

The IB community theme in the Middle Years Programme

Sharing our humanity provides IB World Schools with great scope for addressing subjects using the areas of interaction as contexts for learning. (The community theme is not an additional area of interaction). The theme lends itself perfectly to in-depth exploration and inquiry and can be approached in any subject whilst bringing meaning and relevance to learning. It is a great chance for development of attitudes and values that relate to the theme and are reinforced through the IB learner profile.

Through the theme, students will be able to engage with units of work, by placing content into context. They will become aware of the connections between subject disciplines and will start to develop an awareness of the dimensions of each of the areas of interaction as well as more in depth subject knowledge. This awareness may lead to a better understanding of the impact of various issues of shared humanity on students themselves and on those around them, and of the responsibilities they have to themselves, to each other and to society in general. As students become more aware and acquire a better understanding of the context and of their responsibilities, this could lead to thoughtful and positive action.

Units of work in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) can be subject-based or interdisciplinary in nature. Developing interdisciplinary units of work can draw together elements of different subject areas to support a deeper exploration of subject content. These interdisciplinary units of work can provide clearer insight for students as they focus their inquiry on these concepts and skills. This kind of learning can encourage a deeper level of understanding compared with learning the concepts and skills through one subject perspective alone. Meaningful learning can be achieved by exploring issues such as peace or the fight against poverty through more than one subject area.

MYP classrooms can become centres of structured inquiry built in part around the theme of shared humanity, through which students acquire and practise skills and build new knowledge. They do so in a climate that fosters positive attitudes, and offers opportunities for responsible action.

Middle Years Programme-specific ideas and suggestions

There are a number of ways to integrate the IB community theme into the teaching of the MYP, for example, by:

- selecting relevant literature for study in languages A and B
- studying global infectious diseases in humanities, sciences and technology
- selecting relevant materials for study in statistics
- selecting a relevant topic for the personal project
- investigating the impact of scientific research in science and humanities
- studying the digital divide in technology, humanities, arts and language A
- exploring access to education in language A, physical education and humanities
- examining occurrences of natural disasters in mathematics, humanities and sciences
- considering a futures perspective in education – what is our probable against preferable future with current practices?
- organizing Model United Nations (UN) debates and other activities in humanities, language A and language B
- studying personal hygiene in physical education and sciences
- selecting relevant local and global community service projects
- investigating media and bias in language A, humanities and technology
- selecting relevant pieces of film, dance, drama, music or art for study
- examining the role of the arts in change and global awareness

- selecting relevant interdisciplinary focuses
- organizing UN (or other) themed days to recognize issues and their links to the curriculum.