

Ice-Breaking Student Summer Programs in Texas and DC
Final Report
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I. Program goals and objectives

The goal of the *Ice-Breaking* Chinese Student Programs, in Dallas, Houston and DC, aims at raising the awareness of and stimulating the interest in learning Chinese language and culture among middle- and high-school students.

The theme of the student programs is *Your Space My Space*. Through the material and instruction, students use the Chinese language to explore their own space and compare with the spaces of Chinese young people in the spheres of life style, personal preferences, family structure, school activities, and etc. They understand the change of the family structure, from multi-generation to the current one-child policy in China as well as the education system in Taiwan and China. Thus, students learn, through exploration and comparison, that individual spaces of young people reflect the cultural and social uniqueness, as well as the similar exciting energy, free spirit, and wild creativity, whether they are in Beijing, Taipei or Dallas.

Each of the student programs lasts three weeks, four hours per day, in June or July, 60 hours in total. The materials for *Your Space My Space* were developed and collected during the DC/Texas Teacher Programs from March to May. Cultural activities are provided daily by local teachers and masters from Taiwan.

The Programs also include Competition Camp which is arranged after the three-week program, ranging from one to three days, depending on the number of each school. The goal of the camp is to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their language proficiency and ability to function in the language to complete tasks. Students in groups use their language skill and cultural knowledge to compete with each other, such singing, lion dancing, video-clip making, acting, poster designing, and speech. The winners are awarded iPods.

Students' language proficiency is evaluated by performance-based assessment, such as interviews, projects, and presentations. Students with a passing grade of **B** were awarded certificates. The goal of recruitment is 120 students and actual number of enrollment is 129: Houston (19), Dallas (79) and DC (31). The proposed objectives, as listed below, are fulfilled. 129 students attended ice-breaking programs. 121 students completed with the programs with the passing grade B and received certificates.

- To reach an 80% or even higher satisfaction rate from the 120 students in the final survey by intriguing their interest in the lifelong learning of Chinese through a through a standards-based cultural enrichment curriculum.

- To have five campuses in four or more school districts participate in the summer program.
- To increase the number of Chinese and non-Chinese learners and to reach out to more ethnically diverse groups.
- To reinforce the language skills of learners through culturally enriched language camps and help learners be more comfortable with speaking the language.

The model of Texas/DC Startalk Programs is the collaboration among school districts, heritage schools and Chinese Language Teachers Association of Texas. Chinese heritage schools include Huahsin Chinese School, Fort Worth Chinese School, Chenggong Chinese School, and Washington Metropolitan Association of Chinese School. The schools include Plano Independent School District in Dallas, Pin Oak Middle School in Houston, Parkland Magnet Middle School and Burleigh Manor Middle School in Maryland, Lanier Middle School in Virginia.

II. Enrollments

A. Enrollments

schools	applicants	enrollments	Not completed (or with a C)
Pin Oak Middle School, Houston, TX	19	19	3
Jasper High School, Plano, TX	79	79	3
Parkland Magnet Middle School, Rockville, MD	7	7	0
Burleigh Manor Middle School, Ellicott City, MD	13	13	1
Lanier Middle School, Fairfax, VA	11	11	1
Total	129	129	8

B. Classes

schools	Beginning	Novice Mid to Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid
Pin Oak Middle School, Houston, TX	1	0	0
Jasper High School, Plano, TX	2	1	1
Parkland Magnet Middle School, Rockville, MD	1	0	0
Burleigh Manor Middle School, Ellicott City, MD	1	0	0
Lanier Middle School, Fairfax, VA	1	0	0

C. Student Grade Level

schools	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Pin Oak MS, TX	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jasper HS, TX	32	19	16	6	2	3	1
Parkland MS,MD	4	3	0	0	0	0	0
Burleigh Manor M, MD	2	6	4	1	0	0	0
Lanier MS, VA	6	4	1	0	0	0	0
Total	63	32	21	7	2	3	1

D. High schools/middle schools

	Middle school	High schools	Total students
Number of student	117	12	129
percentage	91%	9%	100%

E. Boys/girls

	Boys	girls	Total students
Number of student	66	63	129
percentage	51%	49%	100%

F. Non-heritage/heritage

	Non-heritage students	Heritage students	Total students
Number of student	51	78	129
percentage	40%	60%	100%

G. Years of studying Chinese

	No prior Chinese lang. (Zero)	1 - 2 year of Chinese	3 - 5 years of Chinese	5 years and above	Total
Number of student	69	32	14	14	129
percentage	53%	25%	11%	11%	100%

**III. Program Outcomes:
Participant Growth in Knowledge, Skills and Perspectives**

i. Knowledge

• **Language**

The theme of *Ice-breaking Program* curriculum is *Your Space My Space*. The focus of the programs is the interpersonal, interpretive and presentational communication in speaking. It contains two thematic units: *All About Me; All About You* and *Your Family My Family*, as listed as follows. Students learned the Chinese language to introduce themselves (such as personal information and preferences, such as food and sport) and their families (such as daily routines, holiday activities).

Unit One: All About Me, All About You

- 1.1. Hello, *Ni Hao*
- 1.2. What is your Name?
- 1.3. I am an American
- 1.4. I Like Ice Cream!
- 1.5. Baseball, My Favorite Sport

Unit Two: Your Family, My Family

- 2.1. My Family and My Pet
- 2.2. Where Do you Live?
- 2.3. My Day
- 2.4. Family Fun and Holidays

The structure of Mandarin Chinese, such as pronunciation and sentence patterns, is introduced for the language function purposes. For example, pinyin combinations are not introduced in the first few classes as usually did in a traditional class, but practiced when the certain combinations for words are needed for the topics.

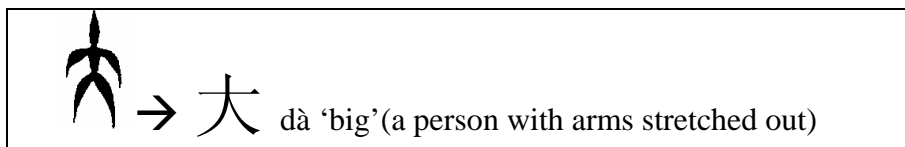
- **Culture**

Through these topics, students also learned the space/life of their counterparts in Taiwan and China through comparison. *Ice-breaking Program* has prepared video clips, authentic posters, and actual objects to help students understand and experience the life of young people on the other side of the Pacific Ocean. For instance, middle and high school students in Taiwan and China do the morning exercises before classes start. Therefore, we showed video clips of the exercises. Our students enjoyed following the movements and repeating the language every morning at the beginning of the class.

Students had hands-on cultural experience everyday, making art crafts, playing traditional games, cooking, and writing calligraphy with local teachers invited by *Ice-breaking Programs*. Two master teachers from Taiwan taught our students lion dance and Chinese yoyo.

- **Characters**

Students learned to recognize and write thirty characters in the Programs. We chose characters that are used in the lessons and are pictographs, such as 好, 日, 月, 中, 大, etc. For each character, students learned the original script and how it was created. The image and description, as shown in the box below, help students remember the meaning of the characters. They were given time to practice writing the characters in class.



ii. Skills

- **Interpersonal Communication**

The objective set for our students in interpersonal communication is that they are able to pass two one-on-one oral interviews with the instructors, one in the mid of the semester and one at the end. Students were given ample opportunities of task-based activities in class in which they have to use the language and communicate with each in order to complete the tasks. Some of the activities are evaluated as how well they performed. The Programs also arranged 'exit ticket' activity. Students earned tickets by responding correctly to the questions from the instructor at the end of each day, so that they could leave the classroom.

- ***Interpretive Communication***
Students are guided to understand the main points of the authentic short clips and commercial ads related to the topics. For example, students observed that the McDonald’s TV ads from Taiwan center on the gathering of family and friends, less on the hamburgers. Students watched short films produced by high school students in Shanghai about their school activities. They realized that the number of students is higher than an American high school class. Also, they stay in one classroom, eat lunch in the classroom at their desks and take a nap after lunch!
- ***Presentational Communication***
Students are required to complete two projects in the Programs. By the end of Unit One, students produce *all-about-me* posters. The second project, *Family Album*, should be completed at the end of the 3rd week. For both projects, they provide description in Chinese of the photos included in the poster or album. After they produce the posters and albums, each student presented his/her product in Chinese. One of the instructors stated clearly the goal and instruction in making the *Family Album*, as demonstrated in the following table.

Family Album Project	
Goals	Through producing the family album and present it at the end of the course, you will be able to use the words you learn in the course to introduce your family and share your family life with the class.
Instruction	<p>You will work individually to complete the Family Album project. The instruction is following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect all of the family information (your father’s family and your mother’s family, and your pets) that you are going to present in Chinese. • Organize your family album by the daily activities or special events (such as holidays, weekends). • You may want to add you family members’ favorite foods, activities, colors, hobbies and etc. • Write a description for each photo. You can use pinyin for the characters that you have not learned how to write. The album should contain at least 15 sentences. • You will receive a words list. Use as many words as you can on the list. • Your album should include 8-10 pages, 8x11 construction papers. The cover page should be added.

iii. Perspectives

- ***Culture***
Culture is the main standard based on which the thematic units *Your Space My Space* are designed. Students in *Ice-breaking Programs* gained

understanding of the space belonging to the young people in Taiwan and China.

- ***Communication***
Students understand that communication is the purpose of learning the Chinese language. The classroom activities and evaluation tasks ask students to use the language in interpersonal, interpretive and presentation communication similar to real-life situations.
- ***Comparison***
The theme of the curriculum points out the essence of comparison, *My Space Your Space*. For each topic covered in class, students are led to observe and compare the similarities and differences between themselves and the youth in Taiwan and China. Through comparison, students understand that they share many interests with the Chinese students, even though they live in different spaces and with different living styles.
- ***Community***
Students realize that there are Chinese communities in their neighborhood. *Ice-breaking Programs* are managed by Chinese heritage schools. They learned from the local teachers/artists and enjoyed authentic snack/food from nearby Chinese supermarkets. In other words, China/Taiwan or Chinese culture is not a remote entity anymore, but tangible and accessible.