

FLES NEWS

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Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Language Teaching Materials

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Large scale programs for the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary school are still relatively uncommon educational ventures in our country. As a result, instructors in this field generally have not had at their disposal a great variety of materials whose effectiveness has been tested over the years—a situation encountered less often by teachers of more traditional subjects. So we foreign language teachers who work with our youngest school children have spent much time gathering large, colorful pictures, translating, writing, and illustrating our own materials, or figuring out how to finance the curriculum materials that look so promising on the catalogue page! As the selection of ready-made materials offered by commercial suppliers begins to increase, an important question comes to mind: How effective will these materials be?

This is not always easy to determine, especially if samples are not available for pre-purchase inspection. To help answer this question, I have developed a set of criteria for use in evaluating new foreign language programs aimed at young learners. Based upon research for a master's thesis at Middlebury College School in France, as well as on personal experience in the classroom (teaching French to American children, grades K-5, and English to French 4 and 5-year-olds), I have found there are five necessary criteria for effective elementary school foreign language materials.

The Criteria

1. an approach designed to develop communicative competencies (rather than knowledge of specific language structures), with an emphasis on oral (not written) functions in the first stages of instruction;
2. an emphasis on physical movement and drama including games, role play, use of puppets, masks, and other props;
3. the use of music in various forms (songs, chants, rhymes, instrumental music) as a means of expression;
4. visual materials of a relatively large format that depict subjects recognizable by children; and
5. an introduction to the cultures of the target language through stories, songs, games, and other traditional activities.

Rationale for Choosing These Criteria

Criterion 1: FLES materials published in France as early as the 1960s (*Bonjour Line*, *Frère Jacques*) had as a major goal the encouragement of children to communicate in French with simple structures, often through the mastering of dialogues. These dialogues were organized in strict progression according to their linguistic content. Although translation, use of the maternal language, and the explicit teaching of grammar were discouraged in these programs, the objective of instruction was seen as the student's production of words and phrases identified by the authors. In the 1970s, however, didacticians (pedagogues), especially those from anglo-saxon countries, proposed that foreign language programs no longer consider language structures as end goals in themselves, but strive to teach the various functions of communication on a more general level (to introduce oneself, ask someone's age, etc.), without so much regard for the particular words or structures themselves. It is because of this enlarged perspective on the teaching and learning of languages that a new generation of materials has appeared since the mid 1980s, for example, *Il était une petite grenouille* (1986), *Les petits Lascars* (1987); and *Michel et Marion* (1988).

As for how these functions are taught, according to Hélène Trocmé-Fabre, specialist in neuropsychology, the first step in learning a foreign language must coincide with that of the natural order of "knowing how to learn"—the act of observation. A child's hearing, sight, and kinesthesia translate for his or her young mind the information that the family, and later the teachers, present to him or her (Trocmé-

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Notes from the President

At the writing of this message, spring is just beginning in North Carolina. The dogwood, redbud, and all the other glorious trees and flowers are letting us know that a season of growth and beauty is upon us. This will be particularly appreciated by those who have endured an exceptionally long and harsh winter this past year. So too is NNELL and elementary school foreign language learning experiencing a season of growth and promise.

New committee chairpersons and regional representatives in NNELL are involving more individuals in important positions and duties within the organization. I want to particularly congratulate JoAnn Olliphant, Pacific Northwest Regional Representative, who has formed an impressive committee of representatives in her region to assist in networking on issues of foreign language in the elementary school.

Additionally, federal grants continue to support our efforts. For example, Iowa State University has received funding to become a National Foreign Language Resource Center in order to disseminate information and to provide training to K-12 teachers (see article on p. 6). Another effort that continues is the training of nearly 50 non-certified elementary school foreign language teachers in North Carolina. Through a grant received two years ago by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the critical need for certified teachers is being addressed.

Other state and local initiatives are helping to bring foreign language instruction to increasing numbers of children. Write to us about your particular projects. Also, if you are interested in becoming involved with the organization, please contact me. And as always, let us know how we can be of service to you.

Have a wonderful spring, and good luck in all of your efforts and endeavors with foreign language instruction for children.

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FLES News is a newsletter for educators interested in providing quality foreign language instruction for children. The newsletter provides information on classroom activities, resources, teaching methods, recent research, and upcoming conferences. *FLES News* provides a means of sharing information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the teaching of foreign languages to young children.

FLES News is published three times a year (fall, winter, and spring) by the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL): Editor Marcia Rosenbusch, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures, 300 Pearson Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011. NNELL executive committee members are: President Audrey Heining-Boynton, Foreign Language Education, CB#3500 Peabody Hall, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3500; First Vice-President Mari Haas, Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th St., Box 201, New York, NY 10027; Second Vice-President Eileen Lorenz, Montgomery County Public Schools, 850 Hungerford Dr., Rockville, MD 20850; Secretary Patty Ryerson, Wellington School, 3650 Reed Rd., Columbus, OH 43220; Treasurer Sonia Torres, 2905 Optimist Farm Rd., Apex, NC 27502; Acting Past-President Carol Ann Pesola, Concordia College, 901 Eighth St. S., Moorhead, MN 56562; Executive Secretary Nancy Rhodes, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Committee appointments are: Bylaws Maureen Regan-Baker, 2120 N. Clark, Chicago, IL 60614; Membership/publicity Virginia Gramer, Hinsdale Elementary School, 210 N. Madison, Hinsdale, IL 60512 and Anita LaTorre, 906 Queensbury Circle, Durham, NC 27713; Political action Gilda Oran-Saperstein, 3540 Green St., Harrisburg, PA 17110; Central States Conference representative Debbie Wilburn, 10157 Alliston Dr., Pickerington, OH 43147; Pacific Northwest Council representative JoAnn Olliphant, 11004 11th St. SW, Tacoma, WA 98498; Northeast Conference representative Harriet Barnett, 225 Clinton Ave., Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522; Southern Conference representative Carine Feyten, University of Southern Florida, College of Education, EDU 306H, Tampa, FL 33620-56560; Southwest Conference representative Carl Johnson, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress, Austin, TX 78701.

Contributing editors for the newsletter by topic are: Classroom activities Diane Fagin Adler, North Carolina State University, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Box 8106, Raleigh, NC 27695-8106; Conferences Susan Walker, 4560 Ohio Ave., St. Louis, MO 63111; Funding information and new legislation Joint National Committee for Languages, 300 Eye St., NE, Suite 211, Washington, DC 20002; Research M. Joy Young, Charleston Day School, 15 Archdale St., Charleston, SC 29401; French resources Myriam Chapman, Bank Street School for Children, 610 W. 112th St., New York, NY 10025; German resources Cindy Sizemore, 4045 N. Avenida Del Cazar, Tucson, AZ 85718; Spanish resources Susan Wolter, 6894 N. Park Manor Dr., Milwaukee, WI 53224; Teaching methods Mary Lynn Redmond, Wake Forest University, Department of Education, Box 7266, Reynolda Station, Winston-Salem, NC 27109.

Membership dues for NNELL, which include a subscription to *FLES News* are \$12/year (\$15 overseas). Please send your check to: Nancy Rhodes, Executive Secretary, National Network for Early Language Learning, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

FLES News wants to hear from its readers. Send letters to: Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Editor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, 300 Pearson Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011. Send contributions to be considered for publication to the appropriate contributing editors at the addresses listed above. Deadlines for information are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1.

Readers are encouraged to make copies of this newsletter to share with colleagues. Articles may be reprinted citing *FLES News*, National Network for Early Language Learning, as the source.

†Foreign Language in the Elementary School

Job Announcements

K-6 Spanish Teachers Needed

The St. Louis Park (Minnesota) Public Schools will be initiating two new elementary foreign language programs: (1) in Fall, 1994 a FLES program in kindergarten (Spanish); and (2) in Fall, 1995 an immersion program in kindergarten and/or first grade (language choice to be finalized in spring 1994). Each subsequent year, the programs will be expanded by one grade until a K-6 program is achieved. St. Louis Park Schools are seeking teachers with elementary certification (K-6) and native or near-native proficiency in a foreign language, particularly Spanish. The St. Louis Park Public Schools, near Minneapolis, have a long tradition of strong parental support and have recently completed construction of media centers at all schools that contain state of the art computer labs and other technologies. Send a

resume and letter of application to Director of Human Resources, St. Louis Park Public Schools, St. Louis Park, MN 55426.

Spanish Partial Immersion Teachers Needed

Oak Ridge (Tennessee) Schools seek applicants for four Spanish partial-immersion teachers (one 5th grade, one 2nd grade, and two 1st grade positions). The beginning date will be August 1994 with preliminary planning conducted in the summer of 1994. A B.S. degree and the ability to obtain a Tennessee teaching certificate are required. Teaching experience in elementary grades and a high level of Spanish language proficiency are preferred. The teachers hired will teach Spanish through the content areas of science, social studies, and related areas and will develop the program in relation to Oak Ridge Schools' curriculum. Apply to Human Resources Office, Oak Ridge Schools, P.O. Box 6588, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-6588. EOE employer.

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JNCL-NCLIS Policy Committee

Statement on Education Reform

Note: The National Network for Early Language Learning is a contributing member of the Joint National Committee for Languages/National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL/NCLIS). The following statement was issued by JNCL/NCLIS in December 1993 for members of Congress and other policy makers.

I. We support Goals 2000: The Educate America Act, the Improving America's Schools Act reauthorizing elementary and secondary education programs, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act.

1. We believe that Goals 2000 must recognize and strengthen the importance of professional development programs, ensure equality through "opportunity-to-learn" standards, and encourage quality programs through assessable content and performance standards.

2. The Improving America's Schools Act should restore and strengthen the Foreign Language Assistance Program, retain the multifunctional resource centers and evaluation assistance centers in Title VII, strengthen support for limited-English-proficient students in Chapter One, and specifically encourage professional development in international education and foreign languages.

3. Given the national consensus on the need for high quality, internationally competitive content and performance standards, we believe that resources must be made available to develop such standards for English as a second language and for the less commonly taught languages.

II. We agree that systemic reform of education in the United States is overdue. We have specific concerns, however, that we believe any reform effort musts accommodate.

1. If our nation is to be internationally competitive, the curriculum must reflect a global perspective.

2. To ensure the participation of students with special needs and special talents, "opportunity-to-learn" standards must be developed in conjunction with content and performance standards.

3. To ensure excellence and equity, adequate resources must be devoted to reform, standards, and assessment.

4. To ensure that teachers and administrators are able to achieve reform, the development of standards should be accompanied by professional development.

III. It is essential that systemic reform not jeopardize content and knowledge by creating education generalists and undermining specific disciplines.

1. We strenuously object to the elimination of disciplinary specialists and programs as a consequence of such reforms as site-based management. The loss of foreign language supervisors and consultants in many states and districts has seriously harmed programs, students, and teachers.

2. The needs of program quality should have priority over unproven claims of managerial efficiency. Slogans like "one-stop-educational shopping" and "doing more with less" are shortsighted and damaging. Financial exigency must not govern education reform.

IV. Finally, we are pleased that foreign languages have been included among the core subjects considered in Goal Three of Goals 2000. Language professionals, including foreign language and English as a second language specialists, collaborating through our member organizations and in funded projects, are already working to ensure that content and performance standards for language study are of high quality, internationally competitive, and assessable.

Conference Calendar

International, national, and regional conferences and workshops are previewed in this section of the newsletter. Please send information on conferences and workshops to the Conferences editor: Susan Walker, 4560 Ohio Ave., St. Louis, MO 63111.

1994 CONFERENCES

May 12-14: Pacific Northwest Council on Foreign Languages. Missoula, MT. PNCFL, Foreign Languages & Literatures, Oregon State University, Kidder Hall 210, Corvallis, OR 97331-4603 (503-737-2146).

October 21-24: Advocates for Language Learning Conference. (Hosted by the Washington Metro Chapter of A.L.L.) Greenbelt, MD. Pat Barr-Harrison (301-386-1519; Fax 301-386-1565) or Nancy Stakem, President of W.A.L.L. (301-498-0122).

November 18-20: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801 (914-963-8830).

November 19: Conference on Books in Spanish for Young Readers. San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, CA. Dr. Isabel Schon, Director, Center for the Study of Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents, California State University San Marcos, San Marcos, CA 92096-0001 (619-752-4070; Fax: 619-752-4073).

1994 SUMMER COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

June 27-July 1; July 11-15; July 25-29: Workshop conducted in English; **August 8-12; August 15-19:** Workshop conducted in Spanish: **Current Issues: Books in Spanish for Young Readers.** Dr. Isabel Schon, Director, Center for the Study of Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents, California State University San Marcos, San Marcos, CA 92096-0001 (619-752-4070; Fax: 619-752-4073).

Conferences Editor: Susan Walker

Activities for Your Classroom

Teachers: Please submit a favorite classroom activity for publication in FLES News by sending a description in the following format: title, objective, materials, and procedure. You may include any pictures or drawings as illustrations. Send it with your name, address, and telephone number to the Classroom Activities editor: Diane Fagin Adler, North Carolina State University, Dept. of Foreign Languages & Literatures, Box 8106, Raleigh, NC 27695-8106.

Title: *Monsieur Pouce, es-tu là?* (Mr. Thumb, are you there?)

Objective:

Students will use vocabulary in short, complete sentences, accompanied by fingerplays.

Materials:

Hands and fingers.

Rhyme #1:

TOC, TOC, TOC	(Knock, knock, knock)
MONSIEUR POUCE, ES-TU LA? ¹	(Mr. Thumb, are you there?)
CHUT! JE DORS. ²	(Sh-h. I am sleeping.)
MONSIEUR POUCE, ES-TU LA? ¹	(Mr. Thumb, are you there?)
JE NE SORS PAS! ³	(I am not going out!)
MONSIEUR POUCE, ES-TU LA? ¹	(Mr. Thumb, are you there?)
HOP! JE SORS. ⁴	(OK! I am coming out.)

Procedure:

¹Make left hand into a fist with the thumb inside. With the right index finger, tap on the enclosed thumb. Repeat (1) twice each time.

²Place right index finger on the mouth. Move the right hand to the ear and tilt head toward it.

³Move right index finger from left to right in front of the face.

⁴Left thumb (Monsieur Pouce) pops out!

Rhyme #2:

MONSIEUR L'ESCARGOT DORT. ¹	(Mr. Snail is sleeping.)
IL FAIT TRES BEAU DEHORS. ²	(The weather is beautiful outside.)
UN PETIT NUAGE PASSE. ³	(A little cloud passes by.)
ET FAIT TOMBER LA PLUIE. ⁴	(And makes it rain.)
MONSIEUR L'ESCARGOT SORT, ⁵	(Mr. Snail goes out.)
UNE CORNE DEHORS, ⁶	(First one horn.)
LES DEUX CORNES DEHORS! ⁷	(Then two horns!)

Procedure:

¹Make left hand into a fist with the thumb inside. Bring right hand to the ear, head tilted forward to the right to simulate sleeping (The snail is asleep inside).

²Spread fingers of right hand (to resemble sun rays) and move right hand from left to right over the left fist.

³Move fingers of right hand together. "Float" the right hand over

the left hand in a circular motion (to resemble the cloud).

⁴Make a "fluttering down" motion with the fingers of the right hand (to resemble the rain).

⁵Thumb pops out.

⁶Left index and fingers pop out. (One horn comes out first.)

⁷Thumb hides again. (Two horns are out.)

Contributor: Marguerite B. Lewis
Montessori School of Northern Virginia

Classroom Activities Editor: Diane Fagin Adler

Job Announcements Continued from page 2

Multilingual Teacher Needed

St. Paul's School, a private Episcopal school located north of Baltimore, Maryland, is seeking a teacher of Japanese and Spanish/French language for a possible opening in 1994-95. This new teacher would work in coordination with two full-time instructors of Japanese language in an established and growing elementary and high school program. Since this would not be a full-time Japanese language teaching position, candidates with the ability and desire to teach multiple languages are urged to apply. Requirements include: foreign language teaching experience, especially at the elementary level, B.A. and the ability to teach multiple languages. Contact Robert Hallett, Headmaster, St. Paul's School, Brooklandville, MD 21022.

PreK-8 Spanish Teacher Needed

The Ancona School (Chicago, Illinois), an urban school that combines the best of Montessori and progressive educational traditions, seeks a bright, flexible Spanish teacher for our preK-8 program. We are looking for a teacher experienced with middle school, elementary and preschool children who is committed to interactive language instruction based on an acquisition model. Compensation for the 1994 school year is \$18,879-\$26,557 plus \$2280 flexible benefits plan and TIAA-CREFF pension. Summer school positions are available to our staff. Interested candidates should send a resume plus a statement of philosophy and teaching interests to Director, The Ancona School, 4770 South Dorchester Avenue, Chicago, IL 60615-2023 (312-924-2356).

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Fabre, 1991). Then, based upon what he/she has assimilated, the child eventually is able to produce in the maternal language—by speaking and writing. So to make second language learning as natural as possible, the same sequence of modalities should be addressed. In other words, after the child is provided with ample opportunities to listen to and observe communication in the target language, the student's production of the second language—in speaking and in writing—will be facilitated.

Criterion 2: Again, young children learn by listening, watching, and above all, by doing! Between the ages of five and seven (the Piagetian pre-operational stage), "the body is the primary medium of communication: the child grows by way of the exchanges between him and his environment" (Destarac, 1991). Playing and imagining come naturally to the young. Thus, for early foreign language instruction to be most effective, a child's physical participation in lessons—through games, role play, the use of puppets, masks, disguises, etc.—is indispensable, not to mention a fun way to motivate the students. These are the activities that provide the important link between the child's playful world and his or her new vehicle for communication: the foreign language.

Criterion 3: Music serves to enliven the language class while providing the students with a valuable means of expression. From birth we are comforted by music; it stimulates our auditory system and accentuates our emotions. Then we learn to use it to express ourselves—an act that is a necessary part of human nature. In fact, as children grow, they need to hear and produce music. In the elementary school foreign language classroom, music in a variety of forms, vocal or instrumental, accompanied by gestures, mimes, or dance, will respond to this need, while considerably animating instruction.

Criterion 4: The visual supports used in an elementary school program, for obvious reasons, should be of a relatively large format, with depictions that are easily interpreted by children. Whatever the form (illustration, photograph, film, etc.), the richer the representation of the spoken word, the more likely that children will understand the meaning of the words. Furthermore, in view of the inherent ambiguity of verbal language, "we depend upon the analogous readability of the image in order to access meaning, or at least certain elements of the meaning of the spoken word" (Mallet, 1991). Children's literature now available in big book format with large-scale illustrations of is a good example material that is visually stimulating to children.

Criterion 5: "Culture and communication sustain each other mutually and have no meaning except one in relation to the other" (Abdallah-Preteceille, 1991). Proponents of this viewpoint, which include specialists in communication, warn instructors not to separate the two into independent subject areas. The study of a foreign language necessarily results in discoveries about one or more cultures other than one's own, which serves to greatly enhance a child's appreciation of differences and similarities among people. But what *cultural competencies*, in view of potential intercultural relations, should we teach in the elementary foreign language class? Is mere familiarity with the customs of various civilizations sufficient? No. In authentic communication-situations, even a simple conversation can be packed with cultural cues. The hand-movements and facial expressions, for example, that accompany spoken language, vary from culture to culture. We need to introduce other ways of living to our students not only through verbal and pictorial descriptions, but also through the language itself, dramatizing each exchange to accurately mimic real-

life communication.

With regards to materials, it is important to look for a variety of rhymes, songs, stories, and games that reflect traditions in the target culture. In addition to providing a general outlook on other communities, they offer a taste of how children spend their leisure time in other areas of the world.

Whether you obtain samples from a publisher or borrow from a colleague, examine materials thoroughly: read all stories and suggestions for activities, listen to all songs and other audio materials. Consider how strong the materials are in each of the five areas. You may even want to devise a point system to make comparing programs easier, for example, where five points is the highest level of quality for each area. It is possible that you will not come across any one set of teaching aids that satisfies your requirements in all five recommended areas. In this case, you will have to decide whether or not you have the resources (or imagination!) to supplement that which seems to have some important strengths. Of course, our personal teaching styles and preferences influence our materials selections and much of the value of each product depends upon the manner in which it is used. If we keep in mind the five criteria, chances increase greatly for eliciting communication that is meaningful and fun for students and that contributes to their overall growth and development.

References

- Abdallah-Preteceille, M. (Aout-septembre, 1991). "Langue(s), culture(s), et communication," *Le Français dans le monde, recherches et applications. Numéro spécial*, p. 95.
- Destarac, M.C. (Aout-septembre, 1991). "Italie: Activités psychomotrices et apprentissage du français," *Le Français dans le monde, recherches et applications. Numéro spécial*, p. 120.
- Mallet, B. (Aout-septembre, 1991). "Personnalité enfantine et apprentissage des langues," *Le Français dans le monde, recherches et application. Numéro spécial*, p. 89.
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Teaching Methods Editor: Mary Lynn Redmond

Apply for a 1995 NEH Summer Fellowship

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Fellowship Program for Foreign Language Teachers K-12 invites teachers to apply for 1995 summer fellowships of \$3,750 to pursue professional development abroad. Fellowship winners spend six summer weeks in a foreign country improving their linguistic skills and developing humanities-related projects that will enhance their classroom teaching. (See *Writing Big Books in Chile—An NEH Fellowship, FLES 7(2)*, for a report by a 1993 participant.) Applications for the summer of 1995 are due October 31, 1994 (subject to approval of funding). For information or an application form, contact Naima Gherbi, Associate Program Director, NEH Fellowship Program for Foreign Language Teacher K-12, Connecticut College, 270 Mohegan Ave., New London, CT 06320-4196 (203-439-2282).

SAMPLE STANDARD
Communication Across Cultures:
Communication Strategies

Students will be able to: circumlocute; guess intelligently; derive meaning from context; apply prior knowledge; understand, interpret, and produce gestures language; ask for and provide clarification; make and check hypotheses; make inferences, predictions, and generalizations; and draw conclusions as they interact with individuals from the target culture.

In the area, Acquiring New Information/Content Through L2, the Task Force combined the *study of culture* with the *study of content*, and the study of the *language system* and *communication strategies* was also combined to produce the following two standards:

SAMPLE STANDARD
Acquire New Information/Content:
Culture & Content

Students will be able to: obtain information to expand knowledge from authentic documents, media presentations, and human resources from the target culture.

SAMPLE STANDARD
Acquire New Information/Content:
Language System & Communication
Strategies

Students will be able to: use language appropriate for the task and content and negotiate meaning successfully.

These curricular experiences combined in a similar fashion for the area, Participating in the Global Community. Two standards were developed as follows:

SAMPLE STANDARD
Participate in the Global Community:
Culture & Content

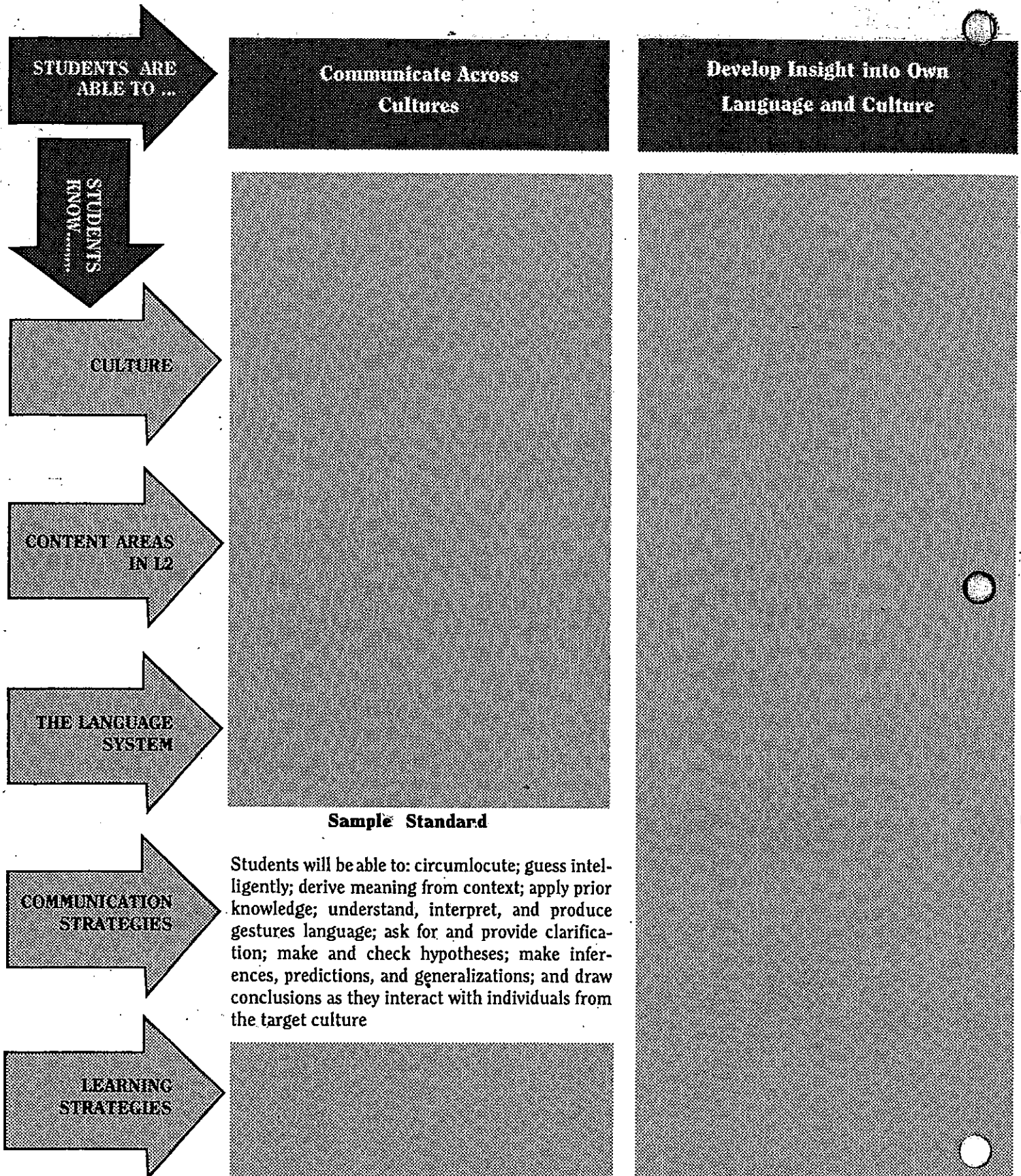
Students will be able to: use language to communicate outside the school setting; explore the applications of the target language(s) in the immediate community; use technology to expand awareness of the global community.

SAMPLE STANDARD
Participate in the Global Community:
Language System & Communication
Strategies

Students will be able to: use language appropriate for the task and context and negotiate meaning successfully.

The group chose to focus first on exit standards—what students should know and be able to do by the time they finish high school. Once the exit standards have been established, they will work in reverse order in developing the benchmarks in the K-12 curriculum which will indicate progress toward achieving the exit standards. It should be noted that the standards presented here are samples only of the *types* of standards the task force is hoping to produce. Above all the standards must be flexible—attainable by students starting at different times and participating in different types of programs. At the same time, they will not enforce the status quo. If these standards are to be met, foreign language education in this country must change, and it is hoped that these samples help illustrate what those changes might be.

K-12 STUDENT STANDARDS



DARDS FRAMEWORK

**Acquire New
Information/Content
Through L2**

**Make Connections
With Other Disciplines**

**Participate More Fully
in the Global
Community/Marketplace**

**Demonstrate
Familiarity with
Contributions of Target
Cultures**

Sample Standard

Students will be able to obtain information to expand knowledge from authentic documents, media presentations, and human resources from the target culture.

Sample Standard

The students will be able to use language appropriate for the task and content, and negotiate meaning successfully.

Sample Standard

Students will be able to: use the language to communicate outside the school setting; explore the applications of the target language(s) in the immediate community; use technology to expand awareness of the global community.

Sample Standard

Students will be able to use language appropriate for the task and context and negotiate meaning successfully.

The Framework

The K-12 Student Standards Task Force met in mid-November to draft a framework and sample exit standards. Rather than trying to write "x" number of individual standards in isolation, the group approached their task by looking for broad areas within foreign language education in which they felt standards needed to be developed—those things which all students should be able to do with a foreign language. Based on their Statement of Underlying Principles developed earlier in the project, they identified six such areas. The task force determined that foreign language education should enable students to:

- *communicate across cultures.* This is generally viewed as the primary goal of language instruction and includes both the oral and written modalities (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). It is in this area where the foreign language profession's focus on proficiency will be of most use.
- *develop insight into their own language and culture.* While learning to communicate in a foreign language is a primary objective of language instruction, there is a need to move beyond skills and begin to focus on other benefits of foreign language education. One of the primary residual benefits which the language profession has never formally assessed is the insight developed by foreign language students into their own language and culture.
- *acquire new information/content through L2.* As students work in L2 (the foreign language), they learn things about other disciplines and other subject matter that they may never have broached in L1 (the native language), and the standards need to reflect that fact.
- *make connections with other disciplines.* Language education needs to be connected to work being done in other subject areas, and the standards need to show that connected study is more meaningful than the study of either the language alone or the other discipline alone.
- *participate more fully in the global community/marketplace.* Much of the rhetoric surrounding

foreign language study today concerns the ability to function in our global society. If we as a profession cannot develop standards in this area, then we'd better stop the rhetoric. It should be noted that the task force uses the terms community and marketplace as two separate things. Many of today's foreign language students are pursuing language study to deal with social and economic issues in their communities within the United States—the term "community" applies in this case. The term "global marketplace" is used to signify the more directly commercial situation of international business and trade.

- *demonstrate familiarity with the intellectual, artistic, and literary contributions of target cultures.* This area includes the traditional "civilization" content that enriches an emphasis on communication.

The task force next sought to link these areas to specific aspects of the foreign language curriculum—specific curricular experiences that would need to occur in order for the standards to be met. In other words, what types of knowledge would students need in order to communicate across cultures, develop insight into their own language and culture, etc. Five areas were identified: *study of culture, study of the language system, study of communication strategies, study of learning strategies, and study of content areas.* These two elements provide the overall framework within which standards will be developed. The table on the following page provides a graphic illustration of the framework: under each of the six goals, standards will be developed which focus on each of the five curricular experiences.

Testing the Framework

Once the framework was established, its feasibility was tested by attempting to develop standards in some of these areas. For example, when looking at the area of *Communicate Across Cultures*, the task force focused on the types of *communication strategies* students would need to achieve this goal. The standard they devised was:

(Continued after chart)

National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center Receives Funding

The national K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center was recently established at Iowa State University with a \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. One of six National Language Resource Centers, this new Center is unique in its commitment to the improvement of foreign language education in kindergarten through twelfth grade through professional development of K-12 teachers. The Center is a collaborative between Iowa State University, the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C., and various foreign language educators around the country. Three initiatives guide the work of the Center.

Effective Teaching Strategies Initiative

A **Teacher Partnership Institute** (June 19-29) will offer professional development to practicing K-8 teachers and to teacher educators from institutions of higher education. An important outcome of this institute will be enhanced university teacher preparation programs for the K-8 level. Yearlong partnerships will be established between the participants who are K-8 classroom teachers and those who are college and university teacher educators. The partners will exchange information on methodology, curriculum design, and student assessment at the K-8 level.

A **Curriculum Institute** (August 7-12) will offer training to experienced and practicing K-12 foreign language teachers and/or foreign language curriculum specialists. In this institute, participants will collaborate to identify and address common problems of articulation and will explore the impact on curriculum of both the emerging long-sequence foreign language programs and the standards movement.

New Technologies Initiative

A **New Technologies in the Foreign Language Classroom Institute** (August 7-12) offers participants—who are experienced in using a Macintosh or IBM-compatible computer—the opportunity to examine new technologies in the learning of foreign languages. Participants will preview exemplary foreign language courseware, including multimedia programs; will implement the use of telecommunications networks to enhance student learning; and will develop telenetworking lessons for use with existing curricula.

An **Interactive Multimedia Authoring Institute** (August 14-19) requires participants to have a basic working knowledge of the Macintosh. In this institute participants will examine exemplary multimedia hardware and software. They will author a HyperCard lesson that links a stack to segments on a CD ROM and/or videodisc or that integrates into the stack a segment of motion video. Participants will also produce lessons that effectively implement multimedia into foreign language instruction.

Performance Assessment Initiative

This initiative is designed to help foreign language teachers develop guidelines, or a framework, for assessing the language of students in their own classrooms. The basis for these guidelines will be the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages's (ACTFL) national K-12 student standards for foreign language education, soon to be available in a revised draft form. The two targeted levels for the guidelines will be grades four and eight, the first two levels of the three proposed levels of the ACTFL standards (grades four, eight, and twelve).

This teacher-based project will include several interrelated components:

- conducting a search of assessment instruments currently available and developing an annotated bibliography;
- identifying 10 foreign language teachers K-8 (who have been identified as successful by their principal or foreign language supervisor) to participate in the project;
- conducting an initial workshop to find out how teachers currently use assessment and to brainstorm with researchers about innovative assessment strategies;
- conducting a follow-up workshop to learn about the national foreign language standards and how classroom assessment can relate to these standards;
- developing draft assessment guidelines;
- piloting the guidelines;
- publishing and disseminating the guidelines to the public.

From its initiation to conclusion, this project will rely heavily on teacher input, with teachers working in collaboration with researchers to develop a framework and then document how they use the framework in developing assessment strategies for their own students.

Unlike other subject areas (i.e., mathematics, social studies, and science) in which students begin studying the subject in kindergarten and continue on through secondary school, current practice allows foreign language instruction to begin at any grade level in elementary or junior high/middle school. The resulting programs vary greatly in total time spent in learning and in the intensity of the learning experience. Consequently, the assessment guidelines will focus on a range of language levels to be attained at grades four and eight, and will take into account students' varying cognitive levels, developmental stages, and mastery levels of their native languages, as well as factors dealing with the time and intensity of instruction.

Participants will receive round-trip airfare to Iowa, and room and board while attending an institute. Graduate credit (1 credit for 5-day and 2 credits for 10-day institutes) is available upon request at no cost to participants.

Nationally recognized experts in foreign language education will lead the initiatives and teach the institutes. The Associate Director for Effective Teaching Strategies is Carol Ann Pesola, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. She will teach the Teacher Partnership Institute and will collaborate with Helena Curtin, Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Public Schools, who will lead the Curriculum Institute. The Associate Director for New Technologies is Karen Willetts, Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools (formerly Technology consultant, Center for Applied Linguistics) who will work with Janine Shelley, Iowa State University. Nancy Rhodes (Center for Applied Linguistics) is the Associate Director for Performance Assessment. The Director of the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center is Marcia Rosenbusch, Iowa State University.

For more information, contact National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center, 300 Pearson Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011 (515-294-6699; Fax 515-294-2776 or -9914. E-mail nflrc@iastate.edu).

Standards Questionnaire: The Framework

The K-12 Student Standards Task Force requests your input on the proposed Standards Framework (see insert). Please complete the following questionnaire and send your response to **Standards Project, ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801**.

1. Is the framework design that links student outcomes and curriculum effective? Why or why not?
2. Are there standards areas (horizontal categories) that should be added? Deleted? Combined?
3. Are there areas in the curriculum (vertical categories) that should be added? Deleted? Combined?
4. Look at the examples the task force drafted to test the framework. Do you see any of these as being potential standards? Please cite or comment.
5. Would you propose a few "exit standards" for all students leaving school using this grid?
6. Any further advice or comment to the Task Force to advance their writing of the draft standards?



Calling all Tests! Calling all Tests!

Do you have a test or assessment instrument (formal or informal) you'd be willing to share with other foreign language teachers? If yes, we're interested in you!

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), as part of the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University, is compiling an annotated bibliography of teacher-developed and commercially-available foreign language tests for grades K-8. This bibliography is part of an effort to encourage the sharing of materials and ideas between foreign language teachers/foreign language programs nationwide. As participants, you will receive a free copy of the bibliography in return for your contribution.

If you are interested in sharing your test(s) or other instruments with us or are willing to talk to us about what you do for assessment, please fill out the form below or call CAL collect: 202-429-9292 (ask for Lynn Thompson or Lupe Hernández-Silva). Thank you! Please respond in writing or by telephone no later than June 20, 1994.

Name: _____ School/School District: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____ When is a good time to telephone you for more information? _____

Language(s): _____

How do you assess your students' language proficiency? _____

Send this form to: Lynn Thompson, K-8 Foreign Language Bibliography Project, CAL, 1118 22nd Street NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Resources for Your Classroom

Please submit directly to the appropriate resources editor any language-specific materials you would like considered for review. Other materials may be sent to the FLES News editor for review.

German

Augestein, V., Blaszkowska, H., Ferdigg, d' Ambrosio R., Kirsch, D., & Scherling, T. (1994). *Aurelia*. Muenchen: Langenscheidt. For additional information contact Langenscheidt, 46-35 54th Road, Maspeth, NY 11378 (800-432-6277). Book: \$16.50; workbook: \$13.25; prices not yet available for the cassette and transparencies.

During the 1993-94, school year I piloted Langenscheidt's new children's text, *Aurelia*. *Aurelia* is a content-related textbook aimed at third and fourth grade students who have had some previous experience learning German and are ready to incorporate more reading and writing into their program.

What sets *Aurelia* apart from other children's texts is that it is a children's storybook in addition to a textbook. The organizing principle of the text is the storyline, not grammatical or thematic topics. The first chapter opens with the main characters, Markus, Steffi, Ralf, Maria, and Kerim, at the Brandenburg Gate. It is there that they find the bird, Aurelia, after she has flown into the statue atop the gate and broken her wing. The ensuing chapters follow the children and Aurelia on a series of adventures at school, on vacation, at home, at the circus, and at play.

One of the most striking features of the book is its inclusion of the varied cultures of Germany. Two of the main characters are the children of guest workers in Germany: Maria is from Italy and Kerim is from Turkey. The home cultures of these two characters and the difficulties they face as foreigners in Germany are incorporated into the storyline. The book even brings in Kerim's grandmother who speaks nothing but Turkish; Kerim must act as translator between her and the other children. Through these characters and their experiences the issues of bigotry and prejudice are explored.

Three chapters in *Aurelia* center on the theme of cross-cultural differences. In one chapter, the children's school, Lenau Schule, is graffitied with slogans against foreigners. The school then decides to have a festival with the theme, *Wir sind Kinder einer Erde* (We Are Children of One World) celebrating world cultures and their contributions to Germany. This very difficult, and often avoided, topic is handled with great sensitivity on a level that young children can understand.

Other topics in *Aurelia* include: street signs, map reading, school, family, friends, doctors, geography, seasons, Advent and Christmas, cooking, magic, the circus, travel, and Easter. Each topic is fully developed with ideas, activities, and projects suggested in the teacher's handbook to incorporate other subject areas. There are art projects, songs, science experiments, and social studies objectives for most chapters.

The teacher's handbook is an essential component of the series and provides information on how to work with other subject area teachers to further develop topics introduced in *Aurelia*. It also provides many integrated activities and extended background information on locations in the text and cultural events. A possible drawback to the teacher's handbook for some is that it is written entirely in German.

In addition to the textbook and the teacher's handbook, a very well-designed workbook full of fun games and activities, transparencies, and cassettes is available with the *Aurelia* program. *Aurelia* will be available for the 1994-95 school year and a second level of *Aurelia* should be available before the beginning of the 1995-96 school year. I highly recommend *Aurelia* and feel that it is one of the most promising texts that I have seen for this level.

German Resources Editor: Cindy Sizemore

French

Curtain, H. & Pesola, C. (1994). *Languages and children, making the match. Foreign language instruction for an early start, Grades K-8*. Second Edition. White Plains, NY: Longman.

We now have the second edition of *Languages and children*, a book which in its first edition quickly became an essential text for any foreign language library. All the excellent elements of the first edition have been retained, but there are important additions that make obtaining this edition essential, even if you already have the first edition. Pesola's framework for curriculum development provides a thought-provoking guide to making decisions about curriculum and assessment. There is a more extensive exploration of ways to integrate culture into the second-language classroom. Keiran Egan's story form framework offers another way of thinking about human development and its implications for curriculum. There is more information about the middle school learner and the kinds of programs that are appropriate in the middle school. There are expanded chapters on lesson-planning and assessment, including portfolio assessment; and there is invaluable new information on cooperative learning and pair activities. Reading and writing assumes a prominent place in the discussion of curriculum. Expanded and revised, *Languages and children* continues to be the indispensable text in the field of second-language teaching for children.

French Resources Editor: Myriam Chapman

Spanish

Smith, N. (1994). *Cantando we learn*. Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook. Includes cassette tape (\$9.95) and book (\$5.95). Available from Publisher, 4255 W. Touhy Ave., Lincolnwood, IL 60466-1975.

This tape and book set are useful for the beginning level of second language learning. The short, lively songs reinforce important first concepts. Some titles include: *Buenos días, ¿Cómo te llamas?, Los números, Los colores, Las vocales, and Los días de la semana*. There are also more complicated songs which continue to expand students' vocabulary. The music of the songs is appealing and the songs are especially attractive because they are sung primarily by children. The book is a valuable resource for two reasons: for the teacher, it provides movement and game ideas to accompany the songs; for parents, it includes the English translation of the songs and the music. The potential for using this set at home to reinforce the Spanish being learned at school is one of its main assets.

Spanish Resources Editor: Susan Wolter

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR EARLY LANGUAGE LEARNING

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

This is the last issue in your subscription of *FLES News* (all subscriptions run from September through May). Send in your check and the form below for a 1994-1995 membership to the National Network for Early Language Learning and for a subscription to *FLES News*. You may make copies of this order form for your colleagues. **Renew now so you won't forget!** You will not receive the fall issue unless you renew.

Note: If you would like to serve the organization in any of the following areas, please mark your selections and return them with your membership renewal form.

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Membership Form (1994-1995)

FLES News, National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)

Please enroll me as a member of the National Network for Early Language Learning and send

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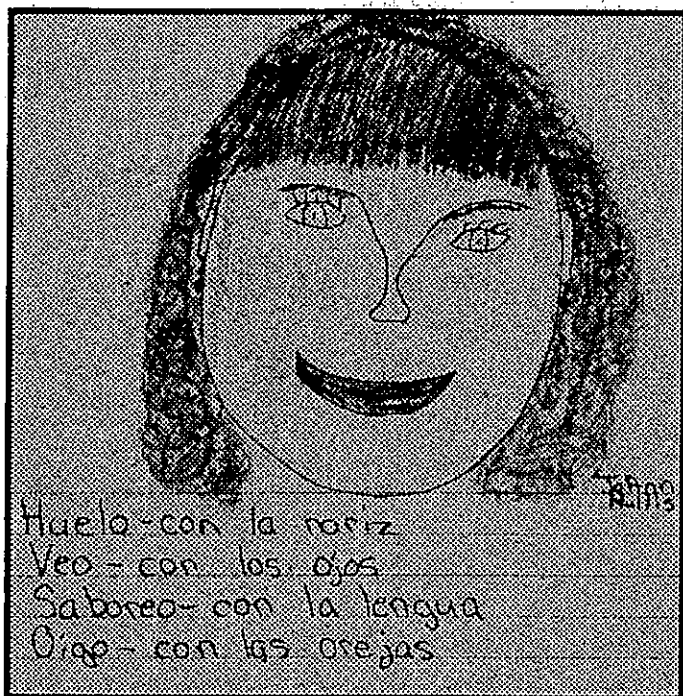
Check whether this address is _____ Home _____ School

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Mail check (no purchase orders) and this order form to:

Nancy Rhodes, Executive Secretary, National Network for Early Language Learning, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Children's Classroom Creations



Jo Ann Mullis
Grade 4
West Yadkin Elementary School
Yadkinville, North Carolina
Cathy Cheek, Spanish Teacher

FLES News enjoys including children's work in the second language. We encourage you to send works that lend themselves to copying, such as line drawings, short stories, or poems. If you would like a work returned to you, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope. Please include the child's name, age, school, and teacher's name, as well as written permission from the child and his or her parents or guardians. Send the original copy of the children's work to the editor, Marcia Rosenbusch.

Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Editor
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Iowa State University
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