



AN IB PROGRAM PACKET · FOR MYP COORDINATORS

Banyan Global Cohorts

A four-week, facilitator-led cross-cultural unit — built to anchor your MYP interdisciplinary unit in Personal & Cultural Expression.

Inside: the program overview, Spring 2026 pilot results, and three ready-to-use IDU co-planning guides — one for each subject pairing.

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What's inside

This packet gives an MYP coordinator everything needed to evaluate Banyan Global Cohorts as the cross-cultural anchor for an interdisciplinary unit — the program at a glance, evidence from our Spring 2026 pilot, and the exact co-planning guides your teachers would use.

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BUILT FOR THE MYP IDU

The shared starting point your MYP IDU is missing.

Banyan Global Cohorts is a four-week, facilitator-led cross-cultural anchor designed to be co-planned around. Your two subject teachers (Individuals & Societies + Language & Literature) build the IDU on top of a unit we've already built. Three student artifacts map to the three IDU criteria your teachers already grade: **Evaluating, Synthesizing, Reflecting**.



Founding partner: Tsai Hsing School, supporting the creation of Banyan Global Cohorts.

A cross-cultural unit your MYP coordinators will recognize **on sight**.

Banyan Global Cohorts anchors two MYP subject groups, Individuals & Societies and Language & Literature, around the Personal & Cultural Expression global context and produces three student artifacts that map directly to the IDU criteria your teachers already grade: **Evaluating, Synthesizing, and Reflecting**. Each unit serves as the cross-cultural starting point for your school's required interdisciplinary unit. Communication, Social, Self-management, and Thinking ATL skills develop throughout.

No homework for students, and no prep to run the sessions. Banyan provides the facilitator, the platform, the partner schools, and all materials, so your teacher never plans or leads a live session. Your two subject teachers then do the real interdisciplinary planning IB looks for, building their part of the IDU on top of the four-week core with our IDU Co-Planning Guide.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Anchored in Personal & Cultural Expression, with a clear Key Concept set per unit | 2 | Builds Communication, Social, Self-management, and Thinking ATL skills |
| 3 | Engages I&S and L&L in one unit, mapped to the three MYP IDU criteria | 4 | 45 minutes per week, 4 weeks total — all student work created in class |
| 5 | Student artifacts map to all three IDU criteria — Evaluating, Synthesizing, Reflecting | 6 | Includes an IDU Co-Planning Guide for your two subject teachers |

FEATURED UNIT

Create Your Own Festival.

BIG QUESTION

How do communities celebrate who they are — and what does that reveal about what they value?

Through curated clips of festivals from around the world, students discover how communities express identity, values, and traditions through celebration. They then design an original festival from the story up: a name, a signature food, a main event, and a symbol that reflects their own community. AI brings every festival to life on video. Partner schools share, react, and reflect on what each other's festivals say about the communities that made them.

FORMAT

- 4 weeks, 45 minutes each week
- Cohort of 3–4 partner schools, time-zone matched
- Live Zoom session each week, led by a Banyan facilitator
- All student work created during class — no homework
- Shared Padlet hub for designs, videos, and peer response

MYP ALIGNMENT

- **Global Context:** Personal & Cultural Expression (*secondary: Identities & Relationships*)
- **Key Concepts:** Identity, Culture, Creativity, Communication
- **ATL Skills:** Communication, Social, Self-management, Thinking
- **Subject Groups:** Individuals & Societies · Language & Literature (*IDU-eligible*)
- **IDU Criteria:** Evaluating, Synthesizing, Reflecting

Weekly Sequence

WEEK	FOCUS	WHAT STUDENTS DO
WEEK 1 Discover	Meet your global partners	Students meet partner classrooms live, view curated clips of festivals around the world, and record a 30–60 second Padlet introduction sharing their festival idea.
WEEK 2 Design	Build your festival	Five rapid design rounds (story, name, food, main event, symbol). Story leads, so meaning drives the design. Groups post a complete festival concept to the shared Padlet.
WEEK 3 Refine & Respond	See it come to life	The session opens with AI-generated videos of every group's festival across all partner schools. Students record a 30-second pitch video and submit one written question for another classroom.
WEEK 4 Celebrate & Connect	The Global Festival Celebration	Pitch premiere across all schools. Students answer partner-school questions live, respond to a partner's pitch, and write a one-sentence reflection on what each cohort's festivals reveal.

What every student produces

Built by your two IDU subjects, the same pair across all four units: **Individuals & Societies (I&S)** and **Language & Literature (L&L)**.

- ✓ A festival concept document: story, name, food, main event, symbol (*L&L · Criterion B: Synthesizing*)
- ✓ A 30-second pitch video shared across the cohort (*L&L · Criterion A: Evaluating*)
- ✓ A designer's statement on how the festival communicates community identity (*I&S · Criterion B: Synthesizing*)
- ✓ A written cultural reflection on what their festival reveals (*I&S · Criterion C: Reflecting*)

FALL SEMESTER AT A GLANCE

Four units, one each month.

In the fall, classrooms run **one unit per month, September through December**. Every Banyan Global Cohorts unit follows the same 4-week arc — **Discover · Design · Refine & Respond · Celebrate & Connect** — and anchors in Personal & Cultural Expression. Theme and Key Concepts change; the IDU criteria (Evaluating, Synthesizing, Reflecting) do not.

SEPTEMBER Festivals	How do communities celebrate who they are? KEY CONCEPTS Identity, Culture, Creativity BEST-FIT SUBJECTS I&S · L&L	Students create: An original festival with name, story, food, main event, and symbol; a 30-second pitch video.
OCTOBER Murals	What stories do communities paint on their walls — and why? KEY CONCEPTS Identity, Culture, Perspective, Creativity BEST-FIT SUBJECTS I&S · L&L	Students create: A mural concept reflecting their community; a 60-second artist statement.
NOVEMBER Local Legends	Whose stories shape our communities — and whose are missing? KEY CONCEPTS Identity, Culture, Perspective BEST-FIT SUBJECTS I&S · L&L	Students create: An original legend rooted in their place; a recorded telling.
DECEMBER Gathering Places	Why do people come together — and what do those spaces say about us? KEY CONCEPTS Identity, Connections, Creativity BEST-FIT SUBJECTS I&S · L&L	Students create: A blueprint for a community gathering place; a 60-second pitch.

SPRING SEMESTER

The same four units repeat, February through May — **Festivals (Feb) · Murals (Mar) · Local Legends (Apr) · Gathering Places (May)**.

From the **March + April 2026** cohorts. Two cohorts · three continents · n=121 students · grades 5–10.

86%

want to do
Cohorts again
(104 of 121)

93%

felt connected to
peers abroad

8.2/10

average overall
experience

92%

learned about
other cultures
(Mar)

"My students were willing to share — even post videos — with the other schools. There was no awkwardness, which is not normal for middle schoolers."

— Participating teacher, March 2026 cohort

**100% of pilot teachers said they would do
Cohorts again** (n=5)

Bring Banyan Global Cohorts to your IB classroom.

Book a 20-minute call to walk through the IDU fit for your school:

calendly.com/teacherseth/20min.

Or reach out: seth@banyangloballelearning.com

GLOBAL COHORTS · PILOT RESULTS

Real people, real places, real conversation.

Over two cohorts, middle-school classrooms in the United States, Ukraine, and Taiwan completed the four-week Festivals unit together. A Banyan facilitator led every live session; local teachers supported in the room. Here is what students and teachers told us.

121

students surveyed

3

countries connected live

8.2_{/10}

 average experience
rating

86%

want to do it again

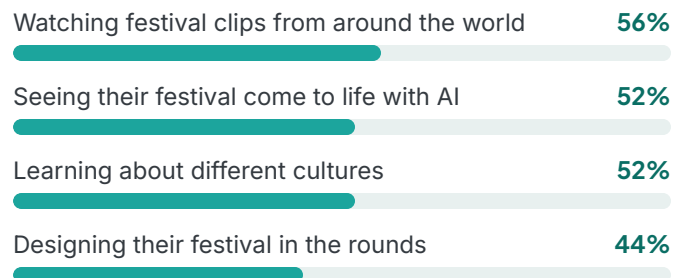
WHAT STUDENTS EXPERIENCED

93% of students felt connected to peers in another country — 63% felt clearly connected; only 3% felt no connection at all.

9 in 10 students learned something new about another culture.

86% would choose to do another Global Cohorts unit.

WHAT STUDENTS LOVED MOST · March cohort, multiple choice



"It made me feel like even though the world is a ginormous place, there are still many similarities between many different types of people."

STUDENT · UNITED STATES

WHAT TEACHERS SAID

March pilot teachers (n = 3 end-of-unit, 5 weekly check-ins) · April pending

8.0_{/10}

average overall rating

8.7_{/10}

would recommend to a
peer

100%

would run another cohort

100%

offered a testimonial

"My students were willing to share, even post videos, with the other schools. There was no awkwardness, which is not normal for middle schoolers."

PARTICIPATING TEACHER · MARCH PILOT

WHAT MADE IT WORK

- **Facilitated, so teachers carry no planning load.** Banyan ran every live session. Two of three teachers rated the workload very manageable; none found it heavy.
- **Real exchange, not content about other places.** US students asked Taiwan classrooms about Lunar New Year food; Taiwan students asked about Thanksgiving. Students designed original festivals and responded to peers' work on shared boards.
- **The AI moment landed.** Week 3 visualizations of student festival ideas drove the strongest engagement of the unit, and were the most common answer to what surprised students most.

"Even though we're kids, we all live in the same world."

STUDENT · APRIL COHORT

THE TRACK RECORD

17 years partnered with Tsai Hsing School, Taipei ·
45,000+ students taught · 20+ countries
connected live · CILC Pinnacle Award

WHAT'S NEXT

Fall 2026 cohorts begin in September with the Festivals unit, followed by Murals, Local Legends, and Gathering Places. Schools can join a single unit or run all four across the year.

Your IDU Co-Planning Guide

For your Individuals & Societies and Language & Literature teachers

RECOMMENDED PAIRING

This is the planning conversation that makes your Festivals unit a collaboratively planned MYP interdisciplinary unit — not just a program you're each running in parallel.

Before you begin

This guide is the planning conversation between the two of you — the thing that turns Banyan's four-week Festivals program into a unit your school can point to as a collaboratively planned MYP interdisciplinary unit (IDU).

It's built with that requirement specifically in mind. It doesn't guarantee any particular outcome in an IB evaluation — that's always your evaluator's judgment — but every section below exists because of something specific the IB asks for, not as busywork.

What's already built for you

Banyan provides all of this — you don't need to plan or recreate any of it:

- Four weekly, facilitator-led live sessions (~45 minutes each), run by Banyan, with no homework for students
- Your partner classroom match, the platform, and all session materials
- The four-week arc (session names vary slightly across Banyan's own materials — this guide uses Week 1–4 throughout to avoid that inconsistency)
- Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (primary), Identities & Relationships (secondary)
- The student artifacts described in Section 2

What's still yours to decide — together

How your two subjects' specific objectives connect to that core, and how you'll jointly judge students' work against the MYP interdisciplinary criteria. That's everything from here on.

How much time this takes

As little or as much as you both want — this is designed to flex. Some schools will get through the sections below in one 45–60 minute sit-down. Others will find it easier as two or three shorter check-ins.

How to use the “Decide together” boxes

Sections marked DECIDE TOGETHER need both of you present at the same time — in person, on a call, whatever works — not filled in separately and stitched together afterward. That's the difference between planning your IDU together and each of you independently adapting a template. Everything else below can be drafted on your own first, then reviewed together.

What happens each week

A quick reference so this guide stands on its own. For the full session-by-session detail — exact scripts, timing, facilitator notes — use the four Teacher Overviews you already have for this unit.

WEEK	FOCUS	WHAT STUDENTS CREATE	YOUR ROLE
Week 1	Meet partner schools, watch three short festival clips, brainstorm ideas as a group.	A 30–60 second Padlet video answering “My festival idea is ___ because ___,” plus short Padlet posts (a word, a food, a local festival) and 1–2 questions for partner schools.	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute video-recording segment.
Week 2	Five fast-paced rounds building the festival's story, name, food, main event, and symbol.	A complete festival concept — story, name, food, main event, and symbol — posted to Padlet, plus partner questions.	Classroom management; help groups stay on task during the rounds and during Padlet posting.
Week 3	Reveal of an AI-generated video of their own festival concept; record a pitch video; explore real festivals near partner cities.	A pitch video (about 30–60 seconds) answering three set questions: What is your festival called? What makes it special? Why should someone come? Plus 1–2 partner questions. (This pairing adds to the pitch task — see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute pitch-recording segment.
Week 4	Watch pitch videos from the whole cohort; “Culture Detective” activity finding patterns across schools; post a Cultural Claim; reflect as a group.	A written Cultural Claim posted to Padlet — “Festivals reveal the culture of the people who create them because ___” — plus a spoken (not retained) reflection on what students will remember, and the end-of-unit survey. (This pairing may add to Week 4 — see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during Culture Detective and Cultural Claim posting.

This pairing adds two required lines to the Week 3 pitch script — see Section 2 for exactly what and why.

1. Your statement of inquiry

Key Concepts: Culture (Individuals & Societies) / Communication (Language & Literature) · Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (secondary: Identities & Relationships)

DECIDE TOGETHER

Before you use the example below, work through this together — it's what actually makes the unit collaboratively planned, not just individually adapted:

Individuals & Societies: looking at what students research and share each week (see “What happens each week” above), what does your own curriculum already teach about community, identity, or cultural values that connects here?

Language & Literature: what does your curriculum emphasize about audience, purpose, or storytelling that connects to the concept document, pitch, and reflection students produce?

Where do your two answers overlap or push against each other? Don't stop at the overlap — pick one specific choice your students will actually make (a name, a symbol, a food, a story detail) and ask: what changes about its meaning when you look at it through your OTHER subject's lens? That shift — not just the shared topic — is your real Purpose of Integration.

Example statement of inquiry: “Communities express and pass on their identity through shared cultural celebrations, and the way a festival is designed and told shapes how outsiders come to understand that culture.”

Example purpose of integration

Individuals & Societies: students research the community, values, and traditions behind their assigned or chosen festival — understanding why its symbols, food, and central event carry cultural meaning.

Language & Literature: students craft the festival's story and pitch, choosing language and narrative technique that make that cultural meaning legible and engaging to an audience outside the community.

Synthesis: students combine research-based cultural understanding with deliberate storytelling choices to design and present a festival concept that authentically communicates a community's identity to a real, distant peer audience — something neither lens produces as convincingly alone.

Treat this as a model, not a script — your own students' festival ideas may point somewhere more specific.

2. Map your subjects onto the artifacts

ARTIFACT	CRITERION	SUBJECTS
Festival concept document (Week 2)	B – Synthesizing	I&S content / L&L storytelling
Pitch video (Week 3, 30–60 sec)	A – Evaluating	I&S / L&L jointly
Community-focused reflection (Week 4)	C – Reflecting	I&S
Writing-focused reflection (Week 4)	C – Reflecting	L&L

Week 1's festival-idea video is a warm-up — it isn't mapped to a criterion and shouldn't be cited as evidence of collaborative planning.

HOW YOUR SESSIONS ARE CUSTOMIZED FOR THIS PAIRING

The Week 3 pitch already asks students to answer three questions in about 30–60 seconds: What is your festival called? What makes it special? Why should someone come? That's the base task. Banyan customizes your cohort's sessions on top of it, specifically for this pairing, so Criterion A (Evaluating) has real joint evidence instead of a loose thematic connection:

Two more lines in the Week 3 pitch, on top of the three questions above: (1) state one true thing about the real community or culture behind the festival, and how it shaped one specific choice in the festival; (2) in one sentence, say what that real detail added to the festival that a purely made-up idea wouldn't have. The second line is what makes this genuine evaluation (Criterion A(ii)) instead of just a fact check (A(i)).

A change to Week 4: instead of the spoken “what will you remember” close (which isn't saved anywhere, so it can't be graded), your cohort's session uses two short written prompts posted to Padlet. The community-focused prompt (Individuals & Societies) asks not just what students learned, but what they'd want to explore or do differently as a result — that forward-looking half is what covers Criterion C's 'future action' strand, not just the 'reflecting on understanding' half.

3. Your disciplinary grounding

This is the part IB cares about most when it comes to why two teachers are involved at all — it protects the integrity of what each of you actually teaches. Draft your own column, then review both together.

PROMPT	INDIVIDUALS & SOCIETIES	LANGUAGE & LITERATURE
What factual, conceptual, or procedural knowledge from your curriculum will students need for this unit?		
Which of your subject-group objectives does this unit address?		
What related concept(s) from your subject connect to Culture / Communication? (name 1–2 from each of your subjects' official concept lists that fit)		
How will you help students weigh the benefits and limits of your discipline's perspective on this topic?		

DECIDE TOGETHER

Once both columns are filled in, sit down together and check: does each of your pieces actually feed into the other's, or are you just running two parallel mini-units that happen to share a topic? If it's the latter, that's worth 10 minutes of adjustment now rather than after the unit runs.

4. Inquiry questions

Starting questions below — adapt freely. IB expects factual, conceptual, and debatable questions that both subjects can genuinely explore.

DRAFT LANGUAGE — a starting point, not an approved or required version

Factual: What cultural elements (symbols, food, central event) define a festival? What sources will you use to research your assigned or chosen culture?

Conceptual: How does the way a story is told change how an outside audience understands a culture's identity? What is gained or lost when a celebration is explained to people outside the community?

Debatable: Can an outsider ever fully and respectfully represent another community's celebration? Should authenticity matter more than audience engagement when presenting someone else's culture?

DECIDE TOGETHER

Keep, cut, or rewrite these together so they genuinely work for both subjects — a question only one of you could teach into isn't doing its job here.

5. Agree now on how you'll assess together

This section is about agreeing on your approach before the unit runs — the actual joint grading happens later (see Section 7). Deciding your approach now makes that step much faster.

DECIDE TOGETHER

For the pitch video's two required lines (see Section 2): what would a strong answer actually look like, from both an Individuals & Societies and a Language & Literature angle? Sketch a shared, rough sense of what 'fully analyses' and 'fully evaluates' (the top band's command terms) would look like in a student's actual answer — you don't need a polished rubric, just a shared mental picture so you're not calibrating from scratch after the unit ends.

6. Record of collaborative planning

Fill in together. Keep this — it's your evidence of collaborative planning if a school is ever asked for it during an IB evaluation.

Teachers (name, subject)	
Date(s) you met	
Format used (one session / two check-ins / other)	
Statement of inquiry — final wording	
Key adjustments you made to the starting materials in this guide	

YOUR CONNECTION, IN YOUR OWN WORDS

This matters more than the checkboxes above: in 2–3 sentences, describe the specific connection you found between your two subjects for this cohort — not just that you met, but what you actually decided. This is your strongest evidence of genuine collaborative planning.

7. After the unit: score Criterion A together

Once students finish their work, sit down together with a sample of it — specifically the pitch videos' researched-fact-and-evaluation lines and the community-focused reflections — and jointly decide a best-fit achievement level for Criterion A, not each of you grading your own slice separately. Budget 20–30 minutes for this after the unit ends; it's required regardless of how the unit was planned.

A different pairing?

This guide is written for Individuals & Societies + Language & Literature — the pairing we recommend for Festivals. If your school is using a different pairing instead, ask Banyan for the matching guide: Individuals & Societies + Arts, or Language & Literature + Arts.

Sources

This guide is built directly on “Interdisciplinary teaching and learning in the MYP” (International Baccalaureate Organization, updated through October 2023) — specifically its guidance on the purpose of integration, statement of inquiry, disciplinary grounding, and the Criterion A joint-assessment requirement. The Criterion A/A(ii) and Criterion C/C(ii) framing was additionally checked against real IB ID eAssessment preparation materials (M25 cycle) to confirm what genuine interdisciplinary evaluation and reflection actually require. This guide does not claim to guarantee IB evaluation outcomes for any specific school.

Your IDU Co-Planning Guide

For your Individuals & Societies and Arts teachers

ALTERNATE PAIRING

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Week 3	Reveal of an AI-generated video of their own festival concept; record a pitch video; explore real festivals near partner cities.	A pitch video (about 30–60 seconds) answering three set questions: What is your festival called? What makes it special? Why should someone come? Plus 1–2 partner questions. (This pairing adds to the pitch task — see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute pitch-recording segment.
Week 4	Watch pitch videos from the whole cohort; “Culture Detective” activity finding patterns across schools; post a Cultural Claim; reflect as a group.	A written Cultural Claim posted to Padlet — “Festivals reveal the culture of the people who create them because ___” — plus a spoken (not retained) reflection on what students will remember, and the end-of-unit survey. (This pairing may add to Week 4 — see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during Culture Detective and Cultural Claim posting.

This pairing adds two required lines to the Week 3 pitch script — see Section 2 for exactly what and why.

1. Your statement of inquiry

Key Concepts: Culture (Individuals & Societies) / Creativity (Arts) · Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (secondary: Identities & Relationships)

DECIDE TOGETHER

Before you use the example below, work through this together — it's what actually makes the unit collaboratively planned, not just individually adapted:

Individuals & Societies: looking at what students research and share each week (see “What happens each week” above), what does your own curriculum already teach about community, identity, or cultural values that connects here?

Arts: what does your curriculum emphasize about visual identity, symbol, or design choices that connects to the festival's name, symbol, main event, and AI visualization?

Where do your two answers overlap or push against each other? Don't stop at the overlap — pick one specific choice your students will actually make (a name, a symbol, a food, a story detail) and ask: what changes about its meaning when you look at it through your OTHER subject's lens? That shift — not just the shared topic — is your real Purpose of Integration.

Example statement of inquiry: “A festival's visual symbols and images carry a community's identity, and grounding those design choices in real cultural research is what makes that identity representation authentic rather than decorative.”

Example purpose of integration

Individuals & Societies: students research the community, values, and traditions behind their festival — understanding why its symbols, food, and central event carry cultural meaning.

Arts: students design the festival's visual identity — its symbol, name treatment, and the AI-generated visualization — making deliberate choices about color, imagery, and form that carry that cultural meaning.

Synthesis: students combine research-based cultural understanding with deliberate visual-design choices to create a festival identity that authentically represents a community's meaning to an outside audience — something neither lens produces as convincingly alone.

Treat this as a model, not a script — your own students' festival ideas may point somewhere more specific.

2. Map your subjects onto the artifacts

ARTIFACT	CRITERION	SUBJECTS
Festival concept document (Week 2)	B – Synthesizing	I&S content / Arts visual-identity choices
Pitch video (Week 3, 30–60 sec)	A – Evaluating	I&S researched fact / Arts AI-visualization process
Community-focused reflection (Week 4)	C – Reflecting	I&S

Week 1's festival-idea video is a warm-up — it isn't mapped to a criterion and shouldn't be cited as evidence of collaborative planning.

HOW YOUR SESSIONS ARE CUSTOMIZED FOR THIS PAIRING

The Week 3 pitch already asks students to answer three questions in about 30–60 seconds: What is your festival called? What makes it special? Why should someone come? That's the base task. Banyan customizes your cohort's sessions on top of it, specifically for this pairing, so Criterion A (Evaluating) has real joint evidence instead of a loose thematic connection:

Two more lines in the Week 3 pitch, on top of the three questions above — the same lines used across Festivals pairings, worded generally enough to support a visual-choice answer: (1) state one true thing about the real community or culture behind the festival, and how it shaped one specific choice in the festival; (2) in one sentence, say what that real detail added to the festival that a purely made-up idea wouldn't have. The second line is what makes this genuine evaluation (Criterion A(ii)) instead of just a fact check (A(i)).

No change to Week 4's structure for this pairing — but the existing written Cultural Claim ("Festivals reveal the culture of the people who create them because __," posted to Padlet) is extended to ask not just what students learned, but what they'd want to explore or do differently as a result. That forward-looking element is what covers Criterion C's 'future action' strand for Individuals & Societies, not just the 'reflecting on understanding' half.

3. Your disciplinary grounding

This is the part IB cares about most when it comes to why two teachers are involved at all — it protects the integrity of what each of you actually teaches. Draft your own column, then review both together.

PROMPT	INDIVIDUALS & SOCIETIES	ARTS
What factual, conceptual, or procedural knowledge from your curriculum will students need for this unit?		
Which of your subject-group objectives does this unit address?		
What related concept(s) from your subject connect to Culture / Creativity? (name 1–2 from each of your subjects' official concept lists that fit)		
How will you help students weigh the benefits and limits of your discipline's perspective on this topic?		

DECIDE TOGETHER

Once both columns are filled in, sit down together and check: does each of your pieces actually feed into the other's, or are you just running two parallel mini-units that happen to share a topic? If it's the latter, that's worth 10 minutes of adjustment now rather than after the unit runs.

4. Inquiry questions

Starting questions below — adapt freely. IB expects factual, conceptual, and debatable questions that both subjects can genuinely explore.

DRAFT LANGUAGE — a starting point, not an approved or required version

Factual: What cultural elements (symbols, food, central event) define a festival? What visual choices — color, imagery, symbol design — do real festivals use to represent their meaning?

Conceptual: How does the way a festival's visual identity is designed change how an outside audience understands its cultural meaning? What is gained or lost when a culture's symbols are translated into a new visual design for an outside audience?

Debatable: Can a visual symbol ever fully and respectfully represent another community's celebration? Should visual appeal matter more than cultural accuracy when designing how someone else's culture is presented?

DECIDE TOGETHER

Keep, cut, or rewrite these together so they genuinely work for both subjects — a question only one of you could teach into isn't doing its job here.

5. Agree now on how you'll assess together

This section is about agreeing on your approach before the unit runs — the actual joint grading happens later (see Section 7). Deciding your approach now makes that step much faster.

DECIDE TOGETHER

For the pitch video's two required lines (see Section 2): what would a strong answer actually look like, from both an Individuals & Societies and an Arts angle? Sketch a shared, rough sense of what 'fully analyses' and 'fully evaluates' (the top band's command terms) would look like in a student's actual answer — you don't need a polished rubric, just a shared mental picture so you're not calibrating from scratch after the unit ends.

6. Record of collaborative planning

Fill in together. Keep this — it's your evidence of collaborative planning if a school is ever asked for it during an IB evaluation.

Teachers (name, subject)	
Date(s) you met	
Format used (one session / two check-ins / other)	
Statement of inquiry — final wording	
Key adjustments you made to the starting materials in this guide	

YOUR CONNECTION, IN YOUR OWN WORDS

This matters more than the checkboxes above: in 2–3 sentences, describe the specific connection you found between your two subjects for this cohort — not just that you met, but what you actually decided. This is your strongest evidence of genuine collaborative planning.

7. After the unit: score Criterion A together

Once students finish their work, sit down together with a sample of it — specifically the pitch videos' researched-fact-and-evaluation lines and the Week 2 visual-identity choices — and jointly decide a best-fit achievement level for Criterion A, not each of you grading your own slice separately. Budget 20–30 minutes for this after the unit ends; it's required regardless of how the unit was planned.

A different pairing?

This guide is written for Individuals & Societies + Arts. If your school is using a different pairing instead, ask Banyan for the matching guide: Individuals & Societies + Language & Literature (recommended), or Language & Literature + Arts.

Sources

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Your IDU Co-Planning Guide

For your Language & Literature and Arts teachers

ALTERNATE PAIRING

This is the planning conversation that makes your Festivals unit a collaboratively planned MYP interdisciplinary unit — not just a program you're each running in parallel.

Before you begin

This guide is the planning conversation between the two of you — the thing that turns Banyan's four-week Festivals program into a unit your school can point to as a collaboratively planned MYP interdisciplinary unit (IDU).

It's built with that requirement specifically in mind. It doesn't guarantee any particular outcome in an IB evaluation — that's always your evaluator's judgment — but every section below exists because of something specific the IB asks for, not as busywork.

What's already built for you

Banyan provides all of this — you don't need to plan or recreate any of it:

- Four weekly, facilitator-led live sessions (~45 minutes each), run by Banyan, with no homework for students
- Your partner classroom match, the platform, and all session materials
- The four-week arc (session names vary slightly across Banyan's own materials — this guide uses Week 1–4 throughout to avoid that inconsistency)
- Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (primary), Identities & Relationships (secondary)
- The student artifacts described in Section 2

What's still yours to decide — together

How your two subjects' specific objectives connect to that core, and how you'll jointly judge students' work against the MYP interdisciplinary criteria. That's everything from here on.

How much time this takes

As little or as much as you both want — this is designed to flex. Some schools will get through the sections below in one 45–60 minute sit-down. Others will find it easier as two or three shorter check-ins.

How to use the “Decide together” boxes

Sections marked DECIDE TOGETHER need both of you present at the same time — in person, on a call, whatever works — not filled in separately and stitched together afterward. That's the difference between planning your IDU together and each of you independently adapting a template. Everything else below can be drafted on your own first, then reviewed together.

What happens each week

A quick reference so this guide stands on its own. For the full session-by-session detail — exact scripts, timing, facilitator notes — use the four Teacher Overviews you already have for this unit.

WEEK	FOCUS	WHAT STUDENTS CREATE	YOUR ROLE
Week 1	Meet partner schools, watch three short festival clips, brainstorm ideas as a group.	A 30–60 second Padlet video answering “My festival idea is ___ because ___,” plus short Padlet posts (a word, a food, a local festival) and 1–2 questions for partner schools.	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute video-recording segment.
Week 2	Five fast-paced rounds building the festival's story, name, food, main event, and symbol.	A complete festival concept — story, name, food, main event, and symbol — posted to Padlet, plus partner questions.	Classroom management; help groups stay on task during the rounds and during Padlet posting.
Week 3	Reveal of an AI-generated video of their own festival concept; record a pitch video; explore real festivals near partner cities.	A pitch video (about 30–60 seconds) answering three set questions: What is your festival called? What makes it special? Why should someone come? Plus 1–2 partner questions. (This pairing adds to the pitch task — see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute pitch-recording segment.
Week 4	Watch pitch videos from the whole cohort; “Culture Detective” activity finding patterns across schools; post a Cultural Claim; reflect as a group.	A written Cultural Claim posted to Padlet — “Festivals reveal the culture of the people who create them because ___” — plus a spoken (not retained) reflection on what students will remember, and the end-of-unit survey. (This pairing may add to Week 4 — see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during Culture Detective and Cultural Claim posting.

This pairing adds a peer-evaluation task in Week 3 and a short closing question in Week 4 — see Section 2 for exactly what and why.

1. Your statement of inquiry

Key Concepts: Communication (Language & Literature) / Creativity (Arts) · Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (secondary: Identities & Relationships)

DECIDE TOGETHER

Before you use the example below, work through this together — it's what actually makes the unit collaboratively planned, not just individually adapted:

Language & Literature: what does your curriculum emphasize about audience, purpose, or storytelling that connects to the concept document and pitch students produce?

Arts: what does your curriculum emphasize about visual identity, symbol, or design choices that connects to the festival's name, symbol, main event, and AI visualization?

Where do your two answers overlap or push against each other? Don't stop at the overlap — pick one specific choice your students will actually make (a name, a symbol, a food, a story detail) and ask: what changes about its meaning when you look at it through your OTHER subject's lens? That shift — not just the shared topic — is your real Purpose of Integration.

Example statement of inquiry: “A festival communicates a community's identity through the story it tells and the symbols it shows, and evaluating how well those two things work together — in your own work and someone else's — sharpens both the writing and the design.”

Example purpose of integration

Language & Literature: students craft the festival's story and pitch, choosing language and narrative technique that give the festival concept meaning and momentum.

Arts: students design the festival's visual identity — its symbol and visual presentation — making deliberate choices about color, imagery, and form.

Synthesis: students combine storytelling choices with visual-design choices, and evaluate how well the two reinforce each other, to create a festival concept whose story and symbol communicate the same meaning together — something neither lens fully tests alone.

Treat this as a model, not a script — your own students' festival ideas may point somewhere more specific.

2. Map your subjects onto the artifacts

ARTIFACT	CRITERION	SUBJECTS
Festival concept document & pitch storytelling (Weeks 2–3)	B – Synthesizing	L&L storytelling / Arts visual-identity choices
Peer-evaluation task (Week 3, added)	A – Evaluating	L&L writing / Arts visual half
Closing reflection (Week 4, added)	C – Reflecting	L&L / Arts jointly

Week 1's festival-idea video is a warm-up — it isn't mapped to a criterion and shouldn't be cited as evidence of collaborative planning.

Week 4's standard Cultural Claim and reflection close still happen as usual — the added closing question below is on top of it, not a replacement.

HOW YOUR SESSIONS ARE CUSTOMIZED FOR THIS PAIRING

The Week 3 pitch already asks students to answer three questions in about 30–60 seconds: What is your festival called? What makes it special? Why should someone come? This pairing doesn't add lines to that pitch the way the other two Festivals pairings do, since there's no Individuals & Societies research to draw on — instead, Banyan customizes your cohort's sessions with a separate task in the same session, so Criterion A (Evaluating) has real joint evidence instead of a loose thematic connection:

A peer-evaluation task in Week 3, alongside the pitch above: each student picks another team's festival from the AI gallery (the same gallery students already browse that week) and evaluates how well that team's story and symbol work together, then does the same for their own — then, in one sentence, says what looking at the story and symbol together showed them that looking at just one wouldn't have. That last sentence is what makes this genuine evaluation (Criterion A(ii)) instead of just a quality check on the pairing (A(i)).

A short written closing question in Week 4, posted to Padlet, on top of the standard Cultural Claim and spoken close: as a team, name one other festival, story, or artwork (real, or seen in the AI gallery) you'd want to explore further using what you noticed about how story and symbol work together. This gives the pairing real Criterion C evidence — both reflecting on understanding and connecting it to future exploration — where previously there was none.

3. Your disciplinary grounding

This is the part IB cares about most when it comes to why two teachers are involved at all — it protects the integrity of what each of you actually teaches. Draft your own column, then review both together.

PROMPT	LANGUAGE & LITERATURE	ARTS
What factual, conceptual, or procedural knowledge from your curriculum will students need for this unit?		
Which of your subject-group objectives does this unit address?		
What related concept(s) from your subject connect to Communication / Creativity? (name 1–2 from each of your subjects' official concept lists that fit)		
How will you help students weigh the benefits and limits of your discipline's perspective on this topic?		

DECIDE TOGETHER

Once both columns are filled in, sit down together and check: does each of your pieces actually feed into the other's, or are you just running two parallel mini-units that happen to share a topic? If it's the latter, that's worth 10 minutes of adjustment now rather than after the unit runs.

4. Inquiry questions

Starting questions below — adapt freely. IB expects factual, conceptual, and debatable questions that both subjects can genuinely explore.

DRAFT LANGUAGE — a starting point, not an approved or required version

Factual: What elements — story, name, symbol — make up a festival concept? What choices do real festival stories and visual symbols make to communicate meaning?

Conceptual: How does combining a story with a visual symbol change how an audience understands a festival's meaning, compared to either alone? What is gained or lost when a story's meaning is translated into a visual symbol?

Debatable: Can a symbol ever fully capture what a story means? Should a festival's visual identity match its story exactly, or is some creative distance valuable?

DECIDE TOGETHER

Keep, cut, or rewrite these together so they genuinely work for both subjects — a question only one of you could teach into isn't doing its job here.

5. Agree now on how you'll assess together

This section is about agreeing on your approach before the unit runs — the actual joint grading happens later (see Section 7). Deciding your approach now makes that step much faster.

DECIDE TOGETHER

For the Week 3 peer-evaluation task (see Section 2): what would a strong answer actually look like, from both a Language & Literature and an Arts angle? Sketch a shared, rough sense of what 'fully analyses' and 'fully evaluates' (the top band's command terms) would look like in a student's actual answer — you don't need a polished rubric, just a shared mental picture so you're not calibrating from scratch after the unit ends.

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Teachers (name, subject)	
Date(s) you met	
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YOUR CONNECTION, IN YOUR OWN WORDS

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7. After the unit: score Criterion A together

Once students finish their work, sit down together with a sample of it — specifically the peer-evaluation responses, including the added evaluative sentence — and jointly decide a best-fit achievement level for Criterion A, not each of you grading your own slice separately. Budget 20–30 minutes for this after the unit ends; it's required regardless of how the unit was planned.

A different pairing?

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