

DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING CHINESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE REAL WORLD

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CELIN: Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network

CELIN seeks to connect with and provide resources for language practitioners, researchers, policy makers, parents, and advocates for language learning across the United States.

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We are affiliated with and supported by *China Learning Initiatives* at Asia Society, which has a strong track record in leading and supporting the Chinese language field.

CELIN BRIEFS

Discussion of ways to develop students' literacy and global competency through learning of Chinese language and culture

Purposes:

- Respond to an urgent need in the field of Chinese language education for research-based information; examples of best practices; and resources for administrators, teachers, and parents
- Address different aspects of Chinese language education; available in English and Chinese; applicable to elementary (K–8), middle, and high school, and even college Chinese language programs

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Briefs Series



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Designing and Implementing Chinese Language Programs: Preparing Students for the Real World

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CITATION

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Introduction

In this interconnected world, language skills are personal and societal assets and a critical component of intercultural competence. Foreign language education has made a clear transition from treating language study as a body of knowledge about language to the teaching of intercultural communicative competency that students need to function effectively in real life situations.

The importance of knowing Chinese language and culture is widely recognized, as China's roles and influence on the global stage have increased. The demand for professionals in all fields (e.g., commerce, education, law, tourism, medicine, science, technology, government, and international affairs) who are proficient in Mandarin, among Chinese dialects, and competent to interact successfully in Chinese cultures is on the rise. Schools with Chinese programs are working hard to meet this demand, seeking to close the opportunity gap for students and positioning themselves at the forefront of developing students with global competency for advanced study and work.

As Chinese is taught in more K-12 schools, many schools face challenges with designing and implementing a program that leads students to attain advanced levels of oral proficiency and literacy in Chinese. Programs should include

to communicate in Chinese with speakers of the language but also possess 21st century skills in problem solving, critical thinking, collaborative engagement, and a strong sense of global citizenship. Such programs will have in place a curriculum with clearly defined language goals that are aligned with proficiency standards, instructional practices that foster learner-centered instruction, and highly qualified and effective teachers and administrators. These Chinese language programs

- Have the goal of ensuring that students develop global competency for the real world
- Set clear language learning expectations aligned with recognized proficiency scales and career demands
- Are student-centered and experiential in orientation
- Are standards-based and integrate language, subject matters, and culture
- Employ best practices in instruction
- Assess student learning outcomes through performances via multiple measures
- Provide opportunities and support for Chinese language teachers to engage in reflective practice and continuous professional development

Global Competency for the Real World

- Advanced language & cultural competency in Chinese is increasingly important
- Critical need for bilingual professionals in all fields
- Critical need for 21st century skills in problem solving, critical thinking, global competency



Global Competency in the Classroom

- Investigate the world beyond the immediate environment
- Recognize multiple perspectives
- Bridge geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers
- Take action to improve conditions



Student-Centered and Experiential Learning



I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.

- Confucius

Student-Centered and Experiential Learning

Why?

- Chinese programs need to be inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds
- Curriculum and instruction must be aligned with the needs and realities of students
- Impact must be measured by student progress
- Traditional textbook-/teacher-centered programs do not serve students well
- Learning must be personally meaningful
- Expected outcomes cannot be divorced from real-world experiences

Experiential Learning: Benefits

- Emphasis on “learning by doing”
- Provides rich opportunities for improving skills
- Increases motivation
- Helps students become independent learners
- Brings the classroom alive
- Prepares students for real-world language use
- Builds cross-cultural understanding and friendships

Experiential Learning: What the Research Says

... Students who have the opportunity to be immersed in Chinese language, culture, and society both in and out of the classroom typically have significantly better short-term and long-term appreciation for the target language and culture.

(Xu, Padilla, Silva, & Masuda, 2013)

The Hosford Middle School Experience

- Two-week residency in Suzhou area
- Maximizes language skills and cultural competency
- Homestay, small-group field studies, research projects
- Community service
- Reflection
- Capstone

Video: [China Research Residency, Suzhou, China](#)

Standards-Based Curriculum

I. World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

5 Goals

- Communication
- Culture
- Connections
- Comparisons
- Communities

Standards-Based Curriculum

II. Common Core State Standards

- K-12 benchmarks for reading skills
- K-12 benchmarks for writing skills

III. 21st Century Skills

- Life and Career Skills
- Learning and Innovation Skills
- Technology Skills

Integration of Language, Subject Matter, and Culture

- Constant integration of culture and content
- Use of
 - A variety of authentic materials
 - Print and non-print materials
 - Auditory materials
 - Digital multimedia materials
 - Age- and level-appropriate materials

Performance-Based Assessment

- Conduct ongoing assessment
- Avoid paper-pencil tests
- Refer to ACTFL Can-Do statements
(https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Can-Do_Statements.pdf)
- Assess various dimensions
- Use scoring rubrics
- Provide ongoing feedback

Best Practices in Instruction

- End goals are clearly set
- Content is organized into thematic units
- Instruction is student-centered
- Language input and output are comprehensible
- 90% or higher of language used is the target language
- Language is used both inside and outside the classroom

Best Practices Ensure Best Learning Experiences

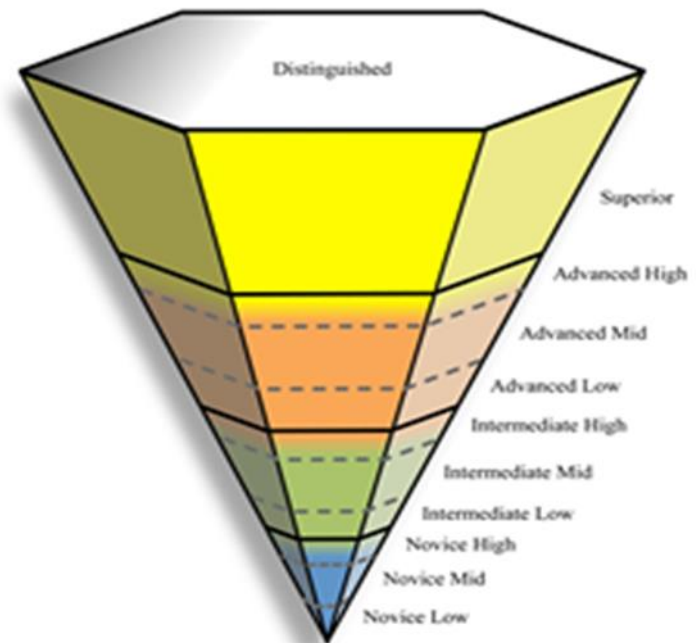
- Age- and level-appropriate real-world materials and tasks
- Learner-centered instruction with emphasis on comprehensible language input and ample language output at the target proficiency level
- Individualized instruction and group collaborative learning for problem solving and critical thinking



Language Learning for Sustaining Lifelong Engagement

Real-world communications in rich cultural contexts for young learners

Develop lifelong language and cultural proficiency and appreciation



Teachers Who Make Change and Lead

1. 昨夜西风凋碧树。独上高楼，望尽天涯路。

Westerly winds withered the trees last night. Alone, climbing up the stairs, I looked out over the endless distance.

2. 衣带渐宽终不悔，为伊消得人憔悴。

My clothes loosen gradually for I am becoming thin; yet I have no regrets, I languish for her.

3. 蓦然回首，那人却在灯火阑珊处。

Suddenly I turned my head, and I found her where the lantern light is dimly shed.

**WE HOPE YOU WILL
JOIN US!**



Questions? Comments?

谢谢！ Thank you!

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