

○ **Key factors to success**

Intensity of French instruction

Students and teachers speak only French during the first half of the year (70% of the day). The focus is on learning how to communicate in French and not on other subject specific and content learning. To this end, students focus on topics which are grouped into relevant and motivating themes. Real-life projects within these themes help students to see the practical value of what they are learning. Instruction concentrates on oral as well as writing and reading skills.

• **Time of concentrated exposure**

Research has shown that the most efficient way to learn another language is to spend concentrated time with it. Higher results are achieved with 90 hours of concentrated exposure over a five week period (four hours a day) compared to 90 hours spread over 10 months (thirty minutes a day), even though the number of hours is the same.

• **Enriched communicative FSL methodology**

In order to make optimum use of the increased time in French, an enriched curriculum is required. This enrichment is provided by adopting a whole language approach to French language instruction. The curriculum is cognitively demanding during the five month period and increases in complexity in areas of language use, knowledge and tasks. The program integrates some topics from other subject areas, such as Science (environmental issues), Social Studies (Canadian and world geography) and Health (rules for good nutrition).

• **Literacy-based approach**

Students are engaged in activities that develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills deep rooted in communication. They participate in a variety of tasks and projects and develop daily classroom routines. The literacy skills and processes developed in IF are often transferred to and used in English thus enhancing literacy skills in both languages.

• **Interactive pedagogy**

Regular use of an interactive pedagogy, such as cooperative learning (working in pairs and small groups) and project-based learning is an essential part of IF. Projects permit students to use language in many different contexts, enabling them to use more types of language functions (explaining, gathering information, asking questions, negotiating meaning) as well as integrating knowledge from different sources using complex language structures. It contributes significantly to the development of cognitive, social and personal capacities as well as the organizational skills of the learner.