

STARTALK

Student Program Curriculum Guide

Last Update: February 2021

STARTALK provides student programs with a curriculum template, knowing that a common curriculum development process will facilitate the sharing of units, instructional strategies, and quality materials. STARTALK designed the template to capture best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The template is meant to guide the discussions that will take place as instructors plan quality programs. New programs are required to use or modify one of the STARTALK Model Curricula. All other programs have the option of designing their own curriculum, or they may opt to use or modify one of the STARTALK Model Curricula.

This curriculum guide will help you to:

- plan the curriculum using **backward design**,
- establish achievable **goals and outcomes**,
- determine how to assess **learners' progress and performance**, and
- prepare for the **development of learning plans**.

Backward Planning and Curriculum Structure

STARTALK created the curriculum template for student programs according to the backward design process for curriculum development. As you work through the guide, you will notice that the template has three stages. Stage 1 asks you to identify desired results. In this section, you will identify the program can-do statements that will guide your program. Stage 2 asks you to identify performance assessment tasks that allow learners to provide evidence they have met each program can-do statement. Stage 3 asks you to unpack each program can-do statement into smaller lesson can-do statements that will guide the major learning experiences in the program. This guide explains each component of the curriculum template in greater detail and provides a representative sample from one of the STARTALK model curricula.

Stage 1

What will learners be able to do with what they know by the end of the program?

Program Can-Do Statements

Select NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements that identify learning goals appropriate for the theme and performance targets for the program.

Stage 2

How will learners demonstrate what they can do with what they know?

Performance Assessment Tasks

Develop assessment tasks that allow learners to provide evidence they have met the goal of each program can-do statement.

Stage 3

What will prepare learners to demonstrate what they can do with what they know?

Lesson Can-Do Statements

Identify smaller indicators of how learners incrementally move toward meeting each the goal of each program can-do statement.

Stage 1

What will learners be able to do with what they know by the end of the program?

In this stage, you will provide a curriculum overview and a daily schedule for the program and will use the *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements (2017)* to identify performance indicators and program can-do statements that will guide the curriculum for your program.

Curriculum Overview

A thematic curriculum will allow you to create a meaningful, real-world contexts for standards-based teaching and learning. Integrating culture, content and language around a meaningful center provides a focus for program can-do statements, performance assessment tasks, and lesson can-do statements. This will allow you to address learners' interests and create a sense of purpose and community in the program. By building on learners' interests and life experiences, their attitudes, skills and knowledge are developed in meaningful ways. In a paragraph, identify the overall theme of the curriculum indicating what real-world contexts will guide what learners will have to know and be able to do by the end of the program.

Performance Target: Novice Mid/Novice High

Students explore the theme **Our Identities: Here and There**. Students introduce themselves by giving biographical details—who they are, where they live, their nationalities, and their heritages. They discuss their interests and activities and compare their interests and activities to those of peers in other cultures. They interview individuals from the target culture to learn more about their interests and activities. They identify typical practices and popular products in the target culture and compare those practices and products to those of their culture. They also comment on the actions and personalities of well-known historical figures and/or those who are popular in the target culture today.

Daily Schedule

Create your timeline for the program showing what will happen each day. Consider how you will blend the types of learning activities throughout the day to avoid a separation between language and culture.

A sample timeline is shown here. You will need to adapt this timeline to meet your needs.

9:00 – 9:15	Opening Activity (exercise, movement, song, etc.)
9:15 – 10:15	Language Class (introduce language focus of the day)
10:15 – 10:30	Break & Snack (process and practice new language)
10:30 – 11:30	Activity Period (connect culture/content to language focus of the day)
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch / Activity Period
12:30 – 1:30	Language Class/Activity Period (move towards meeting language focus of the day)
12:30 – 1:30	Language Class/Activity Period (assessing language focus of the day)
2:30 – 3:00	Celebrate Learning! (documenting learning, announcements, etc.)

Program Can-Do Statements

Use the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements (2017) to identify your program can-do statements by selecting performance indicator(s) appropriate for your program. The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements are aligned with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 and the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners and reflect a continuum of growth in communication skills through the Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished levels. Create program can-do statements by customizing the indicators so that they are specific to the theme and appropriate for the age of the learner.

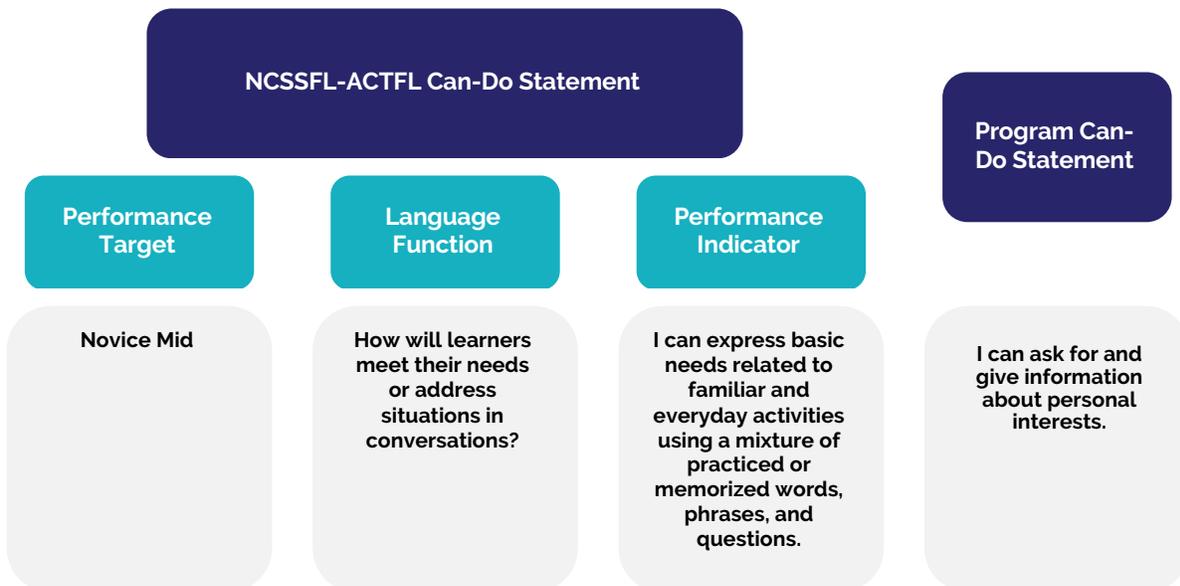
Interpersonal Mode

- How will learners exchange information and ideas in conversations?
- How will learners meet their needs or address situations in conversations?
- How will learners express, react to, and support preferences and opinions in conversations?

Presentational Mode

- How will learners present information to narrate about their lives, experiences, and events?
- How will learners present information to give a preference, opinion, or persuasive argument?
- How will learners present information to inform, describe, or explain?

For each selected question, programs may select up to two performance indicators (e.g. Novice Mid/Novice High) to use for the development of program can-do statements. Once a performance indicator has been selected it must be rewritten as a program can-do statement that reflects the theme of the curriculum. You will further unpack these program can-do statements in stage 3 in order to develop lesson can-do statements that guide the development of learning plans.



Interpersonal Program Can-Do Statements

Performance Indicators	Program Can-Do Statements
<i>From the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements</i>	<i>Customized to the program theme and learners age</i>
How will learners exchange information and ideas in conversations?	
<p><i>Novice Mid:</i> I can request and provide information by asking and answering a few simple questions on very familiar and everyday topics, using a mixture of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences.</p>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can ask for and give information about personal interests. 2. I can ask for and give biographical information.
How will learners meet their needs or address situations in conversations?	
<p>Not a focus of this curriculum</p>	
How will learners express, react to, and support preferences and opinions in conversations?	
<p><i>Novice Mid:</i> I can express my own preferences or feelings and react to those of others, using a mixture of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and questions.</p>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. I can ask and answer questions to identify typical practices and popular products for peers in my culture and in the target culture and can make simple comparisons. 4. I can ask for and give information about the identity, actions and personality of others.

Presentational Program Can-Do Statements

Performance Indicators	Program Can-Do Statements
<i>From the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements</i>	<i>Customized to the program theme and learners age</i>
How will learners present information to narrate about their lives, experiences, and events?	
<p><i>Novice High:</i> I can present personal information about my life and activities, using simple sentences most of the time.</p>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. I can introduce myself and share information about my personality and interests.
How will learners present information to give a preference, opinion, or persuasive argument?	
<p>Not a focus of this curriculum</p>	
How will learners present information to inform, describe, or explain?	
<p><i>Novice Mid:</i> I can present on very familiar and everyday topics using a mixture of practice or memorized words, phrases and simple sentences.</p>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. I can identify a product or practice popular with peers in a target culture and compare the product or practice to something popular in my life.
<p><i>Novice High:</i> I can present on familiar and everyday topics, using simple sentences most of the time. peers</p>	

Stage 2

How will learners demonstrate what they can do with what they know?

In this stage, you will outline the performance assessment tasks that learners will complete in order to provide evidence that they have met the program can-do statements created in stage 1. Performance assessment tasks are assessments which require and expect students to use language in real-life situations. These assessments can happen at any point in your program. Each program can-do statement must have a corresponding task.

Performance Tasks

During **interpersonal performance assessment tasks**, learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions. The interpersonal mode emphasizes two-way, spontaneous, unrehearsed exchanges between individuals in personal contact. Communication may be in oral or written form but does require that each individual is an active participant in the conversation.

Sample interpersonal mode tasks include *making a purchase, discussing meal choices in a restaurant with a friend, asking for directions, discussing events of the day, making plans, and meeting and greeting*. Memorizing rehearsed material, such as a skit or dialogue, is NOT an interpersonal mode task.

Your program may include various forms of interpersonal communication—between teacher and learner, between learners, and between learners and community members or native speakers. It is important, though, to ensure that learners have adequate opportunities to negotiate meaning with one another through engaging, meaningful tasks.

During **presentational performance assessment tasks**, learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences. The presentational mode allows learners time to rehearse, revise, rewrite, consult sources, and otherwise prepare ahead of time. These tasks require learners to use the language for a real-world purpose other than display for the teacher or classroom.

Sample presentational mode tasks include *writing letters, designing webpages, creating advertisements or videos, writing new beginnings or endings of stories or songs, presenting demonstrations, providing an agenda or schedule, and developing surveys and questionnaires*.

While your program should include presentational goals, it is possible that you may emphasize certain types of presentation over others (for example, speaking over writing) depending on the age of the learners.

Interpersonal Performance Assessment Tasks

Program Can-Do Statements	Performance Assessment Tasks
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I can ask for and give information about personal interests.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students interview a partner to identify similarities and differences using a personal interest card that students have created. To support their answers, students select images of people, places, things, activities, and hobbies that have personal meaning for them.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. I can ask for and give biographical information.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Students use a graphic organizer that has an image of each student and teacher in the class. They interview each other and record information on each person – name, age, personality traits, nationality, and heritage. They use this information to create a class composite about those in the class that can be shared with parents at the end of the program.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. I can ask and answer questions to identify typical practices and popular products with peers in my culture and in the target culture and can make simple comparisons.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Students collaborate to identify popular practices and products in their culture before pairing with a native speaker (language assistants in the program or others identified in the community, etc.). Students ask about previously identified popular practices and products in their culture and determine similarities and differences between cultures. Students then compare what they learned from the native speakers. They share information and compile a list of similarities and differences between cultures.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. I can ask for and give information about the identity, actions and personality of others.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Each student selects a person from the target culture who is well known within the culture or someone who is popular in today's culture. Students look at social media posts, photographs, and/or video clips of these well-known actors, athletes, or other individuals who are famous or making a difference today. After collecting information, students interview partners to find out more about the person their partner has identified.

Presentational Performance Assessment Tasks

Program Can-Do Statements	Performance Assessment Tasks
<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. I can introduce myself and share information about my personality and interests.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Each student creates a multimedia presentation that shares key information about themselves. Students share their presentations with peers in small groups. Students use feedback from their small group presentations to improve their individual presentations. Students share their individual presentations with a group of native speakers who are working with the class.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. I can identify a product or practice popular with peers in a target culture and compare the product or practice to something popular in my life.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Each student creates a multimedia presentation on a practice or product from the target culture that is of interest to them. Students include a description explaining where and among whom the practice or product is popular and compare it to one from their own culture. Students share their presentations on a class page for peers to comment on and with parents at the end of the program.

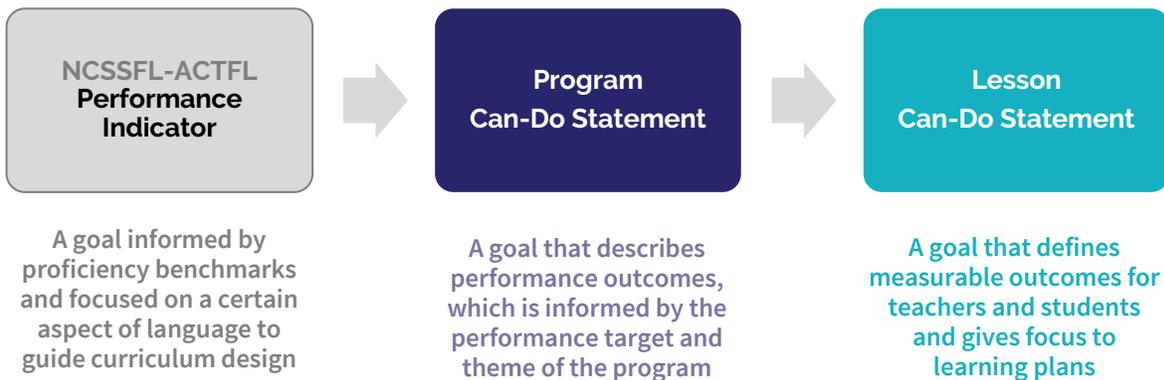
Stage 3

What lesson can-do statements and resources will guide learning plans?

In this stage, you will identify the lesson can-do statements that will indicate the language function and context learners will need to be successful on the performance assessment tasks described in Stage 2.

Lesson Can-Do Statements

Lesson can-do statements are smaller indicators or descriptors of how learners incrementally move toward meeting program can-do statements. These lesson can-do statements are small enough that they can be the focus of a single learning episode or a short series of multiple learning episodes. They are designed to ensure learners understand the input in the interpretive mode before being asked to produce language in the interpersonal and presentational modes. The lesson can-do statements are numbered to make it easier to reference specific can-do statements, but do not convey an order for working with the individual can-do statements. Teachers will need to group statements from different performance assessment tasks in order to recycle and build upon previously learned material. Some performance tasks require the language functions and context that are the focus of other lesson can-do statements.



In order to ensure that learners understand language input in the interpretive mode before being asked to produce language in the interpersonal/presentational modes, lesson can-do statements should be developed in a sequence that allow learners to have opportunities to demonstrate input comprehension before moving to output tasks.

Resources (Interpretive Mode)

As a final step in the curriculum development process, you will identify language and culture specific resources that you will use to provide comprehensible input for learners. What will students understand, interpret and analyze to prepare them to meet both the individual lesson can-do statements and the program can-do statement in order to meet the goals of the performance task?

Program Can-Do Statements

1. I can ask for and give information about personal interests.

Performance Assessment Tasks

1. Students interview a partner to identify similarities and differences using a personal interest card that students have created. To support their answers, students select images of people, places, things, activities, and hobbies that have personal meaning for them.

Lesson Can-Do Statements

- 1.1 I can identify activities and hobbies when they are named in spoken or written text. *Interpretive*
- 1.2 I can identify places associated with activities and hobbies when they are named in spoken or written text. *Interpretive*
- 1.3 I can recognize key words when reading simple text related to activities and hobbies. *Interpretive*
- 1.4 I can ask and answer questions to identify activities and hobbies I have in common with others and react appropriately. *Interpersonal*
- 1.5 I can ask and answer questions to share likes and dislikes related to people, places, activities and hobbies and find out more about those of another person. *Interpersonal*

Sequencing Lesson Can-Do Statements

Once you have developed the curriculum, determine how the learning targets will be introduced and recycled. Decide when learners are most likely to be prepared for the performance tasks. Create a tracking document to determine when and how often each learning target will be addressed during each week of the program. This task cannot be completed in SOPHIE.

Program Can-Do Statement #1		W1	W2	W3
1.1 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can identify activities and hobbies when they are named in spoken or written text.	x	x	
1.2 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can identify places associated with activities and hobbies when they are named in spoken or written text.	x	x	
1.3 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can recognize key words when reading simple text related to activities and hobbies.	x	x	
1.4 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can ask and answer questions to identify activities and hobbies I have in common with others and react appropriately.	x	x	x
1.5 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can ask and answer questions to share likes and dislikes related to people, places, activities and hobbies and find out more about those of another person.		x	x
Performance Task #1			x	
Program Can-Do Statement #2		W1	W2	W3
2.1 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can recognize common greetings and ways of saying goodbye to different people.	x		
2.2 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can greet others and say goodbye using an appropriate form of address.	x	x	
2.3 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can recognize if someone is asking for or giving their name or age.	x		
2.4 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can introduce myself and ask others for their name.	x	x	
2.5 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can give my age and ask others how old they are.	x	x	
2.6 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can identify the nationality or heritage of someone when I hear where a person is from.	x	x	
2.7 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can ask and answer questions about where I and others live and about our nationalities.	x	x	
2.8 <i>Interpretive</i>	I can identify key personality traits.		x	x
2.9 <i>Interpersonal</i>	I can respond to and ask simple questions to share information on personality traits.		x	x
2.10 <i>Presentational</i>	I can share simple information about others in the class.		x	
Performance Task #2			x	

Glossary

Frequently Used Terms in the Curriculum Development Process for Student Programs

Backward Design

Backward design provides a planning sequence for curriculum. Backward design consists of three stages. In stage 1, programs identify desired results. In stage 2, they determine acceptable evidence of learning. In stage 3, programs determine the learning experiences and resources. The teacher addresses the specifics of instructional planning after identifying the desired results and assessments.

Check for Learning

A *check for learning* allows students to demonstrate the progress they have made toward the can-do statement(s) for the lesson. They are formative and allow students to know where they are and teachers to know how to adjust the lesson or future lessons. Checks for learning should occur at least every 30 minutes and more frequently for younger learners.

Gradual Release of Responsibility

The *Gradual Release of Responsibility* (GRR) is an instructional framework that moves from teacher-focused instruction (input) to student understanding and independent application of new learning. The four phases are known as I do, we do, you do together, and you do alone. The GRR Framework is not intended to be linear. Teachers may choose to begin in any part of the framework depending on the instructional purpose.

Language Function

Language functions describe how we use language in our daily lives. They convey the purpose for speaking or writing by identifying the task that a person must be able to do in order to communicate effectively in a given situation. In the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, the standard for each mode of communication is divided into language functions that require learners to exchange information, meet needs, express preferences, narrate, describe, etc. STARTALK programs select the language functions for the interpersonal and presentational modes that are appropriate for their programs.

Learning Episode

A *learning episode* is a sequence of activities that are part of a larger lesson. For STARTALK student programs, a lesson consists of a series of learning episodes. The amount of time allotted for a learning episode is approximately equivalent to the age of the learner and will rarely be more than 30 minutes. Each learning episode is guided by a specific lesson can-do statement and a set of vocabulary and language chunks. A check for learning at the end of the learning episode allows learners to demonstrate that they are making progress toward meeting the lesson can-do statement.

Learning Plan

For STARTALK student programs, a lesson plan is referred to as a *learning plan*. STARTALK student programs complete learning plans for each day of instruction and for all learning experiences, whether those experiences occur in the classroom or in other settings. A lesson is a building block of a unit that has clearly defined learning targets to be achieved within a specified time frame. Lessons are further broken into *learning episodes* which should not last for more than 30 minutes.

Learning Target

STARTALK uses the term lesson can-do statement, but the terms learning targets and lesson goals describe the same concept. All are written as can-do statements that clearly indicate what a learner will do and the context in which they will do it.

Lesson Can-Do Statement

Lesson can-do statements are smaller indicators or descriptors of how learners incrementally move toward meeting the performance indicators and program can-do statements identified in stage 1. They capture the sequence of learning from input to output. Lesson can-do statements are small enough that they can be the focus of a single learning episode or a short series of multiple learning episodes. Progress toward lesson can-do statements is assessed through a check for learning at the end of each learning episode. Lesson can-do statements are first created in stage 3 of the curriculum. Those lesson can-do statements transfer to the key learning experiences document (optional) and to the learning plans (required). Lesson can-do statements capture the sequence of learning from input to output. STARTALK uses the term lesson can-do statement, but the terms learning targets and lesson goals are often used to describe the same concept.

Model Curricula

STARTALK has created *model curricula* to provide support for student programs in the curriculum development process. Those involved in creating the models drew upon existing program curricula, and the models capture best practices observed in various STARTALK programs during site visits. The STARTALK model curricula are intended as examples. Programs will still have to adjust what is provided to meet the specific needs of their students. The intention is to offer representative samples of learning experiences, with the understanding that teachers will adapt the sample experiences to meet the various linguistic and cultural requirements of their individual classrooms.

Modes of Communication

The *modes of communication* focus on how the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are used when communicating. The *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* specify three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational.

- Interpretive communication: Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.
- Interpersonal communication: Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.
- Presentational communication: Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.

NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements

The *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* describe how language learners use language across three ranges of performance (novice, intermediate, advanced, superior, and distinguished), in three modes of communication (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational), and according to certain language functions.

Performance

Performance is the ability to use language that has been learned and practiced in an instructional setting. Coached by an instructor, whether in a classroom or online, or guided by instructional materials, performance refers to language ability that has been practiced and is within familiar contexts and content areas.

Performance Assessment Task

Performance assessment tasks are tasks that learners will complete in order to provide evidence that they have met the program can-do statements. They are assessments which require and expect students to use language in real-life situations. These assessments can happen at any point in the program. Each program can-do statement will have a corresponding performance assessment task.

Performance Indicator

Found in the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can Do Statements, the *performance indicators* deconstruct the proficiency benchmarks by focusing on certain aspects of language performance, i.e., context, text type, and function. Indicators describe the steps toward reaching the overarching proficiency benchmark goal and are divided into three ranges of performance: low, mid, and high.

Performance Objective

A *performance objective* identifies the desired result. The objective is measurable and indicates what learners should be able to do after a series of learning experiences. STARTALK uses the term program can-do statement, but the terms performance objective and unit goals are often used to describe the same concept.

Primacy-Recency

The *Primacy Recency Effect* means that students remember best what they see or hear first in a lesson. Recency means that students remember second best what comes at the end of a lesson. Then, students remember least what comes in the middle. Primacy is often referred to as Prime-time #1, recency is Prime-time #2 and then the middle is referred to as downtime.

Proficiency

Proficiency is the ability to use language in real-world situations in a spontaneous interaction and non-rehearsed context and in a manner acceptable and appropriate to native speakers of the language. Proficiency demonstrates what a language user is able to do regardless of where, when or how the language was acquired.

Proficiency Benchmark

Found in the NCSSFL-ACTFL *Can Do Statements*, the *proficiency benchmarks* identify the overarching features of language performance in each of the three modes of communication to describe learner's progress along the ACTFL proficiency continuum from novice to distinguished. The proficiency benchmarks are not divided into ranges of proficiency.

Program Can-Do Statement

The *program can-do statement* is based on the performance indicator that has been previously selected, but it is specific to the program. It makes clear connections to the curriculum overview by making a specific connection to the program theme showing the context and purpose for the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statement within the curriculum. STARTALK uses the term program can-do statement, but the term unit goals is often used to describe the same concept.

Stage 1

Stage 1 of the curriculum template asks program personnel to identify desired results. At this stage, programs provide a general overview of their program. They identify the theme that will provide the context and purpose for learning and provide a daily schedule. Programs then select the performance indicators and program can-do statements that will guide their programs.

Stage 2

Stage 2 of the curriculum template asks program personnel to identify formative performance assessment tasks in the interpersonal and presentational modes that allow learners to provide evidence they have met the program can-do statement that were developed in stage 1. These tasks show that learners truly understand and can apply new learning.

Stage 3

Stage 3 of the curriculum template asks program personnel to unpack the program can-do statements created in stage 1 into smaller lesson can-do statements that show how learners will incrementally move toward the performance assessment task. Programs also identify specific authentic resources that will be used in the interpretive mode to provide comprehensible input.

Standards-Based

The ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages outline 5 goal areas (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) and are divided into 11 standards. Curriculum that is designed around standards with assessment that determines how well learners have met those goals is said to be standards-based.

Target Performance Level

A *performance target* sets an expectation of how well learners are likely to perform given that they are working within a specific content or context during the program. Programs may select up to two contiguous performance targets for the presentational and interpersonal modes of communication. The performance targets are taken directly from the performance indicators found the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can Do Statements.

Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Framework

The *Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Framework* identifies characteristics of effective teachers in the context of a language learning environment. The TELL Framework has been correlated with well-known teacher effectiveness frameworks currently in use in the field (e.g., ACTFL/CAEP, INTASC, NBTS, the Framework for Teaching, and the Casual Teacher Evaluation Model).

Thematic Unit

A *thematic unit* organizes curriculum around a specific theme which provides a meaningful and purposeful context that is cognitively engaging and relevant for learners. The theme allows for integration of topics and is often guided by an essential question.

Unit Goal

A *unit goal* identifies the desired result. The goal is measurable and indicates what learners should be able to do after a series of learning experiences. STARTALK uses the term program can-do statement, but the terms performance objective and unit goals are often used to describe the same concept.