

Stowers IB Primary Years Program (PYP)

The PYP promotes an international perspective which recognizes and welcomes the diversity of student experiences and backgrounds. Stowers strives towards developing an internationally-minded student who demonstrates the attributes of the **IB learner profile** and the **IB PYP attitudes**.

The core curriculum is taught by the classroom teacher while Spanish, library, and computer education are taught by specialist teachers. We try to incorporate all Information Communication Technology is integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

The IB Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the International Baccalaureate Program used at Stowers are:

- Students are able to develop a holistic attitude to knowledge
- Students' own cultural experiences and backgrounds and those of our diverse teaching and community are valuable learning resources; we encourage acceptance through their own intercultural awareness.
- Our Students ability to express ideas both reflects and deepens their understanding; Stowers students' communication skills are central to their learning.

The aim of our IB program is to enhance the internationally mindedness in our students by helping them recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, and to help them create a better and more peaceful world.

Program of Inquiry

The PYP Program of Inquiry is a matrix made up of six **Transdisciplinary Themes** (Who we are; Where we are in time and place; How we express ourselves; How the world works; How we organize ourselves; and Sharing the Planet).

Each Transdisciplinary Theme is accompanied by an extended description that explains what students will be inquiring into under this theme. It is used as a tool to ensure the balance of the Units of Inquiry under each theme.

Central Ideas

Each of the units of inquiry has a **central idea**. Each central idea will support students' understanding of the particular transdisciplinary theme it is connected to, and challenges and extends students' prior knowledge. The central idea is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant.

Stowers Program of Inquiry demonstrates the opportunity for deeper exploration of all eight PYP key concepts mentioned above.

The central idea is designed to promote conceptual development. The concepts help the students to develop their understanding and extend their critical thinking capacity.

Lines of Inquiry

Each unit will contain three or four lines of inquiry. The lines of inquiry clarify the central idea and define the scope of the inquiry. These contributing aspects of the central idea extend the inquiry, give focus to students' research, and deepen students' understanding. Connections are made, as appropriate, between the lines of inquiry as well as with the central idea.

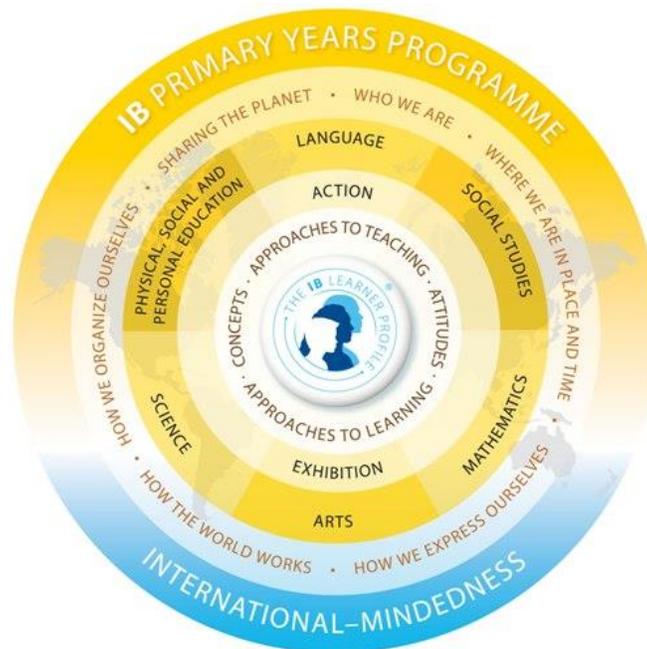
Units of Inquiry

We use an inquiry-based approach where our teaching methods build upon individual understandings, knowledge and interests, emphasizing how to learn and how to delve deeper, while developing critical thinking skills. The teacher created and written units of inquiry make up our school's program of inquiry. The units and overall program are developed under the IB's transdisciplinary skills (approaches to learning), making learning for understanding more effective.

Each unit of inquiry allows the students to explore key concepts such as:

- Form –What is it like?
- Function –How does it work?
- Causation –Why is it like it is?
- Change –How is it changing?
- Connection - How is it connected to other things?
- Perspective - What are the points of view?
- Responsibility - What is our responsibility?
- Reflection - How do we know?

Concepts are big ideas that students inquire into to ensure that they understand what they are learning.



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Essential Elements

The PYP curriculum gives students the opportunity to take an **active** role in their learning and is based on five **essential elements**:

- **concepts**,
- **skills**,
- **knowledge**,
- **attitudes**
- **action**

We also recognize that knowledge is an important part of the curriculum. Students will gain knowledge of the transdisciplinary themes outlined above as well as the single subjects described on this page.

The PYP also requires the development of **transdisciplinary themes** which transcend the individual subject areas. These include thinking, communication, social, research and self-management skills.

We also aim to develop appropriate attitudes, including appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect and tolerance.

Finally, students are encouraged to apply all that they have learned by taking action, not only in the school community, but also in the world around them. Effective action is voluntary and involves the students exercising their own initiative and taking on that responsibility.

Transdisciplinary Themes

The PYP has six transdisciplinary themes that provide the framework for learning. These themes are globally significant and support the acquisition of knowledge, concepts and skills of the traditional subjects. They are revisited throughout the students' time in the PYP.

Who we are

An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; and what it means to be human.

Where we are in place and time

An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; and the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

How we express ourselves

An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

How the world works

An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; and the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we organize ourselves

An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

Sharing the planet

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.



The IB-PYP Learner Profiles

The aim of all IB program is to develop internationally minded students who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. Stowers IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers - Students nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. Students know how to learn independently and with others. They learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable - Students develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. They engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers - Students use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. They exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators - Students express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. Students collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled - Students act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. They take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-minded - Students critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. They seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring - Students show empathy, compassion and respect. Students have a commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around them.

Risk-takers - Students approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; they work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. Students are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced - Students understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for themselves and others. They recognize their interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective - Students thoughtfully consider the world and their own ideas and experience. Students work to understand their strengths and weaknesses in order to support learning and personal development.

The IB-PYP Attitudes

In our PYP school we expect our Stowers students to embrace and demonstrate these 12 attitudes:

Appreciation - Appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people.

Commitment - Being committed to their own learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility.

Confidence - Feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices.

Cooperation - Cooperating, collaborating, and leading or following as the situation demands.

Creativity - Being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas.

Curiosity - Being curious about the nature of learning, about the world, its people and cultures.

Empathy - Imagining themselves in another's situation in order to understand his or her reasoning and emotions, so as to be open-minded and reflective about the perspectives of others.

Enthusiasm - Enjoying learning and willingly putting the effort into the process.

Independence - Thinking and acting independently, making their own judgments based on reasoned argument, and being able to defend their judgments.

Integrity - Being honest and demonstrating a considered sense of fairness.

Respect - Respecting themselves, others and the world around them.

Tolerance - Being sensitive about differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others.

Sixth Grade Exhibition

Students in their final year of the PYP at STOWERS participate in a culminating project, the Sixth Grade PYP Exhibition. It is not only a celebration as students move from the Primary Years Program into the Secondary School but also a final assessment where each student is required to demonstrate engagement with the essential elements of the PYP: **knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes** and **action**. The Exhibition compliments the **Units of Inquiry** which form the basis of the Sixth grade curriculum.

Students engage in a collaborative, transdisciplinary inquiry that involves them in identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real-life issues or problems.

Parents, students and community members are invited to attend the Sixth Grade Exhibition.

Exhibition assessment

As the culminating PYP experience exhibition reflects all the major features of the program and it includes regular and carefully planned assessment. This assessment takes two forms:

- ongoing assessment of each individual student's contribution to and understanding of the exhibition
- a summative assessment and reflection on the event itself.