

Global Village Academy
Immersion Student Interview Protocol for Entry Into the Program
(Developed by Eileen Lorenz, February 9, 2013)

The Global Village Academy, a set of international charter schools in Colorado (<http://www.globalvillageacademy.org/>), uses the oral language assessment provided here. It is used as an informal screening for students entering the immersion program after first grade and entering second through fifth grades. Students are usually not allowed to enter the program unless they possess a level of proficiency in Chinese that is benchmarked by grade.

Note to assessment administrators: All materials used during the interview should be in the language that is taught in the program. All communication with a student candidate should be in the language as well. The objective of this interview is to gather information about a student's proficiency in the language in an immersion classroom. The interviewer(s) **should not correct** either language or information that a student shares during the interview. If a student does not understand a question, try to ask it another way or add gestures, pictures, or items to help him/her understand. Keep track of your use of additional clues to help determine a student's level of understanding and use of the language. The interviewer may also use a **puppet or stuffed animal** or provide students with a puppet or stuffed animal to put the students at ease.

1. Introduction

Welcome the student and introduce yourself. Tell the student that you understand that s/he knows the language (Chinese, French, etc.) and that you would like them to show you **how much** they know.

Sample opening questions to put the student at ease:

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- Do you have brothers or sisters?
- Do you have pets (prompting with suggestions such as a dog, a cat, a bird)?
- Do you like sports?

Note: For the more advanced levels – grades 3-4-5 -- begin by asking specific questions, noted above, and transition to general questions about the above information.

Examples of more general questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you like to do when you are not at school? Why do you like to do this?
- What is your favorite food/TV program/game? Why?

Note: If the student does not respond, revert to the specific questions noted above.

2. Understanding and Following Directions

Place 4 common school items, such as a pencil, paper, eraser, book, calendar (in the target language and format used in class) on the table.

Begin with simple requests.

- Please point to the pencil; paper; eraser; book; and calendar.
- Can you point to today's date?
- Can you tell me what today's date is?

Give the student directions:

- Please take the pencil and write your name at the top of the paper.
- Under your name, please write the date. (To encourage a student who does not seem to understand, add cues, such as pointing to the objects to see if this assists the student in understanding and completing a task.)

3. Math and Explaining

Show the student a math problem from the Placement Test for Singapore Primary Mathematics, selecting the level **preceding** student's entry. The item should be administered in the immersion language. For example, a student candidate for Grade 4 should be given an item from the Grade 3B Placement Test. For this portion of the interview, it does not matter if the student's answer is right or wrong. Focus on noting the language used for the explanation of HOW the problem was solved. Encourage students to draw pictures on their paper to help them solve the problem.

Suggested items are listed below.

- *Entering 2nd Grade* – Item from Assessment Test for Singapore Primary Mathematics 1B:

Item 2 – page 1 - number sense

Item 4 – page 2 – addition, problem solving. Ask the student to explain or show you (with manipulatives or by drawing a picture) how s/he found the answer.

- *Entering 3rd Grade* – Item from Assessment Test for Singapore Primary Mathematics 2B:

Item 3 – page 1 – operations: multiplication and division

Item 14 – page 4 – telling time and problem solving. Ask the student to explain or show you (with manipulatives or by drawing a picture) how s/he found the answer.

- *Entering 4th Grade* – Item from Assessment Test for Singapore Primary Mathematics 3B:

Item 8 – fractions Ask the student to explain one of the answers. Encourage the student to draw a picture to help explain it to you.

Item 12 or 14 – perimeter, operations, problem solving. Ask the student to explain or show you (with manipulatives or by drawing a picture) how s/he found the answer.

- *Entering 5th Grade* – Item from Assessment Test for Singapore Primary Mathematics 4B:

Item 2 – page1 – decimals and fractions as a mixed number

Item 6 – page 3 – money, measurement and problem solving. Ask the student to explain or show you (with manipulatives or by drawing a picture) how s/he found the answer.

4. Reading, Reading Comprehension, and Explaining

Select an appropriate target language text from the level preceding the student's entry. The text may be either sentences or a book but **must have contextual clues** (pictures that support the text) that are

grade and age appropriate. Texts without contextual clues should NOT be used. You should have available texts of three different levels, going from easy to more difficult, so that you may select a text based on the language that a student has used during the interview.

Tell the student that you would like them to read a short text. For example:

Here is a short paragraph (or sentence) that I am going to ask you to read. First, I'd like you to read it to yourself. Read it **silently**. Try to understand what this is about. (Wait 1 minute or adequate time for the student to read it to her/himself.) Now, I'd like you to read it aloud to me.

(Help the student if they are having difficulty. Remember that reading aloud is a skill that is independent of reading silently and understanding.) If the text appears to be too difficult, give them the text from the next level down.

Teacher: Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the text.

Ask comprehension questions, beginning with simple one-word answers. Ask students to put their answers in a complete sentence, noting if they are able to do this or not. Next ask more general open-ended questions.

Examples:

Simple questions (based on story structure):

- Who is the main character?
- Is there a problem?
- What is the problem?
- Where does the story take place? How do you know this?

More open-ended questions:

- What is this story about? or What happens in this story?
- Who are the main characters? Tell me about (one character).
- What do you think about...?

5. Closing the Interview

At the end of the interview, try to ask the student a question that you are sure that s/he can answer to end on a positive note. Thank the student and tell them that you enjoyed talking with them.