



# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE IPC AND IMYC

Updated April 2025





# What are the IPC and IMYC?

A philosophy: what we believe about learning

A pedagogy: an approach to teaching

A process that best facilitates learning for this age group

A curriculum: a set of learning goals for each subject, including personal and international goals, along with Assessment for Learning rubrics

Our *philosophy, pedagogy, process, and curriculum* are all aimed at improving children's learning.



# What is the ICA (International Curriculum Association)?

The International Curriculum Association (ICA) is an active, global community of passionate educators who operate at the forefront of international education. We exist to Improve Learning, Unlock Potential, and Champion Quality and have been supporting the development of educators and learners for over 30 years. The vision of the International Curriculum is to inspire learners to be active and reflective thinkers who lead their own learning now and in the future.

The ICA's 7 Foundations for improving learning are summarized below:

## The 7 Foundations





# What is the IPC

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) is a comprehensive, thematic, creative curriculum for 5-11 year olds (Grades 1 – 5), with a clear Process of Learning and specific Learning Goals for Subject, International and Personal learning.

The IPC design focuses on improving learning and is guided by three key questions:

What kind of world will our children live and work in?

What kinds of personal qualities and dispositions will help our children to succeed in the world?

What kinds of learning experiences will our children need to prepare them for the future?

The curriculum contains over 100 thematic Units of Learning. Teachers pick the Units (each lasts a number of weeks) that will interest, engage and excite their children the most, and work well in the individual context of the school.

IPC is an umbrella that contains many subject areas (History, Geography, Science, Technology, ICT, Art, Music, PE, Health/Wellness, etc) that are taught separately, but are linked through the children's unit learning to create strong neural connections.



# What is the IMYC

The International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) is a challenging, international, theme-focused curriculum, for 11-14 year olds (Grades 6-8), with a clear Process to Facilitate Learning and specific Learning Goals for Subject, International and Personal learning. It provides structures and systems that support the 7 Key Needs of the Adolescent Brain.

The IMYC focuses on improving learning and is guided by three key questions:

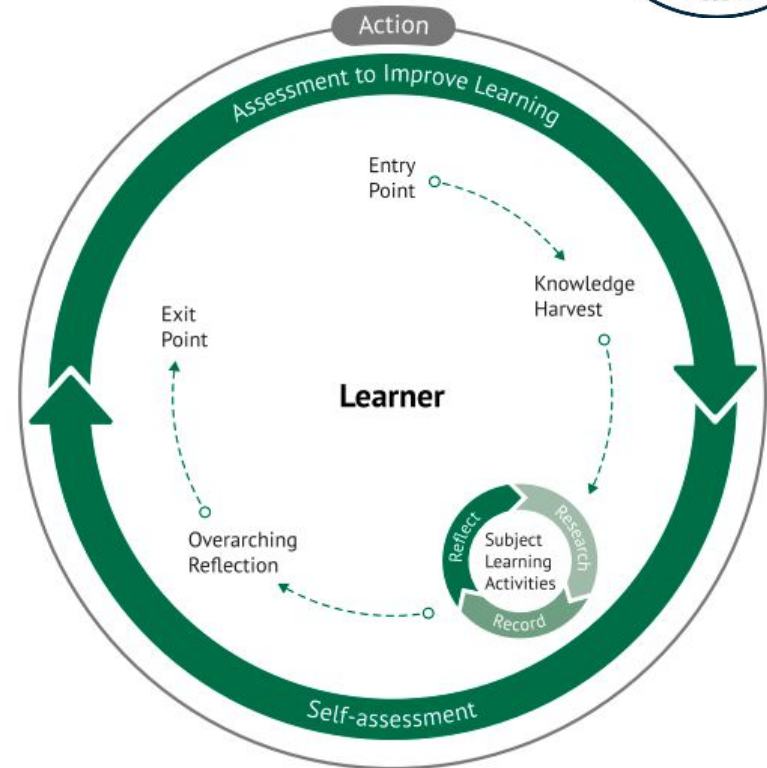
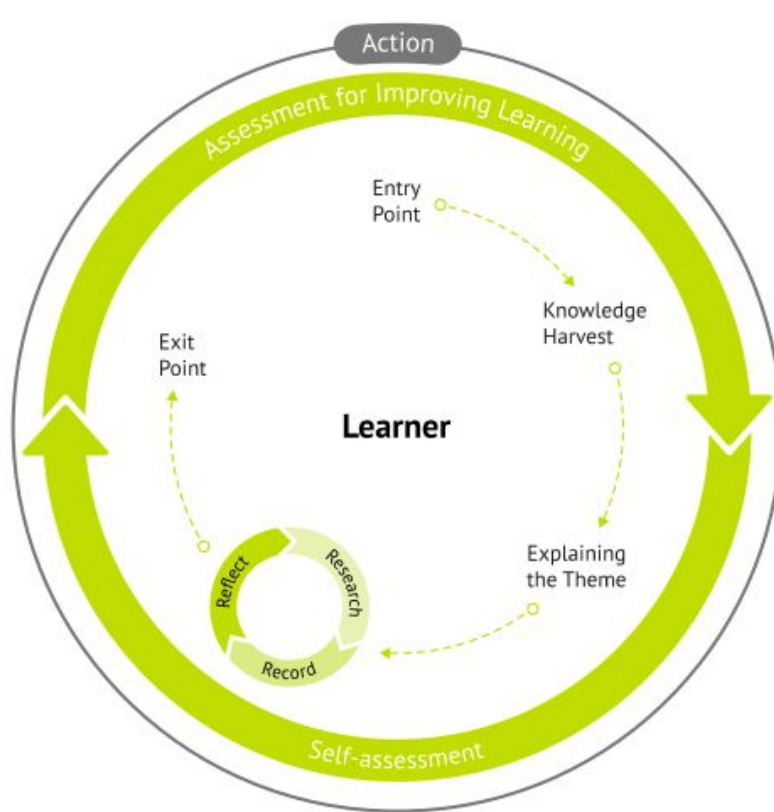
What kind of world will our learners live and work in?

What kinds of personal qualities and dispositions will help our learners to succeed in the world?

What kinds of learning experiences will our learners need to prepare them for the future?

All subjects in the IMYC link to the same Big Idea, a conceptual statement that is approached from different perspectives. This offers learners a blend of individual and shared learning experiences that strengthen neural connections.

# The Process to Facilitate Learning



Each unit is designed to create engaging and stimulating learning experiences for learners. All units follow a consistent learning process, which is research-based and structured to align with the way children's and teenager's brains learn most effectively. Learners are central in the learning process and are given opportunities to act on their learning at different points in the unit.

# The Process to Facilitate Learning



IPC

IMYC

**Entry Point** - an exciting introduction activity that begins each unit

**Knowledge Harvest** - provides an opportunity for children to reveal what they already know about the themes they are studying. It informs planning.

**Explaining The Theme** - Information should be shared with learners to help them see how the unit will progress and how subject learning is connected to the theme.

N/A

**Researching, Recording, Reflecting Activities**- During research activities, learners use a variety of methods and work in different group sizes to find out a range of information. This can involve reading, researching online, discussing and exploring ideas in a variety of ways. During the recording activities, learners demonstrate, share and explain their learning in different ways. At the end, they are given time to check, discuss and compare their recording activities, self-assess, reflect on peer-feedback and learning advice.

**-Big Question**

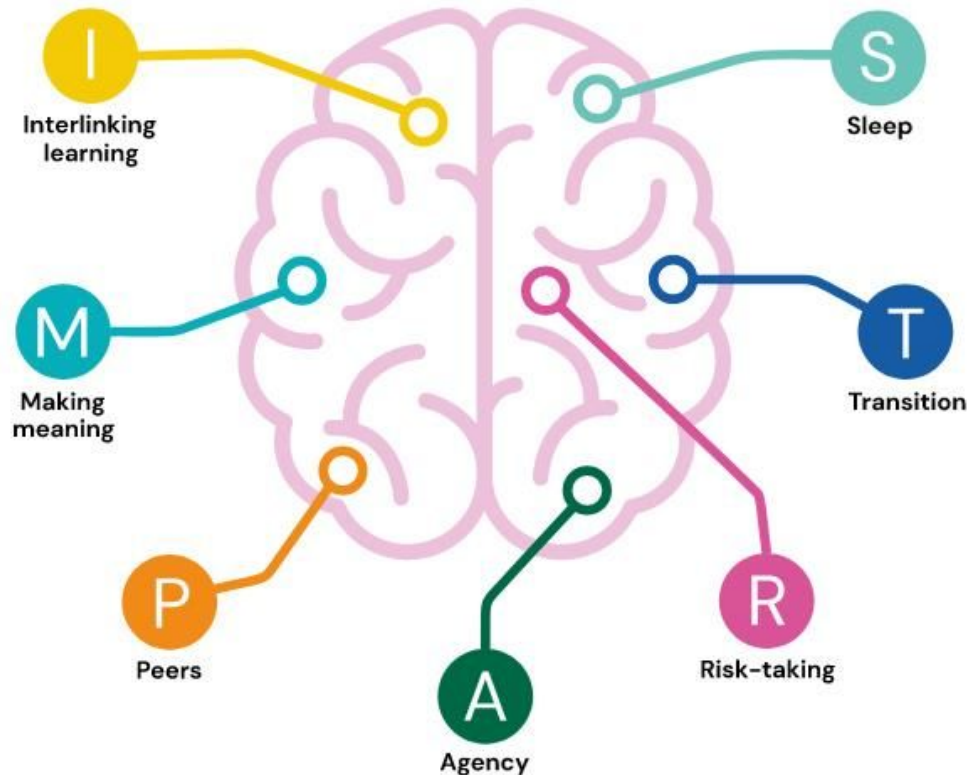
**Overarching Reflection** - Learners answer overarching reflection questions to round up each unit.

**Assessment to Improve Learning** - It is ongoing and used to improve learning.

**Exit Point** - The Exit Point helps learners pull together their learning from different subjects in the unit and act upon it once again, completing a media project. It is a celebration of the learning that has taken place.

**Action Circle** - This grey ring around the outside is there to remind and encourage learners that action can be taken at any point of the learning journey. Learners recognize that they can be agents of change in the school, local, and global communities in which they belong.

# The 7 Key Needs of the Adolescent Brain



Drawing on current neuroscientific research, the IMYC provides structures and systems that support the needs of the adolescent brain: interlinking learning, making meaning, working with peers, developing agency, taking safe risks, getting adequate, quality sleep, and transitioning from elementary education to exam-focused years.



# Planning in the IPC and IMYC



- ❑ **Weekly Plans** - Teachers develop weekly plans that outline tasks, subject connections, differentiation strategies, learning objectives, personal goals, and an international focus. These plans are reviewed and adjusted each week.
- ❑ **Unit Plans** - Teachers develop plans that track teaching and learning across the unit and allow information to be shared amongst subject teachers for collaboration purposes.

**IPC:** Parallel and specialist teachers collaborate before each unit to determine the tasks and activities to be taught and assessed.

**IMYC:** Teachers design unit plans that link subject content to the Big Idea and incorporate subject-specific, personal, and international learning goals. Plans also include learning activities, reflection opportunities, formative and summative assessments, differentiation strategies, and activities that support the 7 key needs of the adolescent brain. These plans are revised as needed based on student progress.

- ❑ **Learning Goals Mapping** - Each teacher maps all subject learning goals within and across grades and mileposts to ensure appropriate coverage in each academic year.
- ❑ **Route Planners** - A structured outline of the units taught and their duration over the school year. Planned in June, route planners help maintain balance in subject coverage while introducing variety and engagement. They also incorporate international celebrations and school traditions.

# Interlinking learning



We encourage learners to reflect on the following questions:

- How does my current learning links to prior learning?
- How does my current learning link to my interests/life?
- How does my current learning link to other subjects, through the theme and Big Idea?

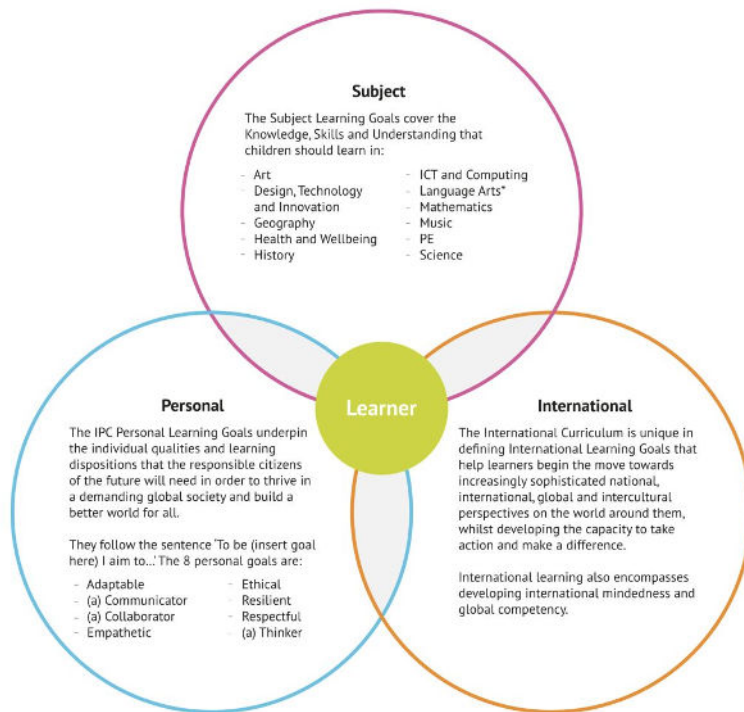
Research has informed us that the brain learns by forming connections between brain cells (neurons) related to a particular concept or idea (Jenson, 2008; Laster, 2009; Spreng et al, 2014). This is sometimes referred to by neuroscientists and psychologists as the ‘chunking’ of information. Neuroscientists suggest that the brain learns ‘associatively’, always looking for patterns and linking to previous learning. By engaging students in learning through topics, it will make retrieval more likely. Organising learning in units that each contain a Big Idea helps students to see how subjects connect to make connections between their learning, transfer skills through and across different subjects and talk about a Big Idea from different viewpoints (a historian, artist, geographer, etc).

*Source: ICA Curriculum Guide, page 25*

# Types of Learning Goals

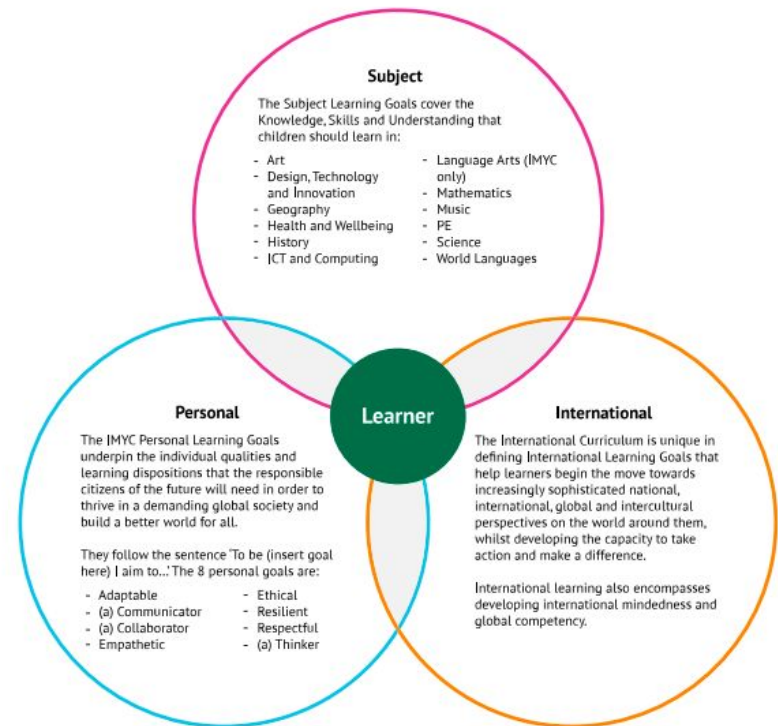


## IPC



\* Includes second/additional language learning

## IMYC



\*World Languages (Modern Foreign Languages) and ICT and Computing are offered only in the IMYC

# Subject Goals



**Knowledge** – ‘Know that’ - knowledge is seen as factual information that can be memorised and is assessed through tests, exams, quizzes, posters, exercises, for which points, letter grades, or other ratings are awarded according to grade level.

**Skills** – ‘Be able to’; skills are learned practically and are assessed with rubrics that include three levels: Beginning, Developing, Mastering. The fourth level ‘Innovating’ is a result of learner-initiated, rather than directed, learning; it describes advanced skills performance and achievement that surpasses the year or grade-level expectations.

**Understanding** – ‘Develop an understanding that’; grasping conceptual ideas, making personal meaning and identifying connections between school, home, and the world. Understanding is expressed through journaling, discussions, Exit Points, etc.

# Personal Goals



Personal goals are individual qualities and dispositions learners will find essential in the future.

We use these learning goals in subject tasks, school events and interdisciplinary activities, in our displays, and in our school Code of Conduct.

Although 'Kind'—January's Personal Goal—is not explicitly listed among the 8 ICA Personal Learning Goals, it is a value we hold in high regard at Futuraskolan International School of Stockholm.



# International Goals



The IPC and IMYC foster international mindedness, which is being interested in other cultures while welcoming diversity, collaboration, and other perspectives. It also encourages global competence, which is being aware of, engaged in, or taking action on world issues as progressive, energetic, and respectful individuals.

Terminology to support the development of internationally minded and globally competent learners includes the use of the following throughout the IPC/IMYC units:

- “Home” country is where the child may have been born and/or has cultural roots
- “Host” is where the child is living now, where the school is located
- “Heritage” countries are where the child’s family originates from
- “Adopted” countries enhance learning by allowing for comparison to the home/host/heritage country by identifying the similarities and differences between countries.



# Assessment of Skills



The IPC and IMYC has been designed to measure improvements in learning by using the Assessment for Learning Programme (AfL). This programme supports teachers in assessing and learners in self-assessing their progress with key skills from the IPC/IMYC Learning Goals.

The programme is broken down into three parts:

- **Teacher rubrics:** these are success criteria or descriptors of four levels, 'beginning', 'developing', 'mastering', and 'innovating'. They help teachers observe and record learner performance and progress within and across the different mileposts. 'Innovating' is a result of learner-initiated, rather than directed, learning; it describes advanced skills performance and achievement that surpasses the year or grade-level expectations.
- **Learner rubrics:** learner-friendly versions of the above, in age appropriate language, for learners to use when self and peer-assessing.
- **Learning advice:** specific advice which can be used in class and shared with learners and parents, helping students to move from one stage to the next with their learning.

# Assessment of Skills



## Rubric language

Beginning (I'm getting used to it)

Developing (I'm getting better)

Mastering (I'm really getting it)

Innovating (I've found a new way to do it)



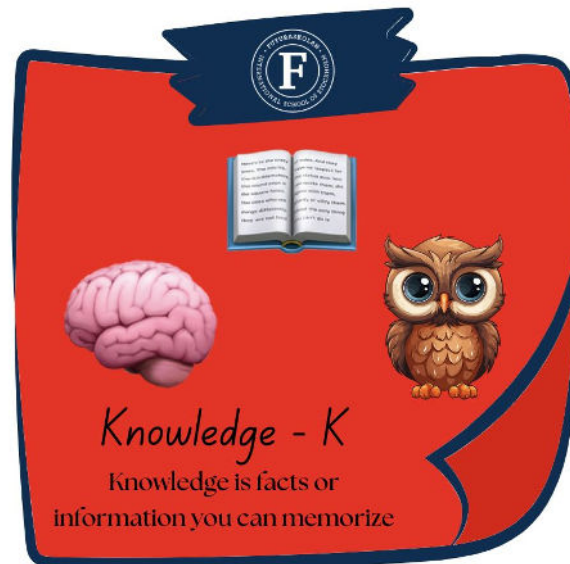


# Assessment of Knowledge



The Assessment for Learning toolkit refers to assessing *skills*, but it is not used to assess knowledge or understanding.

Knowledge is assessed through tests, exams, quizzes, posters, exercises.



# Assessment of Understanding



The Assessment for Learning toolkit refers to assessing *skills*, but it is not used to assess knowledge or understanding.

Understanding is assessed through HOT (higher order thinking) questioning, discussions, observation, reflections, Exit Points.



# How can I support my child?



Use the language below when talking about learning:

- knowledge, skills, understanding
- beginning, developing, mastering
- personal goal words

International mindedness:

- Talk about your home country, host country, heritage country, adopted country or culture, and places you've lived
- Look at maps at home
- Read about news that is important in other countries.
- Read together in English or your Mother Tongue

Volunteer

If you have specialty, interest or experience that can be used to support an IPC or IMYC unit - volunteer!



For further clarity or information, please contact your child's mentor or subject teacher.