# Module 9: Overview of Linguistic Cultures Standards

* 1. **Start Module**

**1.1.1 Part 1: Welcome**

Welcome to the Massachusetts World Languages Curriculum Framework Implementation Training Series! This training is brought to you by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in collaboration with the Center for Applied Linguistics. These Online Learning Modules are one component of the Implementation Training Series and are designed to support you in understanding and using the 2021 Massachusetts World Languages Curriculum Framework.

You are in Module 9: Overview of Linguistic Cultures Standards. This module will introduce the Linguistic Cultures Standards from the 2021 Massachusetts World Languages Curriculum Framework and how they progress across proficiency levels.

**1.1.2 How do I navigate this module?**

First, let’s talk about how to navigate this module. To navigate between the slides of this module, you can click here: on the NEXT button, to see the next slide, and here: on the PREVIOUS button, to go back to the last slide. Please note that on slides that have interactive features, such as clickable icons or tabs to learn more, you will not be able to click NEXT to see the next slide until you click on each of these features.

At the bottom of each slide, you will also see the volume button to make the audio louder or quieter; the closed-captions button to turn on closed captions and read along with the audio; a seek bar, and a replay button.

You can click on the seek bar to control which part of the screen you want to see, and you can click on the replay button to replay the entire slide.

On the left, you can see the menu. You can click on any title to navigate to the slide you want to view. The menu also has a search bar, here. If you are looking for a particular topic, you can search for it. For example, if you want to learn about the Framework, you can type the word “Framework” into the search bar, and the menu will display all slides that mention the Framework.

On the top right, you can click here on the Resources button where you can find a transcript of the full text of this module as well as a one-page summary.

**1.1.3 What are the goals of this module?**

Now let’s talk about the goals of this module. At the end of the module, you will be able to answer these questions:

* What are the Linguistic Cultures Standards in the Framework?
* How do the Linguistic Cultures Standards progress across proficiency levels?
  1. **Part 2: Overview of Linguistic Cultures Standards**
     1. **What are the Linguistic Cultures Standards?**

While the Communication Standards are related to *how* students use the target language and the Lifelong Learning Standards are related to *why* students use the target language, the Linguistic Cultures Standards are related to *what* students communicate about in the target language.

Two Practices comprise Domain 2 of the Framework. These Practices are Cultures and Comparisons. They are accomplished by using the target language in the Interpretive, Interpersonal, Presentational, and Intercultural modes of communication, and they provide content, context, and purpose for communication.

All of the Domains are developed concurrently as students acquire the language. Therefore, no Domain should be focused on to the exclusion of others. For example, students should have opportunities to gain cultural knowledge and apply what they’ve learned while simultaneously developing the skills and proficiency needed to use the language.

* + 1. **Why are the Linguistic Cultures Standards important for world language education?**

The Linguistic Cultures Standards are important for many reasons. Click on each box to learn more.

* The Linguistic Cultures Standards empower students to act with cultural competence and critical consciousness.
* The Linguistic Cultures Standards connect students to their peers in the classroom, their community, and speakers/signers of the target language throughout the world.
* The Linguistic Cultures Standards support students in investigating their own culture and language through comparisons with other cultures and languages.
* The Linguistic Cultures Standards provide an avenue for students to become critical thinkers, good problem solvers, and informed, engaged global citizens.
  + 1. **What do the Linguistic Cultures Standards look like?**

The Linguistic Cultures Standards are divided by Practice and color-coded by four different linguistic components that describe how students achieve the functions of the Standards. In a given Context (shown in teal), using the target language exclusively or almost exclusively (shown in the purple Text Type) and supported by appropriate linguistic scaffolding (shown in the yellow Supports), students can perform the Functions (shown in black). These linguistic components will be described in greater detail later in this Module.

* + 1. **What skills and concepts are included in the Linguistic Cultures Standards?**

Click on each box to learn more.

* The Cultures Standards involve gaining cultural competence and understanding by exploring cultural products, practices, and perspectives. Students use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on culture.
* The Comparisons Standards involve investigating interactions between language and culture. Students explore similarities and differences between languages and cultures and reflect on their own language and culture along the way.
  + 1. **How are the Linguistic Cultures Standards taught?**

The Linguistic Cultures Standards are taught using ACTFL Core Practices. With the backward design model, educators design assessments and learning activities that align with their unit goals or objectives and incorporate students’ interests in language and culture. Use of the target language is key to facilitate a deeper understanding of students’ own languages and cultures, as well as other languages and cultures being studied in the classroom, and this must be scaffolded using supports so that language is comprehensible. Remember: you and your students should be using the target language 90% of the time or more, as this is how students acquire the communicative proficiency needed to gain cultural competence and develop insight into the nature of language and culture.

Authentic resources, which are created *by* native speakers or signers *for* native speakers or signers, offer both target language input and cultural perspectives that are necessary for Cultures and Comparisons. Students also need opportunities to practice their Interpersonal Communication skills, which are essential to overall language learning and the development of intercultural competence. Grammar should be taught in context and can be the basis of making some comparisons between languages, such as comparisons between politeness forms or time frames. Finally, targeted and actionable feedback should be provided to further develop and advance students’ knowledge of cultures and insights into the interactions of languages and cultures. Click on each box to learn more about [ACTFL Core Practices](https://www.actfl.org/resources/guiding-principles-language-learning) and related professional development opportunities through the [Massachusetts Foreign Language Association](https://mafla.org/pdonline/).

Click on the arrow at the bottom of the slide to learn more about supporting Novice learners when teaching Cultures and Comparisons.

To make the Linguistic Cultures Standards more accessible for Novice learners, use tangible cultural products such as clothing, tickets, currency, toys, or art, and support instruction with culturally-appropriate gestures. Authentic texts can include simple video clips, short songs, and visuals. When making linguistic and cultural comparisons, you may find it helpful to use graphic organizers, T-charts, and Venn Diagrams, and students may occasionally use English for reflection activities, such as journals, though activities should be done almost

exclusively (90% or more) in the target language.

* + 1. **How are the Linguistic Cultures Standards assessed?**

When planning for summative assessment, it is important to design performance tasks that allow students to demonstrate how well they have met the unit goals/objectives, and you may find it helpful to use ACTFL’s [Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA)](https://carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/CreateUnit/p_2.html) model to support you in designing a connected and articulated series of tasks. This model calls for three tasks assessing the Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational modes of communication. All three tasks are connected by a central theme, and this theme can address Cultures and Comparisons through different modes. IPAs also use authentic resources, and this offers an opportunity for students to address cultural topics using the target language.

In addition, the Linguistic Cultures Standards can be assessed through alternative assessments such as learning portfolios that allow students to explore target cultures independently and draw their own conclusions. Students can also self-assess, and you may find it helpful to use the methods outlined in the ACTFL Reflection Tool for Intercultural Communication.

Click on the boxes to view the [Assessment Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/worldlanguages/framework/default.html) and the [ACTFL Reflection Tool](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/can-dos/Intercultural%20Can-Dos_Reflections%20Scenarios.pdf) and to see examples of Integrated Performance Assessments compiled by CARLA, the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The following questions are designed to help you discuss or reflect on what you have learned so far in this module. If you are completing this module in a group, you may find it helpful to talk about these questions with your colleagues and take this opportunity to share your insights and experiences. If you are completing this module on your own, you can independently reflect on these questions and consider ways in which they apply to your own teaching context and experiences.

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* + How have you addressed the Linguistic Cultures Standards in your school or classroom?
  + What aspects of the Linguistic Cultures Standards do you find most challenging to teach or assess?
  + What resources do you find most helpful for teaching and assessing the Linguistic Cultures Standards?

* 1. **Part 3: Progression of Linguistic Cultures Standards** 
     1. **How do the Linguistic Cultures Standards progress across proficiency levels?**

Students develop and/or advance their skills in the areas of Cultures and Comparisons at each level of proficiency. Students’ proficiency progresses in terms of Functions, which are the most direct expression of the Standards, and across Contexts, but the Text types and Supports remain the same throughout the Linguistic Cultures Standards. The Framework recognizes that students’ levels of cultural knowledge and proficiency may differ substantially from their levels of linguistic proficiency. With that in mind, the Text types and Supports are intentionally written to be broad and flexible so that teachers can address Cultures and Comparisons in a way that provides students the linguistic rigor and support that they need while also providing them with challenging and appropriate standards. Comprehensibility is not included in the Linguistic Cultures Standards; it is only a component of the Communication Standards.

**1.3.2. How do Functions progress across proficiency levels in the Linguistic Cultures Standards?**

Functions are assets-based skills that correspond with the main proficiency levels included in the Framework. They are the simplest expression of the standard describing what students can do with the language. They emerge and evolve slowly, often not changing from sub-level to sub-level. Within the Framework, bolded text indicates a new Function or a more rigorous feature of a previously acquired Function. We will discuss the Functions within each Linguistic Cultures Standard in Modules 10 and 11.

**1.3.3. How does Context progress across proficiency levels in the Linguistic Cultures Standards?**

Context refers to the topics and settings in which students can use the language to accomplish a Function. As a student’s proficiency level increases, they can use the target language to demonstrate linguistic and cultural knowledge in a wider range of settings. Click on each circle to learn more about the Contexts described in the Linguistic Cultures Domain for each proficiency level.

* Novice Low & Novice Mid: Settings that students would find familiar and highly predictable
* Novice High, Intermediate Low, and Intermediate Mid: A variety of settings
* Intermediate High, Advanced Low, and Advanced Mid: A wide variety of settings
* Advanced High & Superior: A variety of general and specialized settings

Contexts are described in the Framework on page 21. A summary of Contexts used throughout the Linguistic Cultures Standards can be found on Page 11 of the [Linguistic Components Summary](https://www.doe.mass.edu/worldlanguages/framework/linguistic-components.pdf).

**1.3.4. Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* How do you promote use of the target language when addressing the Linguistic Cultures Standards?
* When providing supports, what does “appropriate linguistic scaffolding” look like at different proficiency levels?
* In what ways does your current curriculum support students to progress through the proficiency levels? Where might there be a need to make adjustments to that curriculum?
  1. **Part 4: Conclusion**
     1. **What did we learn in this module?**

We have now come to the end of Module 9. Let’s summarize the topics this module covered. In Module 9, we learned what the Linguistic Cultures Standards in the Framework are and how the Linguistic Cultures Standards progress across proficiency levels.

You can check the Resources section for a one-page summary of the topics covered in this module.

* + 1. **Check for Learning**

Complete the following check for learning to see what you have learned in this module. After answering each question, click submit to check your answer against the expected response. You will have two opportunities to answer the questions correctly, and if you do not answer correctly, you will see the correct response before being prompted to move on to the next questions.

* + - 1. **Question 1**

What are the Linguistic Cultures Standards? Select all that apply.

* + - 1. **Question 2**

Match the Linguistic Cultures Standard to its description.

* + - 1. **Question 3**

Select the correct Context for each proficiency level.

* + - 1. **Question 4**

Place each linguistic component of the Linguistic Cultures Standards under the correct label.

* + - 1. **Question 5**

True or false: Domain 1: Communication should be the focus of instruction even if this means excluding other domains, including Domain 2: Linguistic Cultures.

* + 1. **What’s next?**

We hope you will also join us for the next module, Module 10: Cultures Standards.

* + 1. **Thank you!**

Thank you for completing this module and showing your commitment to providing high-quality world language education by learning more about the 2021 Massachusetts World Languages Framework!