered a human right
- education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student
- every educator is an educator of *all* students
- learning is considered from a strength-based perspective
- learning diversity is valued as a rich resource for building inclusive communities
- *all* learners belong and experience equal opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning
- full potential is unlocked through connecting with, and building on, previous knowledge
- assessment provides *all* learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning, which is rewarded and celebrated
- multilingualism is recognized as a fact, a right and a resource
- *all* students in the school community fully participate in an IB education and are empowered to exercise their rights and accept their responsibilities as citizens

- *all* students in the school community have a voice and are listened to so that their input and insights are taken into account
 - *all* students in the school community develop the IB learner profile attributes and develop into inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect
 - diversity is understood to include *all* members of a community
 - *all* students experience success as a key component of learning.”
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- The Montessori approach and philosophy subscribes to these principles and lends itself to meeting many different individual learning needs. We strive to meet each child’s needs (whether the child has learning differences, emotional needs, requires more challenge, etc), and when we cannot, we support the parents in looking for an alternative choice of school. All of our students are included in the same program and differentiation is crafted within that program.
 - We share observations early and often with parents so that if educational testing is needed, parents are encouraged to pursue that testing at as early a stage as possible. Teachers may request observations or testing to identify special educational needs and the school, with the consent of the parents, may facilitate these evaluations. If students are assessed outside of school for learning differences, parents are urged to share those findings with the teachers so that we may best accommodate the student and work to provide the best environment and teaching structure for the child.
 - We do our best to build into our program differentiation for gifted students, students with learning differences, and students with social/emotional challenges. If necessary, students may also get extra help outside of regular class time. Differentiation may take the form of differences in instruction, materials, or product. For example, gifted students may be challenged to move beyond the material that is being studied, to probe deeper or to find new connections between subjects, to explore material at a higher level, and/or to explore material that is connected to that which is being studied. Students who struggle with concepts or material may be instructed in different ways, may work with concrete materials, may be allowed extra time to complete assignments, and/or may be given more guidance to complete assignments.
 - We do our best to accommodate English language learners, as described in the Language Policy.
 - We do not have in-house learning support specialists at this time. The core teachers work as a team to implement any accommodations or additional instruction time needed and resource experts, as needed. The conference teacher is the first point of contact for any requests around child-specific modifications to the program.

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Language Policy:

The International Baccalaureate is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and is equally committed to extending access to an IB education for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds (“Language Policy,” 2014).

All teachers at Princeton Montessori School are language teachers, in that they model, facilitate, and direct language use, both in their specific disciplines and outside of them. Students develop communication skills through classroom activities and lessons, and through interaction with teachers, peers, and other adults. Students are seen as continuing to develop their language skills throughout the program.

Students at Princeton Montessori School learn Spanish. In the Middle School program, students participate in Spanish classes, work to teach young children some Spanish, and participate in other programs, such as cultural exchanges via video exchange and international trips to Spanish-speaking countries.

Native speakers of languages other than English who attend Princeton Montessori School will be included in classes and supported as needed. The student who is learning English will receive support for understanding through activating prior meaning, scaffolding, and extending language where possible. The student’s parents, where possible, will be consulted to determine a language acquisition plan. Students with limited English proficiency will have expectations adjusted as necessary.

Students whose “mother tongue” is not English will be encouraged to share that language and culture with the other students in class.

Students will not be excluded from the IB program because of limited English language skills.