# Module 13: Connections Standards

* 1. **Start Module**
     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 13: Connections Standards. This module will discuss the Connections Standards in the Framework and highlight ways in which you can address these Standards in your classroom.

* + 1. **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. **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 is Practice 7: Connections, and why is it important to develop proficiency in this Practice?
* What are the Massachusetts World Languages Standards for Connections?
* How can I address the Connections Standards in my classroom?

**1.2. Part 2: Connections**

* + 1. **What is Practice 7: Connections?**

Practice 7: Connections supports students to connect with other disciplines and acquire information and diverse perspectives to use the language to function in academic and career-related situations. This Practice is an important component of *why* students communicate in the target language, and it is one of four Practices included in the Domain of Lifelong Learning.

* + 1. **What do students do in Practice 7: Connections?**

In Practice 7: Connections, students build, reinforce, and expand interdisciplinary knowledge. Students also develop skills that are necessary for success in a globalized, diverse 21st Century society, and they employ creativity, innovation, flexibility, and adaptability to engage in critical-thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving in all disciplines.

* + 1. **Why is it important to develop proficiency in Practice 7: Connections?**

It is important to develop proficiency in this Practice for many reasons. Click on each section of the circle to learn more.

Proficiency in this Practice promotes the value of diverse perspectives and global competence, encouraging students to apply what they’ve learned about different languages and cultures to become productive, global citizens.

Proficiency in Practice 7: Connections also reinforces and expands on the knowledge students have gained in other disciplines, allowing them to use multiple languages and

cultural competencies to research and discuss other content areas.

Proficiency in this Practice also provides opportunities for students to use their language skills in an immediate and practical way, as knowledge of different disciplines and perspectives can be applied within and beyond the language classroom.

Proficiency in this Practice exposes students to meaningful, relevant, and cross-disciplinary content from target-language resources, allowing them to make connections across disciplines while simultaneously developing a deeper understanding of target-language cultures and communities.

Proficiency in this Practice also increases student motivation and engagement in language learning, as students interact with content that is both accessible and high interest, thus encouraging them to acquire the language and continue building proficiency.

Finally, proficiency in Practice 7: Connections is essential for effectively communicating in the target language and applying what has been learned to make connections with diverse perspectives and communities.

**1.2.4: Pause for Equity**

Now, let’s take a few minutes to pause for equity in line with Massachusetts’ vision for [Deeper Learning](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/overview.html), which encompasses the Framework’s priorities for Social Justice and reflects Massachusetts’ goals of having all students explore identity, diversity, justice, and action, combined with mastery. If you are completing this module in a group, you may find it helpful to talk about the guiding questions on this slide 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.

Before we dive into the individual standards, consider the following questions:

* How do you think students might demonstrate mastery in Practice 7: Connections?
* How will this Practice enable students to reflect on their own identity and behaviors? In what ways will it introduce students to diverse perspectives?
* How might this Practice inspire students to independently extend their learning of the language and/or culture?

**1.3. Part 3: Connections Standards**

* + 1. **What are the Connections Standards?**

The Connections Standards are descriptions of the skills that students can demonstrate at different levels of proficiency in the area of Connections and are organized by proficiency level from Novice Low to Superior. Each Connections Standard contains two different Functions, and each Function has a Standard Identifier numbered 7.a and 7.b.

* + 1. **How do the Connections Standards progress across proficiency levels?**

In Module 12, you learned that Context progresses in a similar way across proficiency levels for all of the Lifelong Learning Standards. You also learned that Text Type and Supports remain the same across proficiency levels, and Comprehensibility does not appear in these Standards. In addition to Context, Functions, which describe what students can do, gradually progress in difficulty, rigor, and/or complexity across proficiency levels in the Lifelong Learning Standards, though this progression may look different for each of the Practices. You will also notice that the black text at the end of the Standard introduction changes across proficiency levels, as students move from minimally to fully and consistently accomplishing Functions. This will be shown in greater detail in the following slides.

Click here to see a chart showing how Functions progress across proficiency levels within the Connections Standards.

As shown in the chart, some Functions are repeated from level to level (as indicated by a check mark) and some Functions progress from level to level (as indicated by a check mark with a plus sign). These Functions, which are new, more rigorous features of a previously acquired Function, appear in bolded text within the Framework. We will look at the Connections Standards in greater detail in the following slides, and while we will be focusing on the progression of Functions across proficiency levels, we recommend that you also reflect on ways in which Context progresses from level to level throughout this Module.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Novice Low level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Novice Low level. As you can see, students at this level can incorporate age-appropriate, interdisciplinary vocabulary to recognize, exchange, and present information from across content areas. Students at this level can also recognize, exchange, and present diverse perspectives and distinctive viewpoints from authentic age-appropriate materials.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Novice Mid level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Novice Mid level, each of which is repeated from the Novice Low level. The progression from Novice Low is instead seen in students fully and consistently accomplishing the Functions.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

There will be several opportunities for discussion and reflection in this part of the Module. The questions presented on the Discussion/Reflection slides 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.

This set of questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Novice Low to Novice Mid levels?
* What can your Novice-level students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Novice standards?
* What do you expect Novice High students who are moving up into the Intermediate level to be able to do?
  + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Novice High level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Novice High level, one of which is repeated from the Novice Mid level and one of which has more rigorous features of the previously acquired Function. As shown in NH 7.b, students at this level can understand, exchange, and present diverse perspectives and distinctive viewpoints from authentic age-appropriate materials.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Intermediate Low level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Intermediate Low level, each of which is repeated from the Novice High level. The progression from Novice High is instead seen in students minimally but consistently accomplishing the Functions instead of only often succeeding.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Intermediate Mid level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Intermediate Mid level, each of which is repeated from the Intermediate Low level. The progression from Intermediate Low is instead seen in students fully and consistently accomplishing the Functions.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Novice High to Intermediate Mid levels?
* What can your Intermediate-level students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Intermediate standards?
* What do you expect Intermediate High students who are moving up into the Advanced level to be able to do?
  + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Intermediate High level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Intermediate High level, one of which is repeated from the Intermediate Mid level and one of which has more rigorous features of the previously acquired Function. As shown in IH 7.b, students at this level can research, analyze, exchange, and present diverse perspectives and distinctive viewpoints from authentic age-appropriate materials.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Advanced Low level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Advanced Low level, each of which is repeated from the Intermediate High level. The progression from Intermediate High is instead seen in students minimally but consistently accomplishing the Functions instead of only often succeeding.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Advanced Mid level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Advanced Mid level, each of which is repeated from the Advanced Low level. The progression from Advanced Low is instead seen in students fully and consistently accomplishing the Functions.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Intermediate High to Advanced Mid levels?
* What can your Advanced-level students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Advanced standards?
* What do you expect Advanced High students who are moving up into the Superior level to be able to do?
  + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Advanced High level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Advanced High level, each of which has more rigorous features of the previously acquired Functions. As shown in AH 7.a, students at this level can research, analyze, discuss, and hypothesize areas of specialized professional and academic expertise across content areas. Students at this level can also research, analyze, evaluate, and hypothesize about diverse perspectives and distinctive viewpoints found in authentic materials from target-language cultures, as shown in AH 7.b.

* + 1. **What is the Connections Standard at the Superior level?**

There are two Functions within the Connections Standard at the Superior level, each of which is repeated from the Advanced High level. The progression from Advanced High is instead seen in students accomplishing the Functions without help.

* + 1. **Discussion/Reflection**

The questions for discussion and reflection are:

* What do you notice about how the Standard progresses within the Advanced High to Superior levels?
* What can your Advanced High and Superior students do? Does your experience align with the expectations outlined in the Standards?
* Where do you see Social Justice or SEL implications within these Superior standards?
  1. **Part 4: Addressing the Standards**
     1. **How do I address the Connections Standards in my classroom?**

To address the Connections Standards in your classroom, it is important to embed Connections into your unit goals/objectives, your summative assessment tasks, and your learning activities and experiences. Rather than being addressed in isolation or through mini-lessons on different disciplines or perspectives, the Connections Standards should be simultaneously addressed through tasks and activities targeting each of the communicative modes.

* + 1. **How should the Connections Standards be assessed?**

When it comes to assessment, you should embed Connections into performance tasks designed for the different communicative modes and Integrated Performance Assessments (IPAs). This can be done by designing tasks around interdisciplinary and contemporary themes, such as those presented in the 21st Century Skills Map for Languages or the Advanced Placement (AP) Curriculum Frameworks. You may also find it helpful to design Interpretive tasks around authentic texts from other disciplines or areas of knowledge and providing opportunities for students to make their own connections in Interpersonal and Presentational tasks. Remember that authentic texts are defined as any authentic conveyor of information from target-language cultures, and the texts selected should represent a variety of viewpoints and experiences in the target-language culture. Finally, Connections can be embedded into performance tasks by encouraging students to use 21st Century skills to solve different problems that are meaningful and relevant to them and their lived experiences.

* + 1. **How should the Connections Standards be taught?**

Click on each tab to learn more about teaching the Connections Standards in your classroom.

When teaching the Connections Standards, you should use engaging, purposeful, and age/ proficiency-level-appropriate essential questions and themes to guide instruction. Click on “use essential questions” to learn more about them. Essential questions are open-ended, thought-provoking questions that align with your theme. They engage, intrigue, and motivate students in their language learning; encourage students to think about and use language in meaningful ways; and address big ideas that extend learning and go beyond the classroom. When developing essential questions, consider why it is important for students to learn what is being taught and how this will transfer to or connect with other disciplines and the real world. Examples of essential questions include “Who am I?”, “How do language and culture impact one’s identity?”, and “How are we connected to different communities and the world?”.

It is also important to help students make connections to content being learned in other classes, and you may find it helpful to work with other teachers in your school or program to provide opportunities for collaborative learning within and across disciplines.

In addition to making connections to students’ other core classes, it is important to move beyond traditional academic subjects by incorporating interdisciplinary or contemporary topics, such as financial, civic, and health literacy. This approach to instruction encourages students to make meaningful connections between disciplines by interacting with diverse perspectives and discussing issues of global importance.

It is also important to promote student autonomy and students’ ownership of their learning, as this will increase their interest and engagement while simultaneously helping to develop their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. You may find it helpful to include students in decisions about content to motivate students to acquire language, build proficiency, and use their language skills in immediate, practical ways.

Activities that expose students to authentic texts and resources that reflect a variety of experiences within the target-language culture are critical when teaching Connections, as these allow students to explore diverse perspectives and distinctive viewpoints from target-language cultures and communities.

Finally, students will benefit from opportunities to use technology to connect with different disciplines and perspectives.

Click on the boxes at the bottom of the slide to view the [21st Century Skills Map for World Languages](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/resources/21st%20Century%20Skills%20Map-World%20Languages.pdf), the [Massachusetts Digital Literacy and Computer Science Content Standards](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/dlcs.docx), and resources from [ACTFL](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/publications/standards/Connections.pdf), the [California Department of Education](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/fl/cf/documents/wlfwteachconnectionsstds.docx), and [STARTALK](https://www.startalk.info/educators-principles-integrating/) that may be helpful for addressing the Connections Standards.

* + 1. **What does addressing Connections look like in different contexts?**

Click on the boxes to see examples of how Connections can be embedded into goals/objectives and tasks for different contexts. The example tasks provided on this slide could be used in IPAs for summative assessment purposes or included as key learning activities and/or formative assessments during the course of instruction. You can view all examples or the one that is most similar to your context, as you only need to click on one example before you are able to move on to the next slide.

* Elementary, Novice
  + Context: Elementary French (Novice Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can identify and label items in the target language using information from my science classes.
  + Task: After watching a video about landforms and bodies of water in French, students explore maps of different French-speaking countries and mark the geographical features found in each country in French.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
* American Sign Language, Intermediate
  + Context: American Sign Language (Intermediate Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can present distinctive viewpoints in the target language using information from my art classes.
  + Task: Students view images of [De’VIA artwork](https://www.museumofdeaf.org/de-via) and deliver presentations in ASL about how different elements of the artwork connect to Deaf culture, identities, and communities.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
* Secondary, Novice
  + Context: Secondary German (Novice Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can compare diverse practices and perspectives in the target language using information from my health and science classes.
  + Task: Students view nutritional guides from Germany and the United States before asking and answering simple questions in German about the similarities and differences between the countries’ recommendations.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
* Secondary, Advanced:
  + Context: Secondary Italian (Advanced Mid)
  + Goal/objective: I can exchange information about financial literacy in the target language using information from my mathematics, history, and social science classes.
  + Task: Students conduct research on a variety of perspectives on an economic issue in Italy, and then they engage in small group discussions about recommendations for addressing different issues related to the country’s financial system.
  + Discussion: What is one way that this task could be extended to further consider diverse experiences?
    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:

* What is your experience embedding Connections into unit goals/objectives?
* What learning activities or assessment tasks have you used to target Connections in your classroom, and which would you like to use more?
* What resources do you find most helpful for teaching or assessing Connections?
  1. **Part 5: Conclusion**
     1. **What did we learn in this module?**

We have now come to the end of Module 13. Let’s summarize the topics this module covered. In Module 13, we learned what Practice 7: Connections is and why it is important to develop proficiency in this Practice; what the Connections Standards are; and how to address the Connections Standards in your classroom.

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 question.

* + - 1. **Question 1**

What is Practice 7: Connections? Drag the following words to fill in the blanks.

* + - 1. **Question 2**

What are Novice Low to Novice Mid students able to do in Practice 7: Connections? Select all that apply.

* + - 1. **Question 3**

Match the Function with the appropriate proficiency level.

* + - 1. **Question 4**

Which of the following skills are involved in Practice 7: Connections? Select all that apply.

* + - 1. **Question 5**

True or false: Connections should only be made to traditional academic subjects and disciplines, such as mathematics, social studies, and science.

* + 1. **What’s next?**

We hope you will also join us for the next module, Module 14: Communities 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!