

St. Anthony Academy

Language Policy

Philosophy

At St. Anthony Academy, we believe that language is important to learning and essential for communicating. Language is so important that it is relevant in every aspect of education. All teachers are language teachers, and school is a place to encourage and respect everyone's native language.

Placement

A student's primary language is determined at registration through the use of a Home Language Survey. Students that are listed as speaking a language other than English are screened for possible placement in an ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom.

Classroom Language Instruction:

English is the language of instruction at St. Anthony Academy. Language is taught across the curriculum through the Balanced Literacy approach, where there is an obvious connection between reading and writing. Listening, reading, writing, speaking, and media literacy language are the necessary components of a solid language program. These language strands are embedded in the Texas Curriculum or Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students are taught Language skills in every subject and every classroom at St. Anthony. Each teacher uses their grade level Curriculum Guide, which clearly outlines what is to be taught and learned at each grade level as a guide for planning their language lessons. Our language curriculum is further enhanced with the acquisition of the Primary Years Program (PYP). The focus of language and its application is infused throughout our Transdisciplinary Program of Inquiry (POI). Language skills are taught and learned naturally with the rich amount of literature that comes with each Unit of Inquiry. The Library & Media Center for Inquiry serves as another venue for students to receive language instruction. The media center is stocked with several books that support the acquisition of language skills and is available for teachers and students' use daily.

Language Professional Development

Because all teachers are language teachers, all teachers receive annual training in English Language Arts (ELAR). Many teachers receive current research and best practices through their university course work, staff book studies, district sponsored workshops, national conferences (IRA and ASCD), and from our local Service Center (Region 10). It is the responsibility of the PYP Coordinator to ensure that staff members are made aware of professional development opportunities.

Language Assessment

The Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) provides a means for ensuring that all students become independent readers by the end of second grade. Oral language, listening, and fluency are assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year for students in grades kindergarten through second with results that are used to drive the teachers' instruction. Further, students in grade four are assessed on their independent language and writing skills annually through the state mandated assessment and all grade levels are assessed on their writing ability three times per year through local assessments.

Writing samples are kept in student classroom portfolios and are passed on with the students to the next grade level, so that teachers are able to analyze and individualize students' language instruction.

Classrooms are arranged so that students spend most of their day in cooperative groups that encourage the development of language. In addition, students are required to complete and present a unit project after each unit of inquiry is taught, further developing their language skills.

Second Language

Currently, St. Anthony offers additional instruction in Spanish as a separate subject. Kindergarten-Fifth grade students receive weekly Spanish instruction. Classes communicate with students from other countries via internet and as Pen Pals.

St. Anthony's Language Policy will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed and Revised May 2019

Language Policy Committee Members

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