

Questions & Answers

1. What eventual effect does an immersion program have on verbal and mathematical skills in English?
 - Studies have consistently shown that immersion students do as well as, and may even surpass, comparable non-immersion students on measures of verbal and mathematical skills.
2. Will the achievement of immersion students keep pace with non-immersion students?
 - Primary (K-3) immersion students usually do well on measures of reading comprehension but have difficulty with English spelling, punctuation, and similar language-specific skills. Later, when English language arts instruction is formally introduced, this lag in achievement diminishes.
3. What commitment is required from immersion students and their parents?
 - Parents are asked to commit to immersion through 5th grade.
 - Parents are asked to read English stories with their children daily.
 - Students are asked to read Spanish literature at home, even though the parents may not understand the content.

4. Are there other programs like this?
 - Immersion as an instructional strategy originated in North America in Quebec in 1963. Currently, more than 100,000 Canadian children study in immersion programs. U.S. interest first developed in California in 1971.
 - Successful programs exist in Lehigh and Allegheny Counties in Pennsylvania, in several Maryland counties and in 30 other states.
5. What sources of information exist about immersion studies?
 - Advocates for Language Learning
P. O. Box 32083
Kansas City, MO 64171
 - Center for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd St. NW
Washington, DC 20037
6. What does research indicate?
 - Immersion students acquire remarkable proficiency as compared to traditional second language programs.
 - Generally, immersion students show equal performance to their English-speaking peers in measures* of content mastery in mathematics, science, and social studies.

*Administered in English.



Manheim Township
School District

Spanish Immersion Program

Immersion is...

A method of instruction in which the regular school curriculum is taught through the medium of foreign language. At times the target language itself is the focus of instruction. Generally, the language is learned concurrently with curricular content.

By the end of 5th grade, immersion students will...

Achieve the curricular expectations maintained for all Manheim Township School District elementary students.

Demonstrate progress in the development of English skills.

Develop proficiency in Spanish reading, listening, writing, and speaking.

Communicate effectively and appropriately in Spanish in a wide range of situations and for a variety of purposes.

Develop positive attitudes towards themselves as bilingual students.

Demonstrate awareness of Spanish dialects and appreciation for Hispanic cultures.



Premise...

Children learn language by using it. Children learn a second language in the same way they learn their first language: by practicing with and imitating encouraging adults, and by needing their new language to communicate and learn.

Rationale...

Foreign language skills benefit individual citizens as they strive for success in a global society. (*Manheim Township Mission Statement*)

Children best learn a second language when they use it for daily classroom life and learning.

Immersion enhances cognitive growth as students build vocabulary, concepts and experiences in two languages.

Sequence of Instruction...

K
Spanish*

Grade 1
Spanish*

Grade 2
Spanish*

Grade 3
Spanish* with English taught as a separate subject

Grade 4
Spanish* with English taught as a separate subject

Grade 5
Spanish* with English and one other subject taught as a separate subject

Grade 6
Social Studies taught in Spanish.
Only Spanish spoken in homeroom.
All other subjects taught in English.

Grades 7 and 8
One period of Spanish with focus on grammar, writing and reading

Grade 9-12
Spanish as an elective

*Exception: Elementary art, music, physical education, library

