



Language ab initio

Nature of the Subject

Language ab initio is available in French and Spanish. It is an intensive language acquisition course designed for students with no prior experience of the target language, or for those students with very limited previous exposure, reaching A2-B1 by EU language competency standards. At the language ab initio level, a student develops, at a fast pace, receptive, productive and interactive communicative skills in the target language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts. In more practical terms, students will be able to:

- understand, both aurally and in writing, simple sentences and some more complex sentences relating to the five prescribed themes and related topics.
- express information fairly accurately, in both writing and in speech, using a range of basic vocabulary and grammatical structures.
- understand and respond clearly to some information and ideas within the range of the five prescribed themes and related topics while

engaging in simple conversations and using strategies to negotiate meaning and foster communication.

Syllabus outline

The syllabus approaches the learning of language through meaning. Through the study of the five themes listed below, students build the necessary skills to reach the assessment objectives of the course through the development of their receptive, productive and interactive skills:

- Identity
- Experiences
- Human Ingenuity
- Social Organization
- Sharing the Planet

Prior Learning

Any student who is already able to understand and respond to spoken and written language on a range of common topics can not be placed in language ab initio as this would not provide an appropriate academic challenge, nor is it fair for those students who are genuine beginners of the language

Assessment Objectives

Having followed the Diploma Programme course in Language ab initio, students will be expected to:

1. Communicate clearly and effectively in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes.

2. Understand and use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or intercultural contexts and audiences.
3. Understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with fluency and accuracy.
4. Identify, organize and present ideas on a range of topics.
5. Understand, analyze and reflect upon a range of written, audio, visual and audio-visual texts.

Teaching Approach

In our Language ab initio courses, we focus on inquiry-based learning, where students actively explore and ask questions, diving into topics on their own. We emphasize understanding concepts, not just memorizing facts, so students really get the big picture. Our classes are globally oriented, helping students understand different cultures and perspectives. We recognize that everyone learns differently, so we adapt our teaching to meet these diverse needs. Finally, we encourage students to work together; this way, they learn from each other and build communication skills. These approaches help make learning more effective and engaging.

Why students might choose this subject

Studying Language ab initio in the IB program enhances communication skills and cultural understanding. This course offers students appreciation of a new culture through language study, opening up global perspectives and career opportunities. It not only involves the development of linguistic skills but also develops critical thinking skills. Ideal for those aiming for international careers or education, Language ab initio is a stepping stone to becoming a global citizen, equipped with the skills to thrive in a diverse world.

Course Assessment

The **final Diploma grade** in the subject is determined by two assessment components:

1. Internal assessment: Individual oral assessment (25%)

A conversation with the teacher, based on a visual stimulus and at least one additional course theme (30 marks). This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.

2. External assessment: Paper 1 & Paper 2 (75%)

Paper 1 (1 hour) 25%

Productive skills—writing (30 marks)

Two written tasks of 70–150 words each from a choice of three tasks, choosing a text type for each task from among those listed in the examination instructions.

Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes) 50%

Receptive skills—separate sections for listening and reading (65 marks)

Listening comprehension (45 minutes) (25 marks)

Reading comprehension (1 hour) (40 marks)

Comprehension exercises on three audio passages and three written texts, drawn from all five themes.