

2024 STARTALK Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How many parts does the STARTALK Chinese program contain?

A. The program contains three parts: Pre-camp (before the summer camp), Summer Camp, and Post Camp (after the summer camp).

Q. What's the requirement for the students to be considered for the STARTALK Chinese program?

A. The applicant **MUST** be an

- ❖ ILTexas rising 9-11th grade students in 2024-2025 (Current 8-10th)
- ❖ who has completed the STARTALK Chinese program application, and
- ❖ has obtained a letter of recommendation from his/her current Chinese teacher.

Q. When will STARTALK Pre-camp start? Is it going to be online or in person?

A. Pre-camp will start in April of 2024, either on weekends or/and weekday evenings. (dates to be announced later). It will be online in synchronous and asynchronous forms.

Q. How long is the STARTALK Pre-camp? What will participants do in the Pre-camp?

A. Participants will attend 30 hours of online fundamental learning in Pre-camp to prepare them to be successful in using frequently referenced classroom terms in Summer Camp.

Q. How long is the STARTALK Post Camp? When is the STARTALK Post Camp?

A. Participants will attend 30 hours of Post Camp online in synchronous and asynchronous sessions. It will be from August to December of 2024.

Q. What does the STARTALK Post Camp look like?

A. Participants will engage with Chinese students on summer camp projects and have the chance to delve into career prospects associated with the Chinese language. They will benefit from insights shared by guest speakers from the National Security Agency and the ILTexas Leadership Speaker series.

Q. When is the STARTALK Summer Camp? Is it in person? Where will the Summer Camp be?

A. The STARTALK Summer Camp is from June 3 - June 21, 2024. It will be in person at ILTexas Garland High School campus.

Q. What does "Residential Immersion Summer Camp" mean?

A. In the Residential Immersion Summer Camp, students will be immersed in the Chinese language learning and cultural environment. They will stay at the ILTexas Garland High School student apartment at night and on the weekends throughout the Summer Camp.

Q. What is a typical day like in the STARTALK Summer Camp?

A. The students will start the day with a morning warmup in the gym and then go to the Chinese language classes. After lunch, students will work on projects at designated

stations led and guided by the Chinese teachers and instructional aids in the afternoon. Following the dinner, students will participate in themed night activities: cooking, games, sports, movies, social, etc. from Monday to Friday.

Q. What do the students do during the weekends in STARTALK Summer Camp?

A. Students will have fun activities, field trips, and interactions with guest artists and students' parents.

Q. Are there any celebrations at the end of the STARTALK Summer Camp? Can parents attend?

A. Yes, all parents and family members are invited to attend the end of the STARTALK Summer Camp Showcase on June 21st at International Leadership of Texas Garland High School.

Q. Do you provide meals for the students during the STARTALK Summer Camp? What's the cost?

A. Yes. Meals and snacks will be provided to all participants **Free of Charge** every day during the Summer Camp.

Q. How many students will be allowed into this STARTALK Chinese program?

A. A maximum of 120 students can be accepted.

Q. How is the lodging arranged? How many students are in each room in the dorm?

A. Generally, there will be three rooms in each student apartment where two students will share one room with two separate beds. There is a dining room, a living room, and a kitchen with a refrigerator in each apartment. Students will be organized into distinct areas within the dorm, with separate sections designated for boys and girls.

Q. What security measures are in place for the STARTALK Summer Camp?

A. There will be security guards on duty in the classroom area and the apartment at all times. Security cameras are on the campus and in and outside the enclosed apartment. Instructors and Instructional Aids will supervise the students during the instructional time and the evening activities. At night, trained resident advisors (RA) will monitor the campers in the dorm, and conduct room inspections, ensuring their safety. STARTALK instructors, Instructional aids and resident advisors will act as chaperones on field trips.

Q. Are campers allowed to take electronic devices (cell phones and tablets, etc.) to the STARTALK Summer Camp?

A. Yes. However, electronic devices are not allowed during instructional time.

Q. How can parents check on the student during STARTALK Summer Camp?

A. Students are allowed to call and text the parents outside instructional hours. The STARTALK Staff members will regularly provide parents with updates on their child's progress and promptly communicate in emergency situations, if there are any.

Q. Will transportation be provided for the students to the campsite before the STARTALK Summer Camp, and from the campsite at the end of the Summer Camp?

A. Because of the concurrent ILTexas summer programs at the time of the camp and the limited resources, we are actively addressing this matter and will provide an update soon.

Q. Do parents and students have to prepare supplies for campers? If yes, what supplies are required?

A: No. ALL supplies will be provided by the STARTALK program.

Q. Are there laundry machines for students to do laundry at the dorm during the STARTALK Summer Camp?

A. Yes, there is a laundry facility in the dorm with designated areas for boys and girls. Students will need to provide their own laundry detergent.

Q. When does the application open? What's the deadline for the application submission?

A. The application is open now. The deadline for application submission is February 2, 2024.

Q. How can students apply for the STARTALK program?

A. Interested students can apply via this link: <https://bit.ly/ILTexasSTARTALKApplication2024>. Students can also access the application via the ILTexas STARTALK website at <https://www.iltexas.org/about-us/grants/startalk>

Q. Is the recommendation letter from my child's current Chinese teacher required?

A. Yes. Once you decide to apply, your child needs to contact his/her current Chinese teacher to request a recommendation.

Q. When will applicants know that they are accepted?

A. Applicants will receive an acceptance notification by March 30, 2024.

Q. Can a student attend another summer program after having been accepted to the STARTALK program?

A. After the applicant has made the commitment to the STARTALK program and has been accepted, he/she can't attend another summer program that conflicts with the timing of the STARTALK program.

Q. How do I communicate if I have questions?

A. You can email us at startalk@iltexas.org for questions regarding the STARTALK program.