Module 7: Interpretive Communication Standards

This module provides an overview of the mode of Interpretive Communication, discusses the Massachusetts World Languages Standards for Interpretive Communication, and highlights ways to address the Standards.

Interpretive Communication

This mode involves understanding, interpreting, and analyzing what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics. In this mode, students engage in age and development-appropriate reading, viewing, and listening skills across a variety of genres as they engage with an authentic text. Students also demonstrate understanding of the characteristics and viewpoints of multiple cultures and communities as well as the messages, main ideas, and supporting details in written, spoken, or signed texts on a variety of topics in the target language. Proficiency in Interpretive Communication increases students’ abilities to understand other cultures and perspectives, helps students develop strategies to understand texts, and supports students in advancing their proficiency in other communicative modes.

Interpretive Communication Standards

The Massachusetts World Languages Standards for Interpretive Communication describe the skills that students can demonstrate at different levels of proficiency. The Interpretive Communication Standard at each proficiency level contains two different Functions, numbered 1.a. and 1.b. along with the proficiency level abbreviation. The chart below shows how Functions progress across proficiency levels within the Interpretive Communication Standards. Check marks with a plus sign indicate new, more rigorous features of a previously acquired Function.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NL | NM | NH | IL | IM | IH | AL | AM | AH | S |
| a. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓+ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓ | ✓ |
| b. | ✓ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓+ | ✓ |

Addressing the Standards

Recommendations to effectively address Interpretive Communication Standards include setting Interpretive Communication unit goals/objectives using the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements; selecting authentic texts for students to interpret that affirm students’ identities and present varying, diverse perspectives; designing Interpretive Communication summative assessment tasks with the Integrated Performance Assessment model that provide opportunities for literal and interpretive comprehension of authentic texts; and including Interpretive Communication activities to learn about the context of texts, explore their deeper meaning, and critically analyze them. When designing Interpretive Communication assessments and learning experiences, educators should consider all students, including students with disabilities and those from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. To align with Massachusetts’ vision for Deeper Learning components of Mastery, Identity, and Creativity, educators should provide students with opportunities to interact with and interpret texts in the target language (Mastery) so that they see themselves and encounter diverse perspectives in the texts (Identity) and are supported to independently extend their engagement with the texts and/or topics (Creativity).

Two Lenses: Proficiency and Equity

Proficiency and equity serve as the foundation of the Interpretive Communication Standards. The Standards are organized by proficiency level according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, and they are addressed using Core Practices that align with proficiency-based approaches to language teaching. In terms of equity, the Interpretive Communication Standards center and affirm students’ identities; encourage students to understand the identities and ideas of others, including those from minoritized communities; and promote a deeper understanding of and respect for different cultural perspectives.

Additional Resources

[ACTFL Resources](https://www.actfl.org/resources/guiding-principles-language-learning/authentic-texts) • [CARLA Resources](https://carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/CreateUnit/unit_examples.html) • [DESE’s Guidebook of Culturally Diverse Artists and Artworks](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/arts/) • [Massachusetts Deeper Learning Initiative](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/overview.html) • [NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements](https://www.actfl.org/resources/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements) • [Ohio Department of Education Interpretive Communication Strategies](https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-s-New-Learning-Standards/Foreign-Language/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum-Framework/Instructional-Strategies/Strategies_Interpretive_MCwebsite.pdf.aspx) • [Ohio Department of Education Resources](https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Foreign-Language/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum/Model-Curriculum-for-World-Languages-and-Cultures/Instructional-Strategies#assessmentrubrics) • [STARTALK Assessment Resources](https://www.startalk.info/educators-principles-conducting/) • [STARTALK Interpretive Tasks](https://startalkcreate.org/lpg/learning-plan/show/search-form?query=share&data=%7B%22cn__proficiencyIndicator___TEMP%22:%5B%22Interpretive%22%5D,%22xx__custom%22:%5B%22All%20Published%22%5D,%22_action%22:%22db-search%22,%22_asciiOnly%22:1,%22_forceNotLoggedInExperience%22:%220%22,%22_actionFlowFromClient2DB%22:%22tbd%22%7D)