

Frequently Asked Questions

Burnaby Central

MODERN LANGUAGES

1. ***Does my child have to take French in Grade 8?*** All Grade 8 students are required to take French. If your child has an IEP, then they may be exempt from taking French, if their educational plan recommends it.
2. ***What languages are offered at Central?*** The Languages Department at Central offers American Sign Language, French, Japanese, Spanish, and Mandarin. These courses only run if enough students elect to take them. This year we have Japanese for the first time in many years, but only one class.
3. ***My child already speaks a language at home. Can they receive credit for it?*** The Languages Consortium offers challenge exams in French, German, Japanese, Mandarin, Punjabi, and Spanish. Students who wish to take a Challenge Exam in one of these languages, must register with their counsellor in October. If your child prefers to take the course, they can decide with one of our Language teachers to be assessed for a higher-grade level. Generally, we do not advance students more than two years, in order to keep them reasonably close to their age group. For example, a former French Immersion who is entering Grade 8 would be placed in either French 9 or French 10.
4. ***When can my child choose another language?*** In Grade 9 Burnaby Central offers Japanese, Mandarin or Spanish. Currently, American Sign Language is only offered as an Introductory class starting in Grade 11.
5. ***Are there other Introductory Courses offered?*** We also offer Introductory Japanese 11, Introductory Mandarin 11 and Introductory Spanish 11, for students who did not take a Language in Grade 9 and/or Grade 10. This is a good option for students who decide they need a language to fulfil their university entrance requirement.
6. ***Does my child need to take a language in Grade 12?*** A Language 12 is not a requirement for graduation. Most university programs only require a Grade 11 Language credit for acceptance. If your child is majoring in the Faculty of Arts, a Grade 12 Language is recommended.

FRENCH

1. ***Are students expected to speak French at all times?*** The junior classes are taught in both English and French. As students advance into their senior years, they are expected to speak the target language most of the time.
2. ***What if my child has never taken French before?*** Although prior knowledge of French is an asset, it is not a prerequisite. All French 8 classes start with the basics and build from there. Teachers only evaluate the students on what has been taught in class.

SPANISH

1. ***What is covered in Spanish 9?*** Spanish 9 is like French 8. Students learn to communicate basic concepts such as the alphabet, numbers and greetings and build on vocabulary and verbs to learn to express basic needs and desires and to communicate a basic message.
2. ***If I am a former French Immersion student, can I skip French 8 and go straight into Spanish 9?*** All grade 8 students are required to take French, with few exceptions. We recommend waiting until Grade 9 to take Spanish with your Grade 9 peers. Former French Immersion students will be placed in a level of French that is most appropriate for their learning.
3. ***Does Introductory Spanish 11 cover the same concepts as Spanish 11?*** No. Introductory Spanish 11 is an intensive course that covers two years of Spanish: both Spanish 9 and Spanish 10. It is the prerequisite to Spanish 11.
4. ***Can my child take Spanish 12 after completing Introductory Spanish 11?*** No, they would take Spanish 11. So, if they took Introductory Spanish 11 in Grade 11, they would take Spanish 11 in Grade 12.

MANDARIN

1. ***What Chinese characters will the students learn?*** In the Mandarin class, students will learn the Chinese pronunciation system, the Pinyin system. Students will also learn how to read and write simplified Chinese characters. (Traditional characters will be introduced where appropriate, and this exposure will be especially valuable for comparative and practical purposes.)

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

1. ***Is American Sign Language a universal language?*** No. There are different signed languages in different parts of the world. American Sign Language is the primary language of most Deaf people in Canada and the United States. Langue des signes

du Québec (LSQ), is the predominant sign language of deaf communities used in francophone Canada, primarily in Quebec.

2. ***Can ASL 11 be used as a second language credit for admission to post-secondary institutions?*** Yes, ASL 11 satisfies the university entrance requirement.