

Georgia Performance Standards for Modern Languages Connections Middle School Grades

Modern Languages Connections

Course Description

The Connections language course focuses on the introduction of communicative competence in the target language and understanding of the culture(s) of the people who speak the language. It assumes that the students have no prior knowledge of the language and culture. Under no circumstances should a student who has had elementary foreign language for the equivalent of 30 minutes per day for five days per week for one year or more be allowed to take a Connections course unless it is in a different language than the one originally experienced.

This course may be taught over nine weeks (e.g., middle school programs). The major means of communication between students and instructors will be in the target language. Because students may begin formal language learning at various stages of their cognitive development, teachers must adjust vocabulary and content to reflect developmentally appropriate interests.

An important component of language classes is the use of the language beyond the classroom in the real world. The integration of technology is an important tool in accessing authentic information in the target language and in providing students the opportunity to interact with native speakers.

By the end of the Connections language course, students will exhibit Novice-Low level proficiency in speaking, listening, and reading and possibly Novice-Mid level proficiency in writing (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, 1999).

Student Profile (Connections)

ACTFL Listening Proficiency Guidelines (Novice-Low)

The understanding of the student is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high-frequency social conventions. Essentially there is no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

ACTFL Speaking Proficiency Guidelines (Novice-Low)

For speakers at the Novice-Low level, oral production consists of isolated words and perhaps a few high-frequency phrases. These speakers have virtually no functional communicative ability.

ACTFL Reading Proficiency Guidelines (Novice-Low)

The reader at the Novice-Low level is able to identify isolated words and/or major phrases occasionally, especially when they are strongly supported by context.

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ACTFL Writing Proficiency Guidelines (Novice-Mid)

Writers at the Novice-Mid level are able to copy or transcribe familiar words or phrases, and reproduce from memory a modest number of isolated words and phrases in context. They can supply limited information on simple forms and documents, and other basic biographical information, such as names, numbers, and nationality. There is little evidence of functional writing skills.

Georgia Performance Standards with Elements

I. Communication

Interpersonal Mode of Communication (IP)

- MLC.IP1 The students exchange simple spoken and written information in the target language, utilizing cultural references where appropriate. The students:
- A. Use basic greetings, farewells, and expressions of courtesy, in both oral and written forms.
 - B. Use sequenced information, such as the alphabet, days of the week, months, seasons, and numbers 0 to 100 in context.

- MLC.IP2 The students demonstrate skills necessary to sustain brief oral and written exchanges in the target language. The students:
- A. Initiate, participate in, and close a brief oral or written exchange.
 - B. Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in oral and written exchanges with respect to proper pronunciation, intonation, and writing mechanics.

Interpretive Mode of Communication (INT)

- MLC.INT1 The students demonstrate understanding of simple spoken and written language presented through a variety of media in the target language and based on topics such as self, family, school, etc. The students:
- A. Identify main ideas and some details when reading and listening.
 - B. Understand simple instructions, such as classroom procedures.
 - C. Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in listening and reading comprehension.

- MLC.INT2 The students interpret verbal and non-verbal cues to understand simple spoken and written messages in the target language. The students:
- A. Differentiate among statements, questions and exclamations.
 - B. Recognize basic gestures and body language that clarify a message.

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Presentational Mode of Communication (P)

- MLC.P1 The students present information orally and in writing that contains a minimum of vocabulary, phrases, and patterns. The students:
- A. Present information gathered from a variety of sources such as informal conversations, class presentations, readings, and media.
 - B. Give basic information about self and others including school, family, activities, etc.
 - C. Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in oral and written presentations with respect to proper pronunciation, intonation, and writing mechanics.
- MLC.P2 The students present brief, rehearsed material in the target language, such as dialogues, skits, and songs. The students:
- A. Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in pronunciation and intonation when presenting rehearsed material.
 - B. Demonstrate comprehension of rehearsed material.

II. Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products (CU)

- MLC.CU1 The students develop an awareness of perspectives, practices, and products of the cultures where the target language is spoken. The students:
- A. Identify commonly held viewpoints of the cultures, such as those relating to time, school, family, holidays, etc.

III. Connections, Comparisons, and Communities (CCC)

- MLC.CCC1 The students use information acquired in the study of the target language and information acquired in other subject areas to reinforce one another. The students:
- A. Demonstrate knowledge of geographical locations and identify major countries, cities, and geographical features of the places where the target language is spoken.
 - B. Apply previously learned skills from other subjects, when appropriate to demonstrate knowledge in the target language (e.g. using basic math skills).
 - C. Identify examples of vocabulary, phrases, proverbs, and symbols from the target language that are used in other subjects.
 - D. Relate content from other subject areas to topics discussed in the language class, such as the influence of explorers and settlers on various regions of the United States.

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- MLC.CCC2 The students demonstrate an understanding of the significance of culture through comparisons between the culture(s) studied and the students' own culture. The students:
- A. Compare patterns of behavior and interaction in the students' own culture with those of the target language.
 - B. Demonstrate an awareness of elements of the students' own culture.
- MLC.CCC3 The students compare basic elements of the target language to the English language. The students:
- A. Recognize similarities and differences in sound systems, writing systems, cognates, and gender.
 - B. Recognize basic sound distinctions and their effect on communicating meaning.
- MLC.CCC4 The students demonstrate an awareness of current events in the target culture(s). The students:
- A. Give information regarding a major current event of the target culture(s).
 - B. Understand the impact of current events of the target culture(s).
- MLC.CCC5 The students identify situations and resources in which target language skills and cultural knowledge may be applied beyond the classroom setting, for recreational, educational, and occupational purposes. The students:
- A. Identify examples of the target language and the culture(s) studied that are evident in and through media, entertainment, and technology.
 - B. Identify resources, such as individuals and organizations accessible through the community or the Internet, that provide basic cultural information about the culture(s) studied.

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Modern Languages Connections: Summary of Skills Developed

The following list is intended to guide instruction and to assist teachers with their planning by providing a one-page reference to the elements described in the Georgia Performance Standards for Modern Languages Connections. It is important to remember that typical Connections students will exhibit varying levels of proficiency.

Skills Developed in Connections

The students:

MLC.IP1A	Use basic greetings, farewells, and expressions of courtesy.
MLC.IP1B	Use sequenced information meaningfully.
MLC.IP2A	Initiate, participate in, and close a brief exchange.
MLC.IP2C	Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in oral and written exchanges.
MLC.INT1A	Identify the main ideas and some details when reading and listening.
MLC.INT1B	Understand simple instructions.
MLC.INT1C	Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in listening, viewing and reading comprehension.
MLC.INT2A	Differentiate among statements, questions, and exclamations.
MLC.INT2B	Recognize basic non-verbal cues.
MLC.P1A	Present information from a variety of sources.
MLC.P1B	Give basic information about self and others using suggested topics.
MLC.P1C	Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency in oral and written presentations.
MLC.P2A	Demonstrate Novice-Low proficiency when presenting rehearsed material.
MLC.P2B	Demonstrate comprehension of rehearsed material.
MLC.CU1A	Identify commonly held cultural viewpoints.
MLC.CU1B	Describe some cultural customs and traditions.
MLC.CCC1A	Demonstrate basic geographical knowledge.
MLC.CCC1B	Apply previously learned skills from other subjects.
MLC.CCC1C	Identify examples of the target language in other subjects.
MLC.CCC1D	Relate content from other subjects as it relates to the target language.
MLC.CCC2A	Compare cultural patterns of behavior and interaction.
MLC.CCC2B	Demonstrate awareness of students' own cultures.
MLC.CCC3A	Recognize similarities/differences between target language and English.
MLC.CCC3B	Recognize basic sound distinctions and their effect on communication.
MLC.CCC4A	Give information about current events of target cultures.
MLC.CCC4B	Understand the impact of current events of target cultures.
MLC.CCC5A	Identify examples of target language and culture in media forms.
MLC.CCC5B	Identify community and Internet resources.

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Modern Languages Connections: Suggested Topics

The following topics are strongly suggested for the Connections course. These topics should be combined into coherent thematic units and taught in context. The GPS for Modern Languages encourage language taught in communicative context and discourage language taught in isolation.

Celebrations

Colors

Family and Friends

Geography

Numbers

School and Classroom Routine

Self

Time and Calendar

Weather