

World Language Curriculum Corner

“When we strive to understand others - their language and what is important in their lives, we are more inclined to find common human purpose - more likely to listen and to trust those who at first may seem different.” @grantboulanger

This year, Spanish clubs across the district found authentic uses for language within their building and deepened their understanding of cultural connections. At Intermediate North, Spanish Club learned about the cultural significance of *Cinco de Mayo*, and made papel picado and maracas. Intermediate East’s Spanish Club teamed up with the Technology Club to create signs to label the different places in school. Students used a laser printer to print labels out on wood and then painted them the school colors. And On June 6th, Intermediate South will host its School Club Day where members of the Spanish Club will share traditional foods such as empanadas, tamales, and flan. Through these types of activities, students examine their own connection to language, and find a purpose for how learning another language is relevant in their own lives.

World language students continue to learn and apply vocabulary and phrases to speak and engage in conversation about the world around them. Sixth and seventh grade students are working on authentic texts taken from Latino culture, including Mayan history, and depending on the story they are learning, students are discovering how to describe physical characteristics of animals and habitats. Eighth grade students are learning to describe themselves and others using words to talk about hair color, age, height, personality and other characteristics. They are also learning words that describe relationships to others in their family or social groups. Final projects include oral presentations, storyboards, rehearsed skits, and/or interpretive listening exercises.

One of the most amazing things is that throughout each one of these topics and grade levels, literacy skills and authentic texts are used to anchor the vocabulary and build background knowledge so that students learn about language and culture, all while connecting learning to their other subject areas. Skills such as identifying character traits, retelling a story, describing setting, and identifying main idea and details are all key skills students use as they improve their language proficiency. Can you believe that in a few short weeks students are able to use context clues to read and interpret a text in Spanish? Try this fun interpretive reading exercise at home with your child to see if you can answer the true or false question:

Cierto o Falso (True or False)

El 5 de mayo es el día de independencia de México.

Respuesta: Falso. El día de independencia es el 16 de septiembre. El 5 de mayo de 1862, los soldados mexicanos ganaron una batalla muy famosa contra el ejército francés en la ciudad de Puebla, México.

So, how did you do?