The background of the cover is a dark grey color. It features several large, white, geometric shapes that are cut out or layered, creating a complex, abstract pattern. These shapes include rectangles, squares, and triangles, some of which are nested or overlapping. The overall effect is a modern, minimalist design.

Learning Languages

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning

Winter 1996
Vol.1 No. 2

Learning Languages: The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning is the official publication of NNELL. It serves the profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of languages. The journal reflects NNELL's commitment to promoting opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, both practical and scholarly articles are published. Practical articles describe innovative approaches to teaching and to the administration of effective language programs for children. Scholarly articles report on original research and cite both current research and theory as a basis for making recommendations for practice. Scholarly articles are refereed, i.e., reviewed anonymously by at least three readers. Readers include members of the NNELL executive board, the editorial advisory board, and invited guest reviewers who have expertise in the area. Refereed articles are identified as such in the journal. Write to the editor at the address below to request a copy of author guidelines for preparing articles.

Submissions: Deadlines for information are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1. Articles, classroom activities, and materials offered for review may be submitted to the appropriate contributing editor (see below). Send announcements, conference information, and original children's work (such as line drawings, short stories, and poems) to the editor. Children's work needs to be accompanied by written permission from the child's parents or guardians and must include the child's name, age, school, and the teacher's name, address, and telephone (add fax and e-mail address, if available).

Submit a favorite classroom activity for the "Activities for Your Classroom" section by sending a description of the activity that includes title, objective, materials, and procedure. Include pictures or drawings as illustration, if available. Send with your name, address, and phone number to the Classroom Activities editor listed below.

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Notes from the President



*Each of us
shares the
mission...*

Nineteen ninety-six marks the ninth anniversary of the founding of the National Network for Early Language Learning. Over these past nine years, NNELL's membership has increased to over 600. Each of us shares the mission of sustaining and improving foreign language education in general, with a particular emphasis on kindergarten through grade eight (K-8).

In November 1995, when the NNELL Board Meeting convened in Anaheim, California, officers, regional representatives, and committee chairs worked together to identify shared successes and areas of concern to the NNELL membership. As we looked at where we have been and plan to go in the future, we identified three goals for this year:

- * Political action initiatives
- * Standards for foreign language learning at the national and state levels
- * Teacher-based research.

Political Action. The current political climate is one in which educational policy, goals, and funding are being closely scrutinized. Throughout the nation many K-8 foreign language teachers are working to defend programs that are under attack because of budget shortages or a lack of understanding about the advantages that students derive from learning a second language. Under the leadership of Mary Lynn Redmond and Kay Hewitt, the Political Action Committee will work with regional, state, and local representatives to distribute legislative

updates, provide information about national issues impacting foreign language education, and suggest strategies for developing action plans to organize K-8 foreign language colleagues in communicating a unified message to decision makers.

Standards. The final version of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning were presented at the inaugural session of the American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in November. NNELL salutes our colleagues who spent many hours developing and revising the standards with invaluable input from professionals. It is our professional duty to develop a deeper understanding and knowledge about these (our) standards.

Further, members of NNELL must become involved in initiatives to develop state standards to ensure that the K-8 perspective is accurately represented. NNELL will be working with ACTFL to distribute information and promote understanding of the foreign language standards.

Teacher As Researcher. Teacher-based research is a relatively new tool in the field of foreign languages. It is an approach that allows us to explore and reflect on what goes on in our classrooms. By collecting and examining data about issues of interest, we have a first-hand opportunity to investigate these issues and share the results with our colleagues. Under the leadership of Mari Haas, this initiative began last year and will continue to

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The Bayeux Tapestry: A Medieval Document Inspires Students

Armelle Webster
The Country School
Madison, Connecticut

For many language teachers, the opportunity to spend six weeks in a foreign country devoted solely to studying literature, art, history or languages and visiting the places that inspired these, is the stuff of dreams. For National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Fellows, this experience becomes a reality. The research plan all applicants propose can be tailored and focused as they wish; the whole package is personalized to their unique needs and dreams.

Research on the Bayeux Tapestry

As a 1994 Macmillan-NEH Summer Fellow, I had the opportunity to spend six intense and rewarding weeks in Normandy, France, and in England, devoting my time to research on the Bayeux Tapestry and William the Conqueror and developing appropriate lessons on the topic for my middle school French students and other students in the school.

The Bayeux Tapestry is a unique embroidery dating back to the 11th century that is the only work of its kind to have survived since the early Middle Ages. The Tapestry depicts the Conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy, culminating in the Battle of Hastings in 1066. It is made of a strip of linen 230 feet long and 20 inches wide, embroidered – not woven as its name suggests – using eight different colors of woolen yarn, skillfully used to create an effect of perspective. This picture story, probably

meant for an illiterate public, is supported by captions in Latin that succinctly clarify the events depicted.

This oversized comic strip unfolds as a colorful and exciting tale of hunting, feasting, friendship, oaths of allegiance, treachery, and intrigue. It ends in a furious battle scene with flashing swords, somersaulting horses, and the death of Harold with an arrow through his eye. It shows the building of a fleet to transport 7,000 men and 3,000 horses across the British Channel to England, and the gathering of supplies such as food, armaments, and tools. It shows ships plowing the seas and knights riding to battle. The tapestry also shows Haley's Comet in the English sky perceived as an omen of misfortune for England.

As I was planning my study, I proposed to follow the footsteps of William and started in Falaise, his birthplace. On the *Place Guillaume le Conquérant* in front of the ruins of the original *chateau* where William was born, the impressive bronze statue of William on his horse dominates. It miraculously remained intact during the heavy bombing of the town of Falaise during the Second World War.

I visited Caen, William's favorite residence, where he had two abbeys built in order to be allowed by the Pope to marry his cousin Mathilde. I went on to Lessay in the Cotentin Peninsula and enjoyed an organ concert in the very abbey built by William. I then explored the picturesque chateau of Pirou, a small-sized Norman strong-

An NEH fellowship is a very special way for teachers to update and enhance the curriculum while renewing their energy and enthusiasm.

As an amateur historian, I felt honored that my fellowship gave me a serious profile that allowed me to meet and converse with experts on the Middle Ages.

hold where a modern version of the Bayeux Tapestry, telling of the invasion of Sicily by the Normans, is exhibited.

I also saw the *Mont Saint Michel*, a monastery built on an island which is depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry with its treacherous quicksand. I went on to *Sainte Suzanne* where William, in his attempt to conquer the whole of France, met his match and after three years of futile attacks made peace with the lord of the fortress. There, the Museum of Medieval Costume gives a precise and informative view of the clothing worn by William and his soldiers.

Later, I proceeded on to England to the town of Battle, the site of the famous Battle of Hastings at which William became King of England. In London, I visited Westminster Abbey where William's crowning took place.

In the town of Reading, I discovered an intriguing Victorian version of the Bayeux Tapestry made by the Wardle family, who took great care in making an exact copy of the Tapestry, while censoring the crude details to avoid offending the Victorian taste of the time.

In Bosham, near Hastings, I made contact at The Penny Royal Theater with a playwright who is the author of *King Harold*, a recent play based on the events in the Tapestry. I was struck by the fact that the Tapestry is still very present in many artists' creative minds.

A pharmaceutical company, Bayer, provided me with a paper copy of their very own six feet long *Bayer Tapestry*, commemorating the 130th anniversary of the Bayer company. It is both original and amusing.

I returned to France and traveled back to Bayeux where my main contact was the Director of the *Centre Guillaume le Conquérant*, Madame Sylvette Lemagnen. She had very kindly provided me with an appropriate

bibliography on the subject at the time that I was still only considering applying for an NEH Fellowship. She made me feel welcome, gave me free access to view the original 11th century embroidery and provided me with valuable contacts with local scholars.

A few blocks away, *Les Ateliers de la Reine Mathilde* is a museum-workshop that teaches the embroidery stitch of the Tapestry as well as the local traditional art of lace making. The director is knowledgeable and helpful and in order to show me the Bayeux stitch, she supplied me with a mini tapestry kit (complete with linen cloth, naturally dyed wool, and a needle) and put me to work.

While I am not yet an expert embroiderer, I have clearly gained a better understanding of the effort and artistry involved in an endeavor such as the 230 foot long embroidery. My modest attempt at the Bayeux stitch is only ten inches wide but my little Norman ship is taking shape.

The Bayeux Tapestry contains all the ingredients that make a good story for students of all levels. Although it is a 900-year-old document, the story is still as vivid and touching as any contemporary tale. It is also visually exciting and provides an authentic and realistic look at life in the 11th century. It is an ideal subject for an interdisciplinary study as it branches out into a number of equally interesting themes.

Lessons Developed from the Tapestry

Back at school in September, I used my renewed energy to get my students as excited about the early Middle Ages and the Bayeux Tapestry as I was. At my school, French is introduced at the kindergarten level and taught in all classes until eighth grade. Latin is introduced at the seventh grade level.

Thanks to a complete series of slides purchased in Normandy, I

introduced the Tapestry in French to my eighth graders who also translated the Latin captions with the help of the Latin teacher, and thus followed the story line. Later, the students were organized in groups and supplied with a long strip of tan burlap cloth, crayons, and markers and embarked on their own narrative epic in the style of the Tapestry. The theme and language of the captions were chosen by each group independently. The results of this activity were varied and equally interesting.

One group drew a typical day at school with Latin captions while another group illustrated the American novel they were studying in English class in a comic strip form. Some students invented a story for children, drew it on the cloth and completed it with a story line in French. One other "tapestry" depicted the 40 year history of our school, following an interview of the school headmaster. Another use of the burlap cloth was the creation of short copies of key scenes in the Tapestry such as the oath of Harold to William. The cloth was stapled onto a flat piece of wood, copying the exact width of the original tapestry, with a length of only two feet. These copies are quite persuasive and decorative.

These original and always humorous creations decorated the walls of the school lunch room for several weeks and were scrutinized and commented upon by many students.

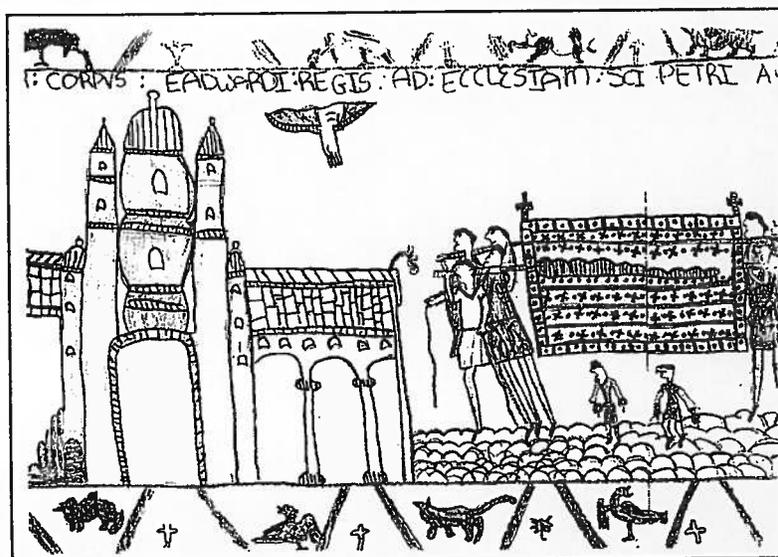
Giant posters were made in class by projecting enlarged photographs with an overhead projector onto a large sheet of poster board tacked to the wall. The students then

completed their posters by adding appropriate French vocabulary to them. The students had fun making the posters and the results were striking and produced excellent eye catchers for the bulletin board.

A vivid class discussion clearly brought to light a number of interesting questions that became the subjects of fascinating research projects. While such subjects as 11th century ship building, weapons and food were investigated, one student researched Haley's Comet and mathematically checked to see if the "hairy star" had actually been seen in the English skies in 1066, knowing that it last appeared in 1984. He also was interested in reading through ancient literature to see if Haley's Comet had always been considered a bad omen when it appeared in the sky every 76 years. He quickly came to the conclusion that the question would be more appropriate as a Ph.D. thesis!

A student who is an excellent horse rider wanted to investigate the animals depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry and compare the riding gear of 1066 with modern equipment. She produced an informative paper in French in book form with illustrations.

One student was interested in fashion and hairstyles on the Tapestry and compared the clean-shaven faces



Emily Blanchard
6th Grade - 12 years old

My students gradually realized that the mystery of the Tapestry is in fact part of its charm, and that it is still generating conflicting views from scholars today.

of the Normans with the thin mustaches of the Saxons. Another student compared medieval tools with modern ones and was struck by their resemblance.

One boy focused on Aesop's Fables in the borders of the Tapestry and discovered that the fable of the Fox and the Crow appears in three different places. He speculated that the cheese was probably a symbol for the crown of England, passing from Harold's hands to William's.

The findings were shared in French with the whole class, which benefited from everyone's work. Many puzzling questions remained unanswered, however, and my students were intrigued by the fact that one could study a subject that is still surrounded by mystery.

Some wooden shields and axes were made in woodshop classes. One particularly musical student recorded a tape of medieval music that complements the Tapestry. All this creative effort culminated in an exhibit entitled "The Normans are Invading the Country School," showing nasal helmets, shields, posters of warriors in chain mail, and the students' own narrative tapestries.

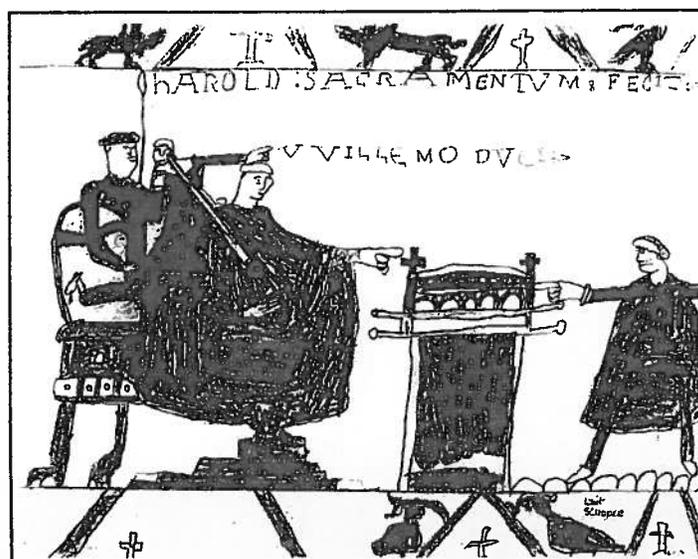
The exhibit sparked the interest of younger students who in turn wanted to know about the story on the Tapes-

try. I visited the third grade class and presented a slide show telling them in English the story of William and Harold. They became excited and I realized that the rhythm of the narrative of the comic strip-like-story provided suspense, tension, moments of relief, and a sudden acceleration culminating in the final violence of the battle scenes, and was very appealing to them. After many questions, each student made a free drawing of a scene they liked. I gathered each picture, laminated them and bound them together in chronological order. This book is a touching treasure.

The theme of the Conquest of England and of the creation of the Bayeux Tapestry seems to have excited the imagination of creative writers, particularly the 20th century historical novelists. Interestingly, each of the recent following novels takes a different perspective on the events of 1066. In *The Striped Ships* by Eloise McGraw (1991), two Anglo-Saxon children witness the events of the Conquest of England and get involved in the embroidery work of the Bayeux Tapestry. In *Odo's Hanging* by Peter Benson (1993), the reader experiences the events and the creation of the Tapestry through a young Norman's eyes. Finally, in *L'Oiseau de Lune* by Lars Bo (1993), the story

presents a young Viking's point of view and involvement in the making of the Tapestry. Each of these novels provides excellent reading for teenagers and adults alike. My eighth graders have been encouraged to read one of these novels for extra credit or extra pleasure!

Another recent work of fiction worth mentioning here is *The Invention*



Whit Scudder
6th Grade - 11 years old

of Truth by Marta Morazzoni (1993), who focuses on the act of creation and on the vision, the sustained effort, and good leadership that are necessary to create a unique work of art such as the Bayeux Tapestry.

After six weeks of research in Normandy, I felt ready and eager to bring the Bayeux Tapestry closer to my students in Connecticut and to make it accessible for them to enjoy as a wealth of clues and information on medieval life. Its extraordinary freshness appeals to their imagination and makes the Tapestry an excellent subject of exploration for students.

Note

Books, slides and reproductions of the Bayeux Tapestry may be mail-ordered from:

Centre Guillaume le Conquérant
Tapisserie de Bayeux
Rue de Nesmond
Bayeux 14400
France

Acknowledgment

I am grateful to the NEH for allowing me to study such a rich subject. Being a 1994 Macmillan-NEH Summer Fellow gave me a stature without which I would not have gained access to libraries, archives and scholars on the Bayeux Tapestry. My fellowship was an intensive but rewarding experience which set the pace for the year ahead.

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promote involvement of K-8 foreign language teachers in shaping foreign language education.

These three goals touch all of us individually in our classrooms and collectively as members of NNELL. Each of us has a responsibility to become better informed and remain knowledgeable in these areas. We must use the results of these efforts to help us deliver the best foreign language education possible for our students.

I invite each of you to become active in NNELL. Our strength and voice as an organization that represents K-8 foreign language teachers will become stronger with each contribution.

You can begin by attending a NNELL Networking session at a regional or state conference where colleagues will help you identify how to become involved in areas of interest. NNELL offers many opportunities for each of us to make a contribution to our profession. Finally, I urge each of you to recruit at least one colleague to join NNELL. Together we can make a positive impact on the K-8 foreign language teaching profession.

I wish each of you continued growth in all your personal and professional endeavors during this school year and I hope that you will share your many successes with your colleagues in NNELL. I invite you to contact me personally with your successes, ideas, and concerns.



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*These three
goals touch
all of us...*

Activities for Your Classroom

— Drawing Conclusions: — Inventors and Inventions

*Kathy Gruyaert, Core French Teacher
Colborne Street School
Strathroy, Ontario, Canada*

*Elaine Marentette, French Consultant
Middlesex County Board of Education
Hyde Park, Ontario, Canada*

Objective:

Students will practice the skills of reading and induction (forming conclusions based on information about inventions) as a model for drawing conclusions about their own inventions.

Materials:

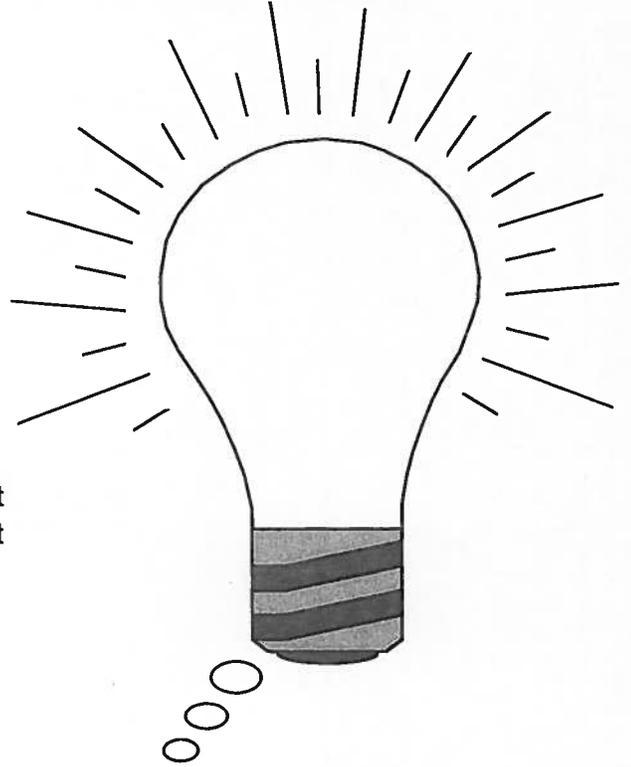
Inventors and inventions grid. (See sample grid on next page.)

Procedure:

Students will read the grid horizontally and make conclusions based upon that information. Next, students read the grid vertically to make conclusions about:

- the inventors (*Qui?/Who?*),
- the dates of inventions (*Quand?/When?*), and
- the changes made to inventions (*Changements?/Changes?*).

Finally, students share their conclusions orally. As a follow-up activity, students prepare a similar grid for their own class based upon the inventions they have made. They engage in further conversation about inventors, inventions, successes, failures, etc.



Thème: Le défi

Issue Principale: L' invention

Qu'est-ce que nous pouvons conclure?

L'invention	Qui?	Quand?	Changements?	Conclusions	Examples of Conclusions Students Gave in French
Liquide correcteur	Betty Graham (américaine)	1951	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pour les poly-copies • pour l'encre • dans un tube en forme de stylo • couleurs 		Betty must have made a lot of mistakes. The changes indicated a new need.
Le téléphone 	Alexander Graham Bell (canadien)	1876	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sans corde • cellulaire • télécopieur • à commande vocale • visiophone 		The number of changes shows it has been a useful invention (but needed to be modernized).
Velcro	Georges de Mestral (suisse)	1948	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? 		Nothing has changed, so it was a good invention.
Les jeans	Levi Strauss (américain)	1860	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1950-juste pour les hommes auparavant, mais aussi pour les femmes maintenant • couleurs 		Very few changes show they've been popular for a long time.
Le crayon 	Nicolas Conté (français)	1795	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avec une gomme • mécanique • en couleurs 		A very useful old invention with few changes.
Conclusions					
Examples of Conclusions Students Gave in French	A lot of inventors are males and are varied nationalities.	The years are all different, therefore there are inventions happening all the time.	Inventions change as needs change.		

Legislative Update - 104th Congress, First Session

*Cindy McMillan
Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL)
National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS)
Washington, DC*

Join with others in your professional organizations to take steps to influence public policy as it relates to language education.

The frenetic pace surrounding "the first hundred days" and the legislative fixation on the "Contract with America" dominated the Congressional agenda early in this session. Once that agenda was declared "completed," fiscal matters took center stage.

For NNELL members concerned with education in general and languages more specifically, the session has been an anxious one. Education reform measures begun in the 103rd Congress have been endangered, and the Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and exchange programs have all come under fire. Rescissions threatened many language programs, and the uncertainty surrounding the budget/appropriations process leaves program administrators wondering if the money they have been promised will indeed be forthcoming. Throughout much of this period, the Administration and minority party have had all they could do just to avoid the new majority's steamroller.

Perceived as a somewhat peripheral issue in relation to the fiscal crisis, English as the official language legislation has begun moving quite quickly in this Congress. The House has held two hearings on the issue and the Senate held their first on December 6th with another scheduled for February 6th.

The NCLIS continues its advocacy on behalf of the language profession in all of these matters. Pending legislation, mentioned in this summary, will likely have an impact on the

language profession.

Join with others in your professional organizations to take steps to influence public policy as it relates to language education: write letters to your members of Congress, make phone calls, visit elected officials, write letters to the editor, and offer op-ed pieces for your local papers. Past successes are no indication of how current decisions will be made, and without vocal support, many important programs of interest to JNCL-NCLIS members may be drastically reduced, if not eliminated.

Education Reform

A number of Congressional members campaigned on so-called "reform" agendas in last year's election. Nevertheless, education reform is clearly under assault in this Congress. Education policy at the federal level is currently in tandem with the trends toward anti-reform and draconian budget cuts we have witnessed in the states.

There are six bills pending this session which propose to eliminate either the Department of Education, federal funding for standards, the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP), the National Education and Standards Improvement Council (NESIC), or a combination thereof. In addition, "Emergency Supplemental" and "Additional Supplemental" rescissions packages have made education reform programs primary targets.

Rescissions

There have been two rounds of

rescissions in this Congress. After much negotiation, the first was signed into law by the President in April, and the second was vetoed in June. As Congress did not have enough votes to override the veto, there was no more action on that bill. Many education programs that were slated for elimination survived the process, but the attempted cuts were reintroduced in the appropriations bill later in the session.

Budget Process

The rescissions were merely the prelude to the budget showdown between the Administration and Congress that culminated in a 21-day government shutdown which has yet to be resolved. As of January 18, 1996, there has been no budget agreement and six appropriations bills are outstanding, including Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education.

If there is no agreement on these bills before January 26, one of two things could happen: Congress could pass another Continuing Resolution, or the government could undergo another partial shutdown. In subsequent Continuing Resolutions, Republicans wish to pursue a "targeted appropriations" strategy that would fund some programs and not others. If this is the case, many foreign language and exchange programs could be in jeopardy. Recognizing that the budget reconciliation bill will, to some extent, set national priorities for the next seven years, the President remains committed to social programs like Medicare and education, while the Republicans are standing firm on their goal to balance the budget and provide tax cuts.

At this point, the President has offered a seven-year balanced budget using the Congressional Budget Office figures, but negotiations have broken down because the budget

does not reflect GOP priorities. It remains to be seen if an agreement will be reached shortly or if this conflict will carry through the election year.

Appropriations

Work on the 13 appropriations bills for Fiscal Year (FY) 1996 became even more difficult when it was linked to the Republican wish to force the President into a budget agreement that would balance the budget within seven years. The House passed its version of a Labor, HHS, and Education appropriations bill that included reductions worth \$3.5 billion in August. Democrats in the Senate have threatened to filibuster education appropriations as reported by the committee because of the drastic reductions, and Republicans have not been able to muster the votes to bring the matter before the full Senate. There are major differences between the House and Senate version of this bill, so the conference between the two is expected to be arduous.

Meanwhile, the Administration is threatening to veto the bill because it slashes funding for the President's reform efforts. As of January 18, the Department of Education is operating under a Continuing Resolution that provides appropriations at whichever is lower: pending House or Senate appropriations figures for FY1996 or FY1995 spending levels. In cases where a program would be eliminated, it will receive 75 percent of the FY1995 level. It has been speculated that there will be no Labor, HHS, or Education appropriations bill for FY 1996, and that all spending for this fiscal year will depend on a series of continuing resolutions such as the one the Department is currently operating under.

English as the Official Language

There are seven bills that would make English the official language of

Many education programs that were slated for elimination survived the process, but...

On a more positive note, Rep. Jose Serrano (D-NY) has introduced an "English Plus Resolution"

the U.S. government. Hearings on the House side were very partisan in nature, and there were no opposition witnesses in the first Senate hearing.

In addition, proposals to drastically reduce federal funding for domestic discretionary programs would have adverse effects on the ESL and bilingual education communities. There are significant decreases in funding proposed for Education for the Disadvantaged, Bilingual and Immigrant Education, and Adult and Vocational Education.

On a more positive note, Rep. Jose Serrano (D-NY) has introduced an "English Plus Resolution" that would counter the official English legislation with pro-active language calling for competency in English and languages other than English.

These are the major issues pending in the Second Session of the 104th Congress. But other legislation, such as reauthorization of adult and vocational education that seeks to consolidate programs and send the money in the form of block grants to the states, changes to the National Security Education program, and an attempt to abolish the United States Information Agency and the Agency for International Development, among others, is likely to have an impact on the profession as well.

NCLIS will continue to monitor developments and provide timely information to its members. Individual members must work with professional organizations to use this information in a way that will have a positive impact on the public policy process.

Note

NELL is an active member of the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS).

Elementary School Guide Offered by Ohio FL Association

The Ohio Foreign Language Association has prepared a guide to provide Ohio educators with information about early start foreign language programs.

The publication is designed to assist parent, teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists, and school board members in making decisions about early foreign language programs. A concise review of the literature and answers to frequently asked questions are also provided.

Since Ohio students in the future may have to demonstrate competence in a foreign language in order to graduate, the guide provides a valuable resource to Ohio educators considering the value of an early start. The guide, however, is a helpful resource for anyone interested in an early start to the study of languages.

Among questions addressed in the guide are: "In what grade should elementary programs begin?" and "What language(s) should elementary children study?" Complete references are included at the end of the guide for the information and references cited.

To order the guide, contact:

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Request the "Ohio Foreign Language Association FLES Guide." Cost is \$1.00 per copy (5 1/2 X 8 1/2 inches; 12 pages).

Network for Foreign-Born Parents Formed

An Arlington, Virginia, mother of two, Alice Rasmussen, recently established The Foreign-Born Parent Network (FBPN) and newsletter for the purpose of establishing a forum for exploring strategies parents can use for raising their children to be citizens and leaders in a multicultural world.

Rasmussen, herself, grew up in several cultures: she was born in Vietnam; as a young child she lived in Laos, then moved to France; after marriage, she moved to the U.S. Her dominant language is French, but she also speaks Lao, Vietnamese, English, and Spanish.

She is passionate about her belief that foreign-born parents have a responsibility to teach their culture and language to their children as a way of preparing them to live in a multicultural world. She points out that bilingualism provides children a unique gift that ensures them a better chance at success in the "global marketplace."

She developed a French immersion program for her own children. They are now not only skilled in French, but have recently begun asking their mother to teach them Spanish.

Rasmussen also believes that parents need to take an active role in helping their children resist bias against other cultures. She teaches a course in global human resources at George Washington University in Washington, DC, and a class on marketing across cultures in Fairfax and Arlington Counties, VA. Because of her teaching experience, Rasmussen is able to provide provocative information in the FBPN newsletter aimed at convincing parents of the need to take a proactive role in the education of their children.

Rasmussen's ideas have found strong support among parents who are encouraged to dialogue with the

editor and founder of the network about issues discussed in the newsletter. For example, in the second issue of the newsletter, subscribers are asked to respond to the dilemma facing foreign-born parents who find that the standards of their children's American school are lower than that to which they were accustomed in the country where they were schooled. Readers are asked, "What would you do next?" According to Rasmussen, responses will be included in the next issue of the newsletter.

Subscription rates for individuals and families are \$35/year for the six issues of the newsletter. Varying subscription rates are offered to public schools, non-profit, and commercial institutions.

For more information contact:

Alice Rasmussen
The Foreign-Born Parent Network
2700 N. Wakefield St.
Arlington, VA 22207-4131
Phone: 703-812-8716
E-mail: arasmus1@gmu.edu

"I have been waiting for a resource like this one for years!"

"I support what you do!"

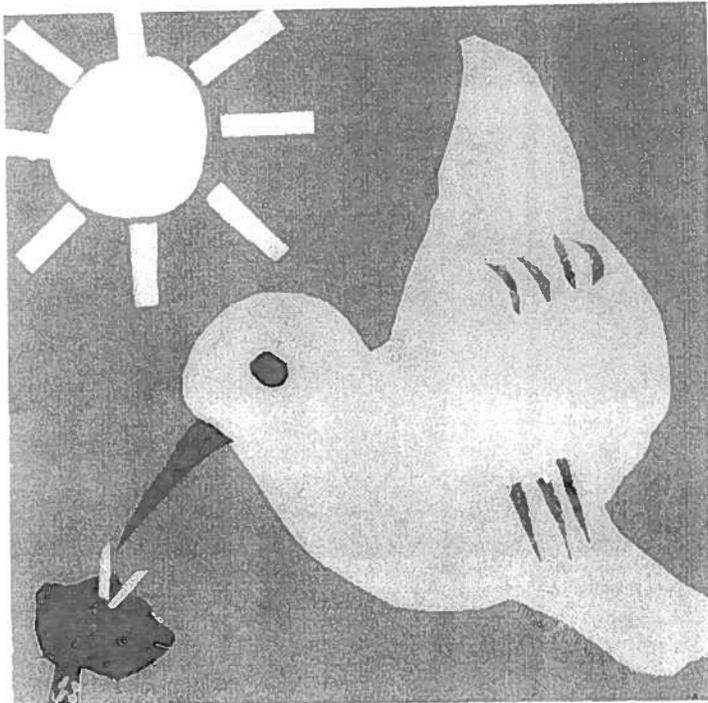
(comments from parents published in Issue No. 2 Nov/Dec, 1995 p. 1.)

Effective Assessment Instruments Invited for Publication

Learning Languages announces a new feature on *Assessment* that will begin in the Spring 1996 issue. Readers are invited to submit effective assessment instruments they have developed for publication in the journal.

Additionally, there is interest in publishing a variety of scoring rubrics for different skill areas and/or assessment projects. Please send your submissions to: Peggy Boyles, Contributing Editor for Assessment, Putnam City Schools, 5401 NW 40th, Oklahoma City, OK 73122 or by e-mail to pboyles@ionet.net.

Children's Classroom Creations



*Este pájaro es un colibrí.
Es muy pequeño y de muchos colores.
Tiene alas.
Vive en la selva tropical.*

This bird is a hummingbird.
It is very small and has lots of colors.
It has wings.
It lives in the tropical rain forest.

Madelyn Puente
Grade 3
Glastonbury Public Schools
Glastonbury, CT
Jane Graveen, Spanish Teacher

This illustration is part of a book written and illustrated by third graders as part of an interdisciplinary unit taught with the collaboration of the classroom, art, and Spanish teachers.

Since the children were studying tropical rain forests in their classroom, in the Spanish class they learned related vocabulary and expressions. Having already explored domestic animals, the students could describe in Spanish special features of the rain forest animals, e.g., paws, tail, wings, etc. The writing activity followed a structured pattern practiced orally, then in writing.

The art teacher taught the children a colorful collage technique for illustrating the animals, birds, insects, or reptiles. When the book was all assembled, it was color copied, a parent printed out the student script, and the students read their book while they were being videotaped.

Jane Graveen

NNELL Seeks Publicity Chair

NNELL invites members to apply for the position of Chair of Public Relations. Duties of the Chair will include preparation and distribution of print and non-print information about early language learning and materials to promote NNELL membership.

The Public Relations Chair must attend the NNELL Executive Board meeting which is held each year at the ACTFL Annual Conference. The next meeting will be held on November 21, 1996, in Philadelphia.

Please send letters of application to: Eileen Lorenz, Academic Programs, Montgomery County Public Schools, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850; 301-279-3911; elorenz@umd5.umd.edu.

Integrating Language and Content: Lessons from Immersion (EDO-FL-96-04)

National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning

This Digest is based on a report published by the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning, *Integrating Language and Content: Lessons from Immersion*, by Fred Genesee. Copies of the report are available from NCRCDLL, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

One of the most interesting innovations to emerge in second language education during the last three decades is the language immersion program. In this method of language instruction, the regular school curriculum is taught through the medium of a second language. The first immersion programs were developed in Canada to provide English-speaking students with the opportunity to learn French, Canada's other official language. Since that time, immersion programs have been adopted in many parts of North America, and alternative forms of immersion have been devised. In the United States, immersion programs can be found in a number of languages, including French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese.

With the purpose of highlighting the lessons to be learned from immersion, this Digest presents selected findings from research carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of immersion programs in Canada and the United States. These lessons are related to the importance of (1) integrating language with content instruction, (2) creating classroom environments that are discourse-rich, and (3) systematically planning language instruction along with content instruction.

Language Integration Over Isolation

The first lesson to be learned from immersion is that when second language instruction is integrated with instruction in academic content, it is more effective than teaching the language in isolation. Proficiency in the target language is not a prerequisite to academic development; rather, language learning results from using language to perform authentic communicative functions.

During the last 10 years, there has been a shift away from teaching language in isolation to integrating language and content instruction. There are at least four reasons for this shift. First, language is acquired most effectively when it is learned for communication in meaningful and significant social situations. The academic content of the school curriculum can provide a meaningful basis for second language learning, given that the content is of interest or value to the learners.

Second, the integration of language and content instruction provides a substantive basis for language learning. Important and interesting content, academic or otherwise, gives students a meaningful basis for understanding and acquiring new language structures and patterns. In addition, authentic classroom communication provides a purposeful and motivating context for learning the communicative functions of the new language. In the absence of content and authentic communication, language can be learned only as an abstraction devoid of conceptual or communicative substance.

A third reason for the shift toward language and content integration is the relationship between language and other aspects of human development. Language, cognition, and social awareness develop concurrently in young children. Integrated second language instruction seeks to keep these components of development together so that second language learning is an integral part of social and cognitive development in school settings.

Finally, knowing how to use language in one social context or academic domain does not necessarily mean knowing how to use it in others. The integration of second language instruction with subject content respects the specificity of language use. For example, evidence indicates that the way language is used in particular academic domains, such as mathematics (Spanos, Rhodes, Dale, & Crandall, 1988), is not the same in other academic domains, such as social studies (Short, 1994).

A variety of integrated approaches to second language teaching have been developed. Immersion is a specific type of integrated instruction. The primary focus of immersion is not language learning but academic instruction. Immersion programs have proved to be successful; the academic achievement of immersion students is comparable to that of students educated through their native language. This indicates that the students in immersion programs acquire the second language skills they need to master the academic skills and information appropriate for their grade level.

Opportunities to Use the Target Language

The second lesson to emerge from research on immersion is that approaches that provide opportunities for extended student discourse, especially discourse associated with activities selected by individual students, can be particularly beneficial for second language learning.

Research on French immersion programs in Canada has shown that immersion students often perform as well as native French-speaking students on tests of French reading and listening comprehension. However, they seldom achieve the same high levels of competence in speaking and writing. Although functionally effective, the oral and written skills of immersion students indicate a number of shortcomings. Immersion students' grammar is less complex and less redundant than that of native speakers and is influenced by English grammar. The available studies suggest that this results, in part, from learning environments in which there is a lack of opportunity to engage in extended discourse.

The solution to the shortcomings in immersion students' productive skills seems to lie in the use of methodologies that

apply techniques to practice language forms with a communicative approach. "Such tasks and activities will meet the same criteria as is demanded of the communicative teaching of grammar: purposefulness, interactivity, creativity, and unpredictability" (Clipperton, 1994, p. 746).

Activity-centered immersion programs, particularly those that focus on individual choice of learning activity, achieve high levels of second language proficiency even in the productive skills. Stevens (1976) compared students who worked on self-selected activities in collaboration or consultation with other students and who were expected to make oral and written reports in the target language on their work with students who all worked on the same teacher-directed activities at the same time and in the same way. Although students in the activity-centered program used the target language for only 40% of the school day, they attained the same levels of target language speaking and reading proficiency and almost the same levels of reading and writing proficiency as the students in the teacher-centered program, which provided all instruction in the target language. The success of the activity-centered classes can be attributed to two main factors: 1) students had regular opportunities for extended discourse; and 2) students were highly motivated because they used the target language in situations of personal choice.

In sum, the use of instructional strategies and academic tasks that encourage increased interaction among learners and between learners and teachers is likely to be beneficial for second language learning.

Effective Curriculum Design

The third lesson to be learned from immersion is that the integration of language and academic objectives should be carefully planned, providing for the presentation, practice, and application of specific language forms that are necessary for discussing different academic content. If integrated instruction is not planned systematically, teachers may use strategies that are not optimal for promoting full second language development. Swain (1988) examined how immersion teachers used French to teach a variety of academic subjects. The study found that teachers used a functionally restricted set of language patterns, corrected content more often than linguistic form, and were inconsistent in their corrections of linguistic form. These results suggest that in an effort to make academic material as comprehensible as possible, immersion teachers might be adopting communication strategies that rely on linguistic skills their students already have, and students may not be challenged to learn new language skills. In order to develop the students' language skills fully, immersion teachers must progressively model more complex language and use instructional activities that demand more complex language skills from students.

Instructional strategies and tasks must be carefully selected so that students use and learn targeted aspects of the language. Without such systematic plans, teachers may provide inconsistent or even random information about language forms. A systematic focus on the structural aspects of the language greatly enhances learning of targeted grammatical features.

Increased attention to language forms does not mean less focus on communication and meaning. Salomone (1992) reports on an immersion program in the United States that "exemplifies the current trend of all second language instruction: using the

second language rather than knowing about the language, with bilingualism as the ultimate instructional goal" (p. 9). However, having verified a lack of accuracy and a continued "fossilization" in the students' speech, teachers in the program studied by Salomone incorporated systematic planning and explicit teaching of the grammar and vocabulary component of the syllabus. This strategy greatly improved the results. Other studies describe the specifics of direct language instruction in an immersion context (e.g., Clipperton, 1994; Laplante, 1993) or show the benefits of identifying the semantic and syntactic features and language functions and tasks that are part of the academic language for a content area and incorporating them in the design of lesson plans (Short, 1994).

Conclusion

Experiences in immersion classes illuminate the practice of second language teaching and indicate effective ways of attaining high levels of academic content mastery and target language proficiency. Evaluations of a variety of immersion programs suggest at least three elements of general relevance for second language instruction: 1) instructional approaches that integrate content and language are likely to be more effective than approaches in which language is taught in isolation; 2) an activity-centered approach that creates opportunities for extended student discourse is likely to be beneficial for second language learning; and 3) language objectives should be systematically targeted along with academic objectives in order to maximize language learning.

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Research Notes:

Language Learning and the Developing Brain

"Gray Matters: The Developing Brain" is a public radio program that was recently broadcast by Public Radio International and produced in association with the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, an independent, non-profit organization made up of over 140 of the nation's leading brain scientists. The content of the program, which focused on how the young brain develops into a "reading, writing, and rollerblading 10-year-old," and which addressed early language learning, is reported here.

The child's brain is different from the adult brain in that it is a very dynamic structure that is evolving. A two-year-old child has twice as many synapses (connections) in the brain as an adult. The young brain must use these connections or lose them. Thus, failure to learn a skill during a critical or sensitive period has important significance. According to Dr. Michael Phelps, Chairman of the Department of Molecular and Medical Pharmacology of the UCLA School of Medicine, the learning experiences of the child determine which connections are developed and which will no longer function.

Dr. Patricia Kuhl, a Speech Scientist at the University of Washington, reports that babies are born "citizens of the world" in that they can distinguish differences among sounds (temporal, spectral, and duration cues) borrowed from all languages. They are ready to learn any language they hear, but by six months of age, they start to specialize in their native language.

Dr. Susan Curtiss, Professor of Linguistics at UCLA, who studies the way children learn languages, notes that in language development there is

a window of opportunity in which the child learns the first language normally. After this period, the brain becomes slowly less plastic and by the time the child reaches adolescence, the brain cannot develop "richly and normally any real cognitive system, including language."

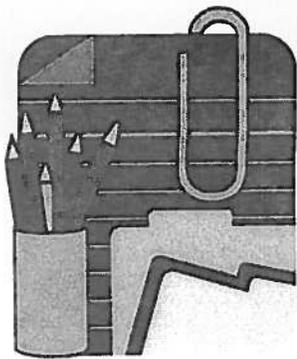
The four- or five-year old learning a second language is a "perfect model for the idea of the critical period." According to Dr. Curtiss:

...the power to learn language is so great in the young child that it doesn't seem to matter how many languages you seem to throw their way....They can learn as many spoken languages as you can allow them to hear systematically and regularly at the same time. Children just have this capacity. Their brain is just ripe to do this....there doesn't seem to be any detriment to... develop(ing) several languages at the same time.

When children wait until high school to start studying a foreign language, the job is much harder. The task now involves learning the rules of grammar, translating, reading, and trying to develop language learning strategies. The task is a different one than it was for the young child in the sensitive period for language learning. Brain plasticity has been lost, the number of synapses has greatly reduced, and the brain no longer has the same facility to restructure itself that it had when the child was young.

"Gray Matters: The Developing Brain" is available from: Wisconsin Public Radio Assoc., The Radio Store, 821 University Ave., Madison, WI 53706-1497; 1-800-652-7246. Audio-cassette (for 40-minute program) \$8.00; transcript \$6.00; shipping \$3.00.

*"Even in late childhood...one cannot learn a first language fully or naturally or normally."
(Dr. Susan Curtiss)*



Classroom Resources

French

Doucet, M. B. (1992). *Le Hoogie Boogie*. Louisiana French music for children. Cambridge, MA: Rounder Record Corporation.

Available from Rounder Record Corporation, # 1 Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140; 1-800-443-4727. Cost is \$15.00 for CD and \$9.50 for audio tape.

This recording is an interesting compilation of Cajun music for children that invites them to move, stamp their feet, and clap their hands. Children will enjoy learning the Hokey Pokey Louisiana-style. There are many cute songs, but also many touching and culturally fascinating ones. I especially like the ones about the *cocodrie* and the *maringuouins* (crocodiles and mosquitoes).

Several songs appear to be old French and English folk songs that have achieved a Cajun transformation. Not all of the songs are appropriate for very young children, but there is enough variety here to satisfy a broad range of students. This recording is particularly good for extending students' awareness of the francophone culture of Louisiana.

German

Transparency Set E 706, Fruits and Vegetables.

Available from Teacher's Discovery, 2741 Paldan Dr., Auburn Hill, MI 48326; 1-800-Teacher. Cost is \$19.95.

This transparency set of fruits and vegetables is a very colorful visual that can be used in elementary and upper grade German classrooms. The transparencies are useful as a class warm-up, an introduction, practice, review, and assessment of vocabulary. In addition, using this transparency set can be an invaluable tool for developing dialogue and discussion.

The fruit and vegetable transparency set consists of 28 full-color transparencies, 28 transparencies of word overlays, two situation transparencies, and one transparency showing fruits and vegetables to be cut out. Also included for duplicating are blackline masters and exercises. The picture transparencies, with the 28 vegetables and fruits, show actual photographs of the items and look very real. The German word overlay transparencies use the appropriate articles in front of the singular and plural nouns.

Placing a background transparency such as the dining room or the cafeteria on the overhead projector, the teacher can build situations using the characters and the cut-out fruits and vegetables. Teacher and students can develop a dialogue, write stories in their German journals, use the situations during math for various graphing activities, pattern works, and addition and subtraction problems.

The transparencies are also a great tool to use in the integrated learning classroom. For example, they could be used in science and health in a unit on nutrition or seeds and bulbs. The activity sheets can be

duplicated and used for categorizing, showing preferences, or listing ways to serve fruits and vegetables.

This transparency set can be used in all elementary and upper grades since the activities can easily be adjusted to the appropriate grade level. Other transparency sets available from Teacher Discovery include clothing, body parts, and household and classroom objects.

Spanish

Haas, M. (1996). *The Language of Folk Art*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley.

Available from Longman Publishers, 10 Bank Street, White Plains, NY 10606-1951; 1-800-552-2259. Cost for each component: \$49.33 for posters, \$10.60 for activity book, and \$26.60 for teacher's guide.

The Language of Folk Art is an exciting trip through Latin America using its rich and varied crafts as a departure point for language exploration. The program, which can be adapted for almost any level of language study, includes eight full-color posters of different examples of folk art, two student activity books, and a teacher's guide, all of which can be purchased separately.

The eight units in the program are based on the following culturally-rich pieces of realia: an *arpillera* (appliqué wall-hanging) from Peru; a wooden truck filled with Andean people from Bolivia; a *vejigante* mask from carnival in Puerto Rico; a band of wooden animal musicians from Mexico; a miniature Andean kitchen from Venezuela; an *arpillera* from Chile; papier-mâché Day of the Dead skeletons from Mexico, and carved animals from a New Mexican folk tale.

The posters are beautiful and will

attract student interest as soon as they are displayed in your classroom.

Lessons, which revolve around the posters, are fun and varied and provide ample room for individual teacher style and the differing needs and learning styles of students. The language that flows naturally from the lessons is authentic and content-based, which serves to motivate the students.

A wealth of fascinating information about the art featured in the posters is provided in the Teacher's Guide. Used with any level, this program will prove motivational and exciting both for you and your students as you journey through the language of Latin American folk art.

Journal Adds New Section: "Teaching with Technology"

Learning Languages is pleased to announce a new feature on the use of technology in foreign language teaching and learning, entitled "Teaching with Technology." Information on communications technologies, as well as reviews of computer programs and applications used to enhance foreign language education will be featured.

The main focus, however, will be on articles written by language teachers who have successfully incorporated these technologies into their instruction. *Learning Languages* invites informative articles about practical applications of communications technologies in the classroom, as well as teachers' experiences with, and their perspective on, different technologies as they relate to foreign language learning.

Send submissions to: Jean W. LeLoup, Visiting Professor, HQ USAFA/DFF, 2354 Fairchild Drive, Suite 6H63, USAF Academy, CO 80840-6244 e-mail: LeloupJW%DFF%USAFA@dfengmail.usafa.af.mil

Spring 1996 Conferences

March 28-31, 1996

Central States Conference and Kentucky Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Louisville, KY. Jody Thrush, CSC Executive Director, 3550 Anderson St., Madison, WI 53704; 608-246-6573.

April 11-13, 1996

Southwest Conference on Language Teaching and New Mexico Organization of Language Educators, Albuquerque, NM. Joann Pompa, SWCOLT Executive Director, Mountain Pointe High School, 4201 E. Knox Road, Phoenix, AZ 85044; 602-759-8449, ext. 3036; Fax: 602-759-8743.

April 18-21, 1996

Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, New York City. Rebecca Kline, Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; 717-245-1977.

Summer 1996 Courses and Workshops

June 16-July 12, 1996

Methods for Teaching Foreign Languages in Elementary and Middle School, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. Carol Ann Pesola, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN 56562; 218-299-4511; or AATG, 112 Haddontowne Court #104, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-3668; 609-795-5553; Fax: 609-795-9398; E-mail: 73740.3231@compuserve.com.

July 23-28, 1996

The National FLES* Institute, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, MD. Gladys Lipton, Modern Languages and Linguistics, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, MD 21228; 301-231-0824; 410-455-2109; Fax: 301-230-2652; E-mail: glipton@mcimail.com or lipton@umbc2.umbc.edu.

July 23-August 2, 1996

Culture and Children's Literature: France and Mexico, Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia H. Rosenbusch, National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N157 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776 or 6206; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

July 31-August 10, 1996

Seminar on Teaching German at the Elementary and Middle School Level, Plymouth State College, NH. Gisela Estes, Department of Foreign Languages, Plymouth State College, Plymouth, NH 03264; 603-535-2303; or AATG, 112 Haddontowne Court #104, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-3668; 609-795-5553; Fax: 609-795-9398; E-mail: 73740.3231@compuserve.com.

Fall 1996 Conference

September 25-28, 1996

Third European Conference on Immersion Programs, Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain. Deadline for submitting papers is April 15, 1996. Institut Europeu de programes d'immersis, Provenca, 324, 1r., E-08037 Barcelona, Catalonia; Phone 011-34-3-4588700; Fax 011-34-3-4588708.

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Please enroll me as a member of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL) and send me a one-year subscription to *Learning Languages*. I am enclosing a check for \$15.00. (Overseas rate is \$20.00.) Make checks payable to NNELL.
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