

# ACTFL

## AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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### WHAT IS A WORLD LANGUAGE?

A world language is a form of communication, essential to the culture of a community, with a system of sounds, letters, symbols, and/or signs recognized and utilized by humans. A world language fulfills **all** the following criteria, distinguishing it from other forms of communication:

A world language is...

a form of human communication used to interact and negotiate meaning with other people, to understand and analyze oral, written, or signed texts, and to create culturally-appropriate oral, written, or signed products and presentations for a specific audience and task

a form of human communication that allows the user to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products, practices, and perspectives of a particular culture through the language. When speaking a world language, people use intercultural skills, insight, and perspectives to decide how and when to express what to whom.

a form of human communication that allows people to exchange information about past, present, and future shared experiences, make arguments, empathize with other people, and creatively express themselves orally, visually, and in writing on a variety of topics.

a means of human communication through which people can share stories relevant to the culture and community, whether ancient or modern.

a vehicle of human communication through which people may be immersed in a specific language community, whether ancient or modern.

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1001 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 200 | Alexandria,  
Virginia 22314  
Phone: (703) 894-2900

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