



International[®]
Baccalaureate

**The origins, philosophy and
fundamental principles of the IB Diploma
and MYP**

IB Latin America annual conference, June 2008

The Diploma Programme: Historical Overview

The League of Nations [establishment of the first international school in Geneva] 1924. First call for an international school leaving certificate

Conference of Internationally minded schools [from 1949]

International Schools Association [established 1951]

- Encourage cooperation between international schools
- Facilitate research work on educational issues
- Promote international understanding and world peace
- Establish a curriculum that would facilitate university entrance

1963: grant from U.S. based 20th century fund to establish the
International Schools Examination Syndicate

1967: **International Baccalaureate**

Forces behind the Diploma

Practical

- Widely recognized university entrance qualification

Ideological:

- Promote international perspectives, understanding, communication and intercultural competence [compassion and world peace]
- Critical thinking and problem solving skills [learning how to learn]

Educational Philosophy underpinning the Diploma

Alec Peterson [first Director General in 1966]

- *“What is of paramount importance in the pre-university stage is not what is learnt but learning how to learn.”*
- *“What matters is not the absorption and regurgitation either of fact or of predigested interpretations of facts, but the development of powers of the mind or ways of thinking which can be applied to new situations and new presentations of facts as they arise.”*

Diploma: Educational Philosophy

- *“Advanced academic work will demand five qualities. These are the capacity for conceptualization and analysis, a memory good enough to enable the student to hold a number of facts or concepts in the mind simultaneously, an unslaked curiosity, a capacity for recognizing and in rare cases formulating new interpretations of available information and a commitment to the intellectual formulation and solution of problems.” [Alec Peterson]*

Diploma: Educational Philosophy

Educating the whole person:

“To develop to their fullest the powers of each individual to understand, to modify and to enjoy his or her environment, both inner and outer , in its physical, social, moral, aesthetic and spiritual aspects.”

[Alec Peterson]

Call to action:

“Plus est en vous” [Kurt Hahn]

Approach

1960's and 1970's predominance of classical, rationalist [content / product based] approaches to curriculum

IB Diploma influenced by [then] new process approaches [early constructivist]:

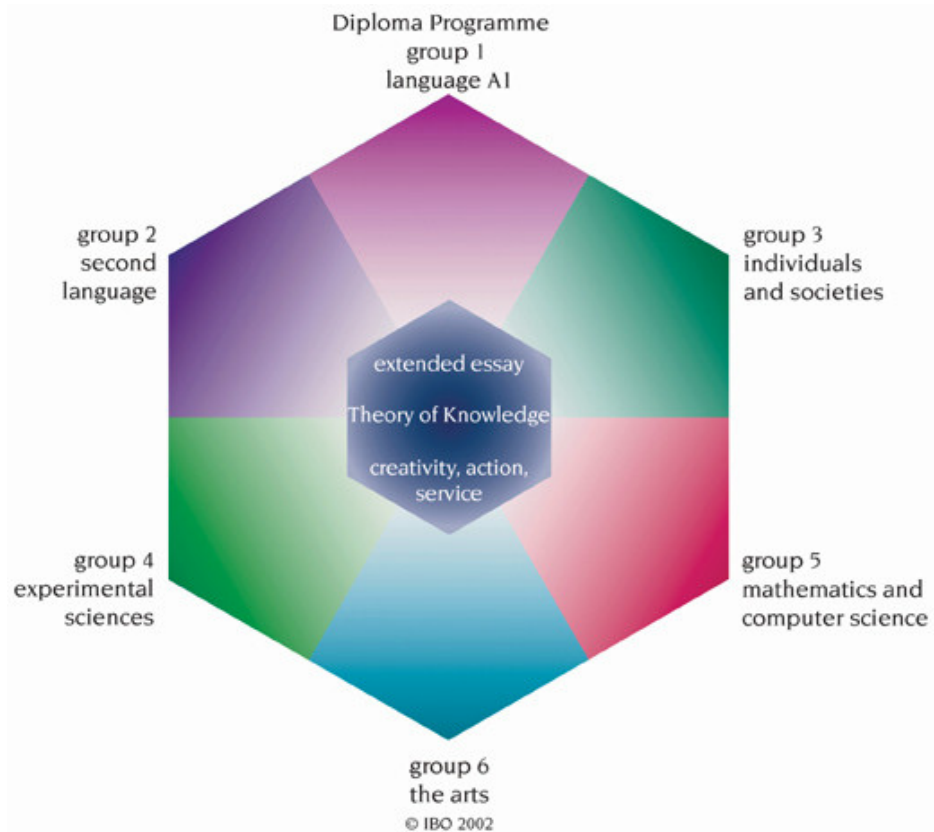
- Phenix [1964] primary goal of education is to analyse the nature of meaning
- Hirst and Peters [1970] Curriculum selection around fundamental forms of thought considered central to understanding and structuring the world.

Assessment in the Diploma

- A deliberate compromise between the early specialization preferred in some national systems and the greater breadth found in others
- Students need to produce and critique [not just reproduce] knowledge
- Importance of authentic assessment made possible by internal school based assessment
- Importance of recognizing experiential learning and self-evaluation

THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

Curriculum Model



The MYP: Historical Overview

- International Schools Association [1982] decision to work on a curriculum for the middle years
- International Schools Association Curriculum developed and piloted in 12 schools [1988-2003]
- 1994 International Baccalaureate take over the programme and it becomes IBMYP

Forces behind the MYP

Need for a programme that:

- Promote international perspectives, understanding, communication and intercultural competence [compassion and world peace]
- Lifelong learners able to adapt to change and different employment opportunities [uncertainty about future]
- Prepared students for the Diploma

- New world order demanding new approaches
- Better understanding of the learning process

Educational Philosophy underpinning the MYP

- *“Learning how to learn and the development of the whole person are the guiding principles of this programme. The overall curriculum is designed to encourage moral development in our children and a sense of responsibility to the world community and its environment.”*

[Part of the general statement adopted by ISA in 1982]

Educational Philosophy underpinning the MYP

“The responsibility of educators is no longer just to prepare good mathematicians, good biologists or good historians. The mission of schools is to prepare young people – the decision makers of tomorrow – to live in a complex multicultural society undergoing a process of rapid change and opening up a new world. Of course the cognitive component of an educational system is fundamental for the acquisition of intellectual and professional skills. Even more important is the acquisition of attitudes in the learning process in a context of cultural exchanges.”

G. Renaud 1991

Three guiding Principles

1. Intercultural awareness
2. Communication
3. Holistic / interdisciplinary learning

“Interdisciplinarity is excellent if it is firmly rooted in disciplinarity. Each subject is not an end in itself but it must be an efficient tool. We must keep its identity and especially its own methodology. Only on that basis will we be able to construct a serious interdisciplinarity. Other wise we will lead our students to mental confusion and superficial surveys.”

[Renaud 1989]

Assessment in the MYP

- Criterion based, authentic
- School coursework not external examination
- *“At the IB Diploma level, the constraints of the forthcoming examination, depending in turn on university requirements, impose serious limitations on the implementation of the curriculum which would rally correspond to the philosophy of an international system of education. The age group for which the ISA curriculum has been developed is certainly more appropriate to that purpose since the perspective of an examination is remote enough to allow more freedom to schools and teachers.”*

[G. Renaud 1991]

Constructivism

Widely accepted by late 1980's that students' construct knowledge based on their existing mental models.
'Understanding' evolves. Importance of inquiry.

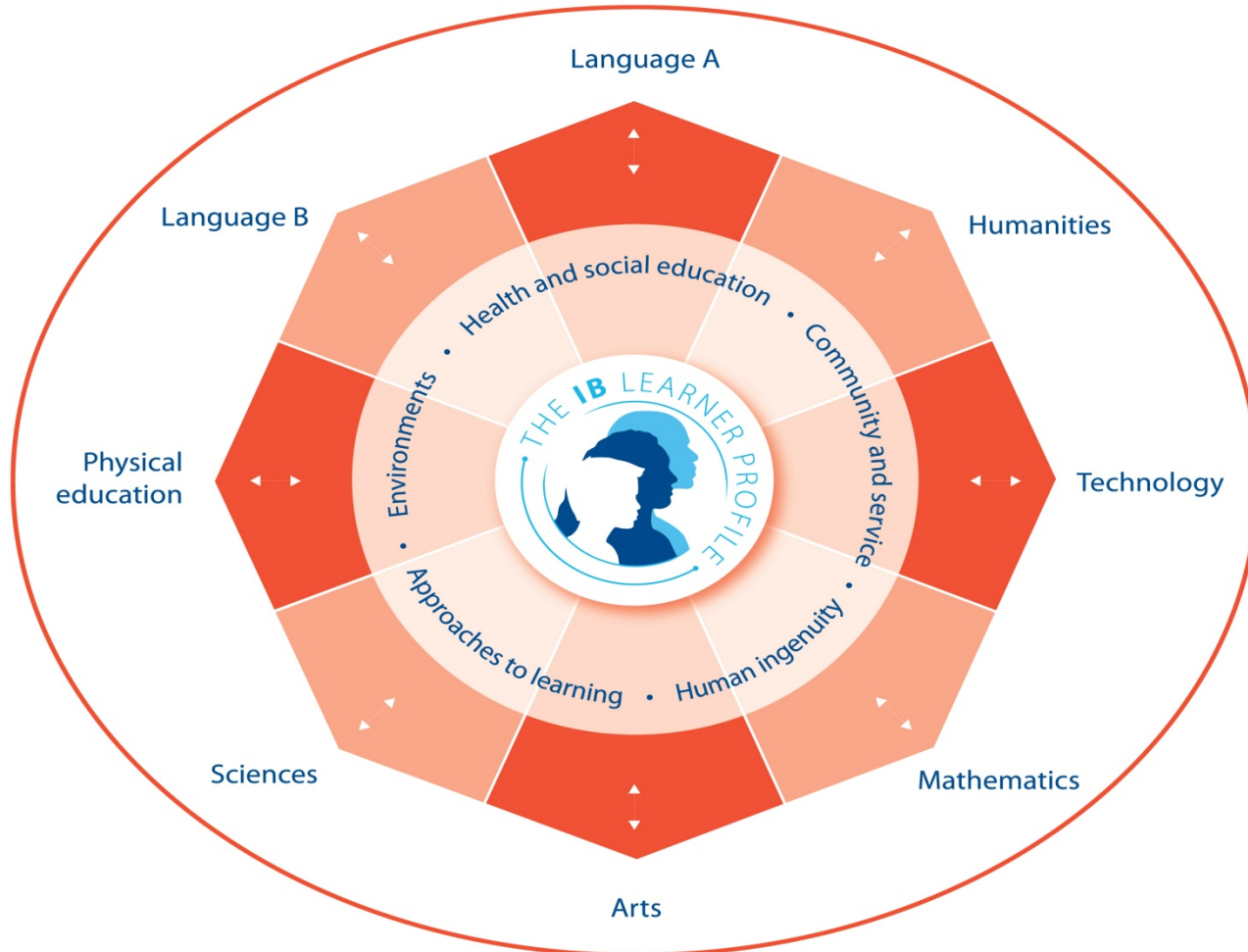
influenced by new theories:

- Multiple intelligences [Robert Sternberg's triarchic theory, Howard Gardner]
- Role of Language as instrumental to learning and constructing meaning [reinforced]

Consequence:

Teacher needs to be an expert educational psychologist

Philosophy: Programme model





International[®] Baccalaureate

Middle Years Programme

The unique benefits of the MYP
IBLA Conference, Costa Rica, 8 June 2008

Definition: How is the Middle Years Programme defined?

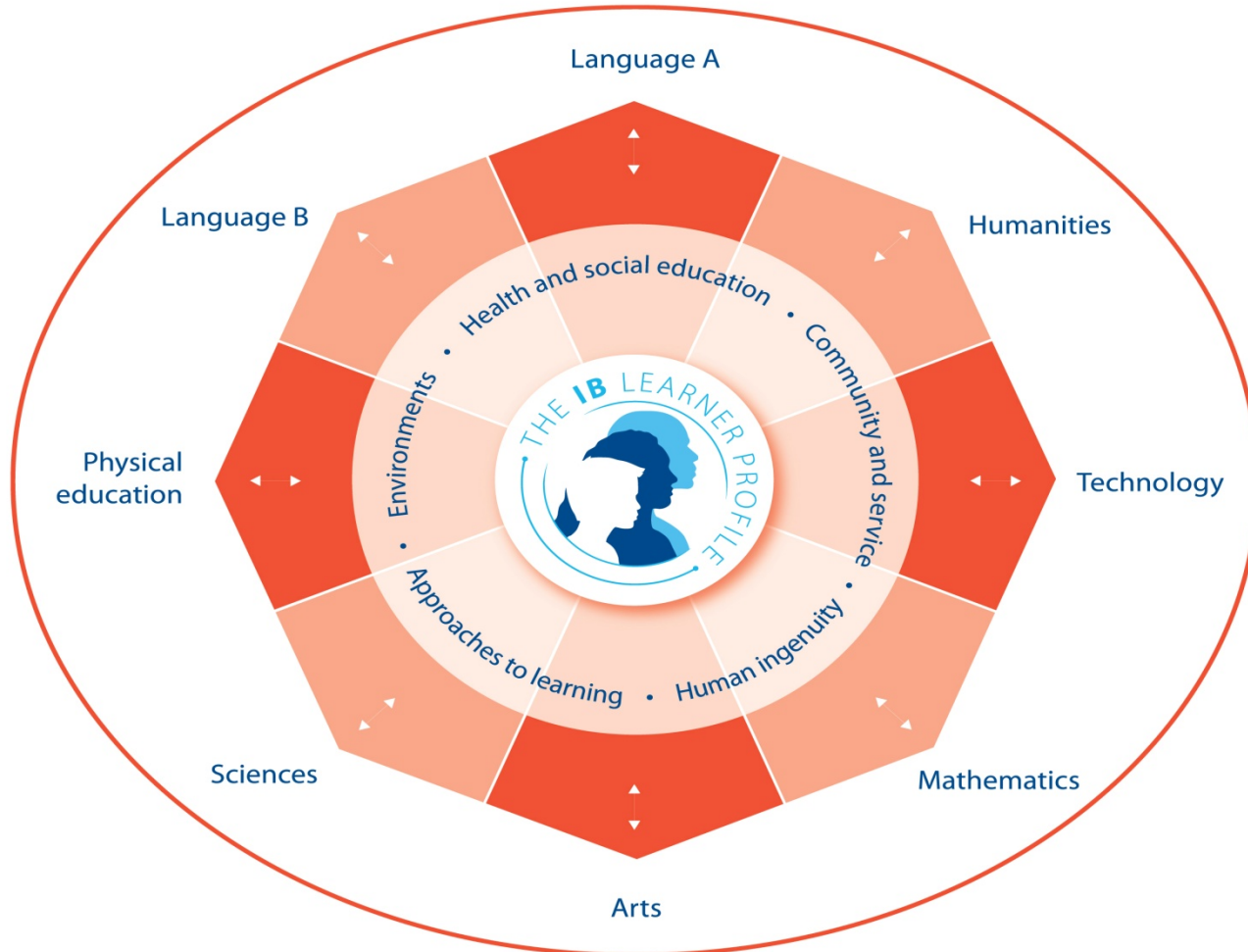
The MYP is:

- for students aged 11 to 16
- a framework of academic challenge
- 8 subject groups, plus personal project in the final year
- taught in any language

The MYP encourages students to:

- understand the connections between subjects through interdisciplinary learning
- understand the connections between subjects and the real world
- become critical and reflective thinkers

Philosophy: Programme model



What are the areas of interaction?

Approaches to learning

Community and service

Health and social education

Environments

Human ingenuity (*Homo faber*)

Areas of interaction: Approaches to learning

Through approaches to learning, teachers provide students with tools to:

- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Develop awareness of how they learn best
- Develop problem solving and decision making skills
- Develop awareness of thought processes and learning strategies
- Develop critical, coherent and independent thought



Areas of interaction: Community & service

This area of interaction extends learning beyond the classroom and requires students to:

- Develop community awareness and concern
- Develop a sense of responsibility
- Take an active part in the communities in which they live, thereby encouraging responsible citizenship
- Develop skills and attitudes that will enable effective contributions to society



Areas of interaction: Health & social education

Deals with a variety of human issues including physical, social and emotional health and intelligence. Students will:

- be aware of the relationship between the individual and society
- take responsibility for their own well-being and for that of others
- take responsibility for their social environment
- be able to make informed choices for themselves with consideration for the wider society



Areas of interaction: Environments

Aims to develop awareness of humanity's interdependence with a range of environments so that students:

- Understand issues within natural, built and virtual environments
- Take responsibility for maintaining and improving environments that are fit for the future
- Take action on issues explored through this area of interaction



Areas of interaction: Human ingenuity (*Homo faber*)

Students explore the ways that human minds have influenced our lives. Students will:

- become aware of the nature of ingenuity
- reflect on the impact of innovations and creations, ideologies and ways of thinking,
- appreciate the consequences of actions



Assessment: How do we assess student learning in the MYP?

- Involves a range of task types
- Assessment of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes
- Criterion related
- Internally assessed (by teachers)
- Externally moderated for global standardization



Overview

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme

- A programme for 11-16 year olds
- Student-centered programme
- Range of academic disciplines
- Academically rigorous
- Areas of interaction connect disciplines to the real world
- Can be taught in any language
- Flexible enough to be used with local requirements
- Designed and reviewed by experienced, practicing educators

How do we provide coherence between programmes?

- Heads of programme meet each month, whilst a head of continuum development starts work in August
- The academic director is writing a document describing teaching and learning across the continuum
- Curriculum review cycles have been aligned
- One assessment director is responsible for both programmes
- A common quality assurance framework for curriculum development incorporates the same standards and practices
- Looking towards harmonising terminology including command and assessment terms; a common understanding of language
- IBNA Access Project – providing materials to help schools prepare MYP students for the Diploma