
Foreign Language Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools



**Board of Education
Commonwealth of Virginia**

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Foreign Language Standards of Learning

for
Virginia
Public Schools

**Adopted in February 2007 by the
Board of Education**

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Foreword

The Standards of Learning in this publication represent a major development in public education in Virginia. Adopted in February 2007 by the Virginia Board of Education, these standards emphasize the importance of foreign language instruction in the Commonwealth and, therefore, are an important part of Virginia's efforts to provide challenging educational programs in the public schools and to enhance the preparation of Virginia's students to compete in a rapidly expanding global society. Knowledge and skills that students acquire in their foreign language classes will reinforce and expand their learning in other subject areas, enable them to interact effectively with others, and give them increased access to information across the world.

Reflecting a review of the previous standards adopted in June 2000, the Foreign Language Standards of Learning were developed through a series of public hearings and the efforts of many classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, administrators, and college faculty. These persons assisted the Department of Education in developing and reviewing the draft documents.

Copies of the Foreign Language Standards of Learning have been distributed to public schools throughout Virginia for school divisions and teachers to use in developing curricula and lesson plans to support the standards. These standards state the end-of-course requirements in levels I through IV of French, German, Spanish, and Latin. The standards for level IV focus on refinement of language skills and may be applied to levels V, VI, and above by adjusting specific course content. There are also generic Modern Foreign Language Standards of Learning, levels I through IV, that may be adapted to other modern languages, including non-Roman-alphabet languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian.

The Standards of Learning set reasonable targets and expectations for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each language course offered for a standard unit of credit. Schools are encouraged to go beyond the prescribed standards to enrich the curriculum to meet the needs of all students. However, in order for students to become proficient in other languages, they must have opportunities for longer sequences of language study; therefore, school divisions are encouraged to offer foreign language instruction beginning in the elementary grades. The standards set clear, concise, and measurable academic expectations for young people. Parents are encouraged to work with their children to help them achieve the standards.

A major objective of Virginia's educational agenda is to give its citizens a program of public education that is among the best in the nation and that meets the needs of all young people in the Commonwealth. These Standards of Learning continue the process for achieving that objective.

Introduction

The Foreign Language Standards of Learning identify essential content, processes, and skills for each level of language learning in Virginia’s secondary schools. Included are specific standards for levels I through IV of French, German, Spanish, and Latin, as well as generic standards adaptable for levels I through IV of other modern languages, including non-Roman-alphabet languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian. The standards for level IV focus on refinement of language skills and may be applied to levels V, VI, and above by adjusting specific course content. In addition, a curriculum framework for American Sign Language has been developed for levels I through III and is published in a separate document.

Each level of the modern language standards is organized into seven content strands and contains a total of 10 to 12 standards that outline the knowledge, skills, and processes essential for language learning. Each level of the Latin standards is organized into six content strands and contains a total of seven or eight standards that focus on interpretation of text. Each standard is followed by two or more essential components of the standard. Examples following the phrase *such as* in some of the components are suggestions offered to clarify the intent of the standard and are not requirements.

The emphasis on communication and interpretation ensures that students completing long-term, sequential foreign language programs in Virginia’s secondary schools will be able to interact, within reasonable limits, with users of the language and understand their culture. The level of proficiency reached depends largely on the amount of contact with the target language; therefore, school divisions are encouraged to offer foreign language instruction beginning in the elementary schools. However, the ability to communicate comfortably with native speakers of the language about most topics is not obtained solely through classroom study. Students should be encouraged to pursue opportunities beyond the normal classroom setting, including long-term contact with, or immersion in, the target language and culture(s), such as participation in the Virginia Governor’s Foreign Language Academies.

The standards are intended to provide a framework from which school divisions may develop local curricula based on the needs of their students and community. The standards do not comprise the curriculum for a given course or prescribe how the content should be taught. The concepts and structures for each level should be presented in a spiraling fashion that allows them to be reintroduced with increasing complexity at various stages of language development. In addition, local assessments designed to measure students’ ability to use the target language should be aligned to local curricula and state standards.

Several terms that have particular significance within foreign language education are used throughout the document. Reference is frequently made to “culturally authentic materials,” which are materials that have been created for and by native speakers of the language and that have been derived from the culture itself. In addition, because language courses are sequential, reference is made to “level-appropriate” linguistic elements, skills, or instructional materials. “Level-appropriate” means that the content, process, skill, or material described requires students to function at the level they have attained. For example, the same instructional resource, such as a culturally authentic text or video, may be used at various levels of instruction by simply matching the linguistic task assigned to the students with their level of language proficiency. “Cultural competence” refers to the appropriateness of a response within a social context.

Goals

Achieving linguistic fluency and cultural understanding is a long-term endeavor, requiring experiences beyond the classroom setting. Within the scope of the level of study, students will be able to perform with reasonable success in each of the following areas:

Effective Communication

- Students will learn to communicate with others in a language other than English.
- Students will improve their understanding of and ability to communicate in the English language by comparing and contrasting another language with their own.

Enhanced Cultural Understanding

- Students will develop an awareness of and an appreciation for another people's unique way of life, the patterns of behavior that order their world, and the ideas and perspectives that guide their behaviors.
- Students will learn about other cultures' contributions to the world and how these contributions have shaped international perspectives.

Expanded Access to Information

- Students will connect with other disciplines through foreign language study, enabling them to reinforce and expand their understanding of the interrelationships among content areas.
- Students will access information in more than one language, giving them a greater range of resources and a richer base of knowledge.

Increased Global Perspective

- Students will respond to and contribute to their communities and the world in a more informed and effective manner as a result of the global perspective gained in a foreign language class.
- Students will gain additional prospects for further education and career opportunities as a result of foreign language study.

Strands

The content of the Modern Foreign Language Standards of Learning is organized around the following seven essential strands (defined on the following pages) of language development and application:

- Person-to-Person Communication
- Listening and Reading for Understanding
- Oral and Written Presentation
- Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products
- Making Connections through Language
- Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons
- Communication across Communities

Person-to-Person Communication

The first strand focuses on the communicative skills needed to exchange information in the target language with another person. When demonstrating skills in the person-to-person strand, students demonstrate their ability to initiate, sustain, and close a conversation or an interactive written communication, such as an e-mail exchange.

Listening and Reading for Understanding

The second strand consists of the communicative skills necessary to comprehend speaking and writing in the target language. The student's level of communicative competence is indicated by the degree of comprehension of spoken or written language, together with interpretation of other visual and auditory cues given by the speaker or writer. This strand differs from the person-to-person strand in that the skills involve understanding one-way communication with no opportunity for clarification through interaction.

Oral and Written Presentation

The third strand centers around the communicative skills needed to present information in the target language orally or in writing to an audience. This set of skills calls for the student to be able to organize thoughts and deliver presentations to a variety of audiences. These skills involve both spontaneous and prepared presentations and, again, differ from the person-to-person strand in that students do not interact with the audience.

Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products

Understanding the culture of native speakers of the target language is an integral part of learning any language. Students demonstrate their understanding of the inextricable link between language and culture by developing an understanding of the perspectives or viewpoints, practices or patterns of behavior, and products of the culture(s). In-depth understanding of these elements of culture improves the students' ability to interact appropriately with native speakers of the language and to function successfully within that cultural setting.

Making Connections through Language

Topics addressed in the foreign language classroom provide an opportunity for students to connect information about the language and culture(s) they are learning with concepts being studied in other subject areas. In addition, students are able to enhance their knowledge of other subject areas by accessing additional information in the target language. This reciprocal reinforcement and enhancement of curricular concepts increases students' in-depth understanding of the total curriculum.

Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons

The process of language learning causes students to reflect on their own culture and language in a way that increases their understanding of the nature of language in general and of elements of their own language and culture. As students become more knowledgeable about the target language, they increase their skills in their native language by making frequent comparisons between the target language and their own. The insight students develop into their own culture helps them increase their understanding of and openness to people who speak other languages and who may view the world from a different perspective.

Communication across Communities

Knowledge of the target language and culture is enhanced when students have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge beyond the classroom setting. This application can take many forms, from corresponding with a native speaker of the language to visiting nearby sites where the language and culture are prominent. Without traveling far, Virginia students can find myriad opportunities to make these connections, for example, by interacting with ethnic populations within the local community, establishing contacts with foreign-owned businesses that have offices and factories in many parts of the state, and using numerous resources available through the Internet and other media. Practical application of their language skills motivates students to continue their language study and develop a lifelong interest in participating in the global community.

For Latin language learning, six strands have been identified. The first two focus on the particular skills needed by students to read and interpret Latin texts, while the remaining four are common with the modern foreign language strands:

- Reading for Understanding
- Using Oral and Written Language for Understanding
- Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products
- Making Connections through Language
- Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons
- Communication across Communities

Reading for Understanding

The focus of a Latin program is the ability of students to derive cultural as well as linguistic information from a Latin text. Students must be able to interpret a Latin text in order to understand the ancient world through the thoughts and information expressed by the author. Beginning students learn to comprehend basic Latin sentences and stories and are introduced as early as possible to authentic texts, such as graffiti from the Roman world or short philosophical statements of the ancient Romans.

Using Oral and Written Language for Understanding

The ability of students to read a Latin text is facilitated through their active use of oral and written Latin. For many students, hearing the language and learning to use it orally enables them to read and understand Latin text more easily. As part of the language-learning process, students learn to ask and answer questions, comprehend spoken texts, and compose simple phrases and sentences in Latin. As students progress in their language study, attention shifts from writing the language to developing the ability to read Latin texts aloud with attention to meter and phrasing.

Latin Standards of Learning

**for
Virginia
Public Schools**

Latin I

In Latin I, students begin to develop the ability to comprehend simple written Latin texts based on a variety of topics. The first strand of the Latin Standards of Learning focuses on interpretation of texts because the focus is on comprehension rather than person-to-person communication. To support the development of reading skills, students learn to use Latin orally, understand oral Latin, and write very simple phrases and sentences. Students also learn about the perspectives, practices, and products of the ancient Romans as reflected in aspects of the daily lives of Roman people. Students compare these cultural and historical elements to their own culture and recognize examples of the influence of Greco-Roman civilization in their own world. Through their understanding of the structures and vocabulary of the Latin language, students enhance their understanding of these same linguistic elements of English.

Reading for Understanding

- LI.1 The student will understand simple written Latin texts about a variety of topics.
1. Read words, phrases, simple sentences, and short passages, and associate them with visual representations.
 2. Demonstrate reading comprehension by answering simple questions about Latin passages.
 3. Demonstrate knowledge of basic Latin vocabulary, inflections, and syntax.

Using Oral and Written Language for Understanding

- LI.2 The student will use Latin orally and listen to and write Latin as part of the language-learning process.
1. Recognize and reproduce the sounds of Latin vowels, consonants, and diphthongs.
 2. Initiate and respond appropriately to simple oral and written questions, statements, and commands.
 3. Compose simple Latin phrases and sentences.

Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products

- LI.3 The student will develop an awareness of perspectives, practices, and products of Roman culture.
1. Identify practices in Roman life, such as those related to family, education, occupations, mythology, and social structure.
 2. Examine products of the Romans, such as food, clothing, buildings, and art.
 3. Locate major geographical features of the classical world, such as bodies of water, mountain ranges, and cities.
 4. Identify important historical and legendary figures and events, such as Romulus, the founding of Rome, and the three periods of Roman history.
 5. Participate in simulated cultural activities, such as family celebrations, banquets, and festivals.

- LI.4 The student will recognize that perspectives, practices, and products of Roman culture are interrelated.
1. Recognize that products of the Roman world reflect practices and perspectives of Roman culture, such as the toga as the symbol of Roman citizenship.
 2. Examine ways geography and history influenced practices and perspectives of the Romans, such as the founding of Rome near the Tiber River.

Making Connections through Language

- LI.5 The student will connect information about the Latin language and Roman culture with concepts studied in other subject areas.
1. Give examples of the use of Latin vocabulary, numerals, mottoes, phrases, and symbols in other subject areas.
 2. Relate current events and content from other subject areas to topics discussed in Latin class, such as Greco-Roman mythology and the influence of geography, history, art, and architecture.

Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons

- LI.6 The student will demonstrate understanding of the significance of culture through comparisons between Roman culture and the cultures of the United States.
1. Compare and contrast elements of Roman and American cultures, such as eating habits, clothing styles, educational practices, architectural styles, and family and social structures.
 2. Demonstrate an awareness of unique elements of the student's own culture.
- LI.7 The student will compare basic elements of the Latin language to those of the English language.
1. Recognize that the basic language patterns of Latin may differ significantly from those of English.
 2. Interpret the Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes that appear in English words.
 3. Compare and contrast the sound systems of Latin and English.

Communication across Communities

- LI.8 The student will explore situations in which to apply Latin language skills and cultural knowledge beyond the classroom setting for recreational, educational, and occupational purposes.
1. Present examples of the Latin language and classical Roman culture evident in media, entertainment, and occupations.
 2. Use resources, such as individuals and organizations in the community or accessible through the Internet, to gain information about classical Roman culture.

Latin II

In Latin II, students develop the ability to comprehend written Latin texts with more complex linguistic structures. The first strand of the Latin Standards of Learning focuses on interpretation of texts because the focus is on comprehension rather than person-to-person communication. Students understand adapted and/or authentic Latin from original sources. To support the development of reading skills, students continue to use and understand some oral Latin and write simple phrases and sentences. Students also learn about the perspectives, practices, and products of the ancient Romans as reflected in areas such as Roman architecture, art, and history. Students compare these cultural and historical elements to their own culture and find examples of the influence of Greco-Roman cultures in their own world. They also compare the effects of the geography of the ancient Roman world and that of the United States on aspects of culture, such as food, dwellings, clothing, and art.

Reading for Understanding

- LII.1 The student will understand written Latin texts based on various topics.
1. Read for information.
 2. Recognize the difference between giving literal meaning and paraphrasing.
 3. Demonstrate expanded knowledge of vocabulary and recognition of additional syntactical structures essential to comprehension.

Using Oral and Written Language for Understanding

- LII.2 The student will continue to use Latin orally and listen to and write Latin as part of the language-learning process.
1. Read Latin aloud with consistent pronunciation, meaningful phrase grouping, and appropriate voice inflection.
 2. Initiate and respond appropriately to oral and written questions, statements, and commands.
 3. Compose Latin sentences with expanded vocabulary and structures.

Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products

- LII.3 The student will demonstrate understanding of the perspectives, practices, and products of Roman culture and the ways these cultural aspects are interrelated.
1. Describe cultural characteristics and behaviors of the Romans, such as marriage and funeral customs, leisure activities, games, entertainment, and meals.
 2. Examine the influence of legendary and historical figures and/or events, such as Cincinnatus, Horatius, and the expulsion of the kings, on Roman perspectives.
 3. Examine the ways geography, history, and major cities, such as Carthage and the Punic Wars, and Athens and Greek culture, influenced the practices and perspectives of the Romans.
 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the architectural styles, art forms, and artifacts of the Romans as evidence of their cultural perspectives.
 5. Examine important myths of Greco-Roman origin, such as Ulysses and craftiness, and Mars as patron god of Rome, and their influence on Roman perspectives.
 6. Participate in simulated cultural activities, such as family celebrations, sports and entertainment, and festivals.

Making Connections through Language

- LII.4 The student will use information acquired in the study of Latin and information acquired in other subject areas to reinforce one another.
1. Give examples of the influence of the Latin language and Roman culture in other subject areas, such as the contributions of Roman architects to the world.
 2. Compare and contrast information acquired in other subject areas to topics discussed in Latin class, such as people and events of the Roman world.

Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons

- LII.5 The student will demonstrate understanding of cultural similarities and differences between the Roman world and the United States.
1. Compare and contrast traditions and customs of ancient Rome and the United States, such as those related to marriage, funerals, leisure activities, games, entertainment, and meals.
 2. Compare and contrast the legends and history of ancient Rome with those of the United States, such as Cincinnatus and George Washington.
 3. Compare and contrast the effects of the geography of the ancient Roman world and of the United States on aspects of culture, such as food, dwellings, clothing, and art.
- LII.6 The student will develop a deeper understanding of the English language through study of the Latin language.
1. Expand knowledge of English vocabulary by noting the relationship of Latin words to their English derivatives.
 2. Compare and contrast structural patterns of Latin and English.
 3. Compare the use of idiomatic expressions in Latin and English.

Communication across Communities

- LII.7 The student will apply knowledge of the Latin language and Greco-Roman culture in opportunities beyond the classroom setting for recreational, educational, and occupational purposes.
1. Present examples of the Latin language and Greco-Roman culture evident in media, entertainment, and occupations.
 2. Use resources, such as individuals and organizations in the community or accessible through the Internet, to reinforce cultural understanding of the Greco-Roman world.

Latin III

In Latin III, students develop the ability to comprehend authentic Latin texts with complex linguistic structures. The first strand of the Latin Standards of Learning focuses on interpretation of texts because the focus is on comprehension rather than person-to-person communication. Students expand their knowledge of archaeological evidence, art, and literature as reflections of Greco-Roman perspectives and practices. They examine the Roman political system, the multicultural aspects of the Roman Empire, and the role of geography in military history and compare these to similar aspects of United States politics, culture, geography, and history.

Reading for Understanding

- LIII.1 The student will comprehend and interpret adapted and authentic Latin texts based on a variety of topics.
1. Read for information.
 2. Interpret increasingly complex language structures, and expand vocabulary.
 3. Recognize figures of speech and stylistic features of Latin authors and texts.
 4. Identify social, political, and historical implications of the work(s) read.

Using Oral and Written Language for Understanding

- LIII.2 The student will increase skills in using and interpreting Latin orally.
1. Read adapted and authentic Latin aloud with consistent pronunciation, meaningful phrase grouping, and appropriate voice inflection.
 2. Comprehend oral Latin presented through a variety of media.

Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products

- LIII.3 The student will examine the interrelationships among the perspectives, practices, and products of Greco-Roman civilization.
1. Understand that literary and nonliterary products reflect practices and perspectives of the Greco-Roman world.
 2. Expand knowledge of archaeological evidence, art forms, and artifacts as reflections of Greco-Roman perspectives and practices.
 3. Examine the role of geography and the military in the history and development of the Greco-Roman world.
 4. Examine the effect of Roman political and social systems on private and public life.
 5. Analyze the multicultural aspect of the Greco-Roman world—for example, Cleopatra and Egypt, the Jews and Masada, Vercingetorix and Gaul—and its effect on the perspectives and practices of the Romans.

Making Connections through Language

- LIII.4 The student will reinforce and broaden knowledge of connections between Latin and other subject areas.
1. Present aspects of Greco-Roman cultures that are also found in modern cultures, such as art, architecture, and language.
 2. Relate topics studied in other subject areas to those studied in Latin class, such as the use of Latin words in scientific and legal terminology or the importance of archaeology as a tool for reconstructing the past.

Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons

- LIII.5 The student will discuss why similarities and differences exist within and among cultures.
1. Compare and contrast aspects of Greco-Roman culture, such as military conquests, diverse social and political systems, and economies, with similar aspects of other cultures.
 2. Explain the relationships between historical events and the development of culture(s) in the Roman world and in the United States.
- LIII.6 The student will strengthen knowledge of the English language through analysis of complex linguistic and syntactical elements of the Latin language.
1. Recognize that Latin and English do not share a word-for-word correspondence.
 2. Apply principles of word building and analysis.
 3. Analyze the structure of English by applying knowledge of linguistic concepts and terminology, such as subjunctive uses, indirect discourse, and verbals, acquired through the study of Latin.

Communication across Communities

- LIII.7 The student will apply knowledge of the Latin language and Greco-Roman culture beyond the classroom setting for recreational, educational, and occupational purposes.
1. Expand Latin language skills and cultural knowledge through the use of media, entertainment, and occupations.
 2. Use resources, such as individuals, museums, and organizations in the community or accessible through the Internet, to broaden cultural understanding.

Latin IV

In Latin IV, V, and above, students interpret and analyze authentic Latin in a variety of genres. The first strand of the Latin Standards of Learning focuses on interpretation of texts because the focus is on comprehension rather than person-to-person communication. Students analyze the effects of stylistic features, such as figures of speech, word choice, and meter, on an author's work. They expand their knowledge of the perspectives and practices of Greco-Roman civilization by examining its philosophy, religion, mythology, and standards of personal conduct. Students also discuss the contributions of the Romans to modern law, government, art, and architecture. The standards for level IV focus on refinement of language skills and may be applied to levels V, VI, and above by adjusting specific course content.

Reading for Understanding

- LIV.1 The student will interpret and analyze authentic Latin texts in selected genres.
1. Interpret and explain the content and intent of the texts read.
 2. Analyze and evaluate the effects of stylistic features, such as figures of speech, word choice and order, and meter, on the texts read.
 3. Discuss and analyze the social, political, and historical implications of the texts read.

Using Oral and Written Language for Understanding

- LIV.2 The student will refine skills in using and interpreting Latin orally.
1. Read authentic Latin aloud with consistent pronunciation, meaningful phrase grouping, appropriate voice inflection, and metrics.
 2. Identify elements of rhythm, meter, and rhetorical devices presented orally through a variety of media.

Cultural Perspectives, Practices, and Products

- LIV.3 The student will discuss how various perspectives reflect the practices and products of the Greco-Roman world.
1. Analyze perspectives and practices of Greco-Roman culture in literature, including evidence of philosophy, religion, mythology, and personal conduct.
 2. Summarize ways in which the progression of events in Roman history affected the perspectives, practices, and products of the Greco-Roman world.

Making Connections through Language

- LIV.4 The student will demonstrate increased understanding of the connections between content studied in Latin class and content studied in other subject areas.
1. Present aspects of Latin language and Greco-Roman culture found in other subject areas, such as legal and political systems and world literature.
 2. Relate topics discussed in other subject areas to those discussed in Latin class, such as the importance of Roman law as a foundation for modern law, philosophy, and governmental administration.

Cultural and Linguistic Comparisons

- LIV.5 The student will discuss the social, economic, political, and artistic influences of the Greco-Roman world on the modern global community.
1. Make comparisons and draw conclusions about the influences of Greco-Roman culture on subsequent art, architecture, music, and literature.
 2. Discuss contributions of the Romans to modern law, philosophy, and governmental administration.
 3. Explain how the Roman view of public and private life has influenced modern world views.
- LIV.6 The student will expand understanding of the English language through analysis of complex linguistic and syntactical elements of the Latin language.
1. Increase English vocabulary by comparing Latin and English words and applying the principles of word building and analysis.
 2. Analyze the structure of English by applying more complex grammatical concepts and linguistic terminology, such as conditional sentences and figures of speech, acquired through the study of Latin.

Communication across Communities

- LIV.7 The student will apply knowledge of the Latin language and Greco-Roman culture beyond the classroom setting for recreational, educational, and occupational purposes.
1. Discuss applications of Latin and Greco-Roman culture found in media, entertainment, and occupations.
 2. Use resources, such as individuals and organizations in the community or accessible through the Internet, to enhance cultural understanding.