STEP OUTSIDE

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One mother and author talks about the importance of travel in developing language fluency

Concordia Language Villages: One Example of Learning Outside the Classroom

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Concordia Language Villages: One Example of Learning Outside the Classroom

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President’s Message

“I’m the collective voice of
ACTFL that unifies us all in making
a strong front for our profession.”

VOYAwards
2012 ACTFL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Dear NNELL Members:
Welcome to the 2012 Spring/Summer issue of Learning Languages—Outside the Class-
room! It seems only fitting that, as a “network” of language learners and teachers, we should
focus an issue of the journal on the various opportunities that exist for us, and our students,
to connect with language and culture, and each other, beyond the school walls.

NNELL’s Advocacy Chair, Tammy Dann, regularly provides a collection of information and
links to websites through Newsworthy and Home/School Connection. ENNELL blasts, NNELL’s Facebook page and Twitter feeds provide instantaneous updates. Webinars and
workshops offered by NNELL, ACTFL, regional and state language organizations and other
education venues offer myriad opportunities to learn and share professional information. In
addition, our newly updated website, with continued member access to a library of Language
Learning journals, is yet another way NNELL supports teaching and learning.

In this issue, several teachers and other professionals have shared their ideas and ex-
periences with learning outside the classroom through investigation, action research and
just telling the story. Maybe reading the ar-
ticles about the Alternate Route to Teacher
Certification (ARC) Elementary camp or
concordia Language Villages will inspire you
to create a summer language learning option
or share your own success story. Perhaps see-
ing how others have tapped into the benefits
of community offerings, blogs and language clubs will spark a new idea for you to try.

NNELL is offering just a snapshot of possibilities for learning outside the classroom in this
journal issue. You have many more stories to share about what this theme means—for teach-
ers, students and parents, and as a teacher, your language and pedagogical learning is ongo-
ing. How do you maintain and improve your language skills? Are you part of a professional
learning community? Do you participate in face-to-face or virtual activities where you can
practice language? Do you access target language and culture resources, such as online peri-
odicals, blogs, TV and radio streams or iTunes?

What about your students? How do they learn outside the classroom, and what do you
do to facilitate that learning? Do you provide them and their parents/guardians with the in-
formation about opportunities to practice, explore interests and connect with peers in the
target language? If you maintain a language page on your school’s website or send home a
newsletter, just the mention of setting up a bilingual playgroup, downloading or checking
out library CDs, DVDs and video games in the target language, or going to language/culture
camps and travel sites may inspire parents in ways that support children’s learning.

Learning outside the classroom can be a subtle way to advocate. By sharing NNELL-pro-
vided links to news articles and research information, you can help to educate parents, board
members and school and district administrators.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Learning Languages and give thought to sharing your story
with us in future issues. (http://www.nnell.org/publications/docs/author_guidelines.pdf)

~Jacque Bott Van Houten

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LEARNING LANGUAGES ~ 3
Dear readers,
I am excited to share with you NNELL’s spring/summer 2012 issue of Learning Languages. The NNELL board made the conscious decision to reduce its carbon footprint, and I am pleased to announce that we have gone fully digital beginning with the release of this issue of the journal. Please also take note of our revised format thanks to our new layout editor Bretton Zinger.

The articles featured in this issue embrace the theme, “Learning Outside the Classroom.” Many of the activities described in the articles can easily be woven into a FLES lesson in the classroom. We have two feature articles: “Living Language and Culture at Concordia Language Villages” by Denise Phillippe and “Go Away: Raising Multilingual Children” by Stacie Nevadomski Berdan. These articles bring home the importance of exposure to other languages and cultures in an atmosphere beyond the four walls beginning at an early age.

New in this issue of the journal is a dedicated column entitled “Parent’s Corner” written by Stacie Nevadomski Berdan, a parent with children in the Glastonbury Public Schools. I invite you to share information from this column with parents, teachers and members of the community in an effort to advocate for early language learning. Please invite them to connect with our Parent Connections section (formerly called Home and School Connections) on the NNELL website (www.nnell.org) in order to obtain more information about promoting foreign language learning in your district and community.

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The Parent’s Corner is a new addition to the journal. I am delighted to introduce the author of this section of our journal, Stacie Nevadomski Berdan. Stacie and her husband reside in Gloucester, Cape, along with their twin children who attend the Gloucester Public Schools. Stacie and her family have traveled the world, and she brings a global perspective to our Parent’s Corner.

I would like to encourage you to share information from the Parent’s Corner with families, teachers, Board of Education members and others who are concerned about raising the 21st century global education for children.

– Alie Oleckow, editor

by Stacie Nevadomski Berdan

The world our children are growing up in is changing at a dizzying speed. Just the last few years have witnessed a global financial crisis, China overtaking Japan as the world’s second largest economy, the Arab Spring, political melodramas across Europe and an environment in which our children in Boston and Boise are increasingly competing with students from Bangladesh and Buenos Aires. Today’s conditions seem to include both ever-closer global integration and ever-accelerating change.

Are we raising our children with the flexible character in charge and mind to handle the challenges globalization is raising for their generation; and if not, what can parents and teachers do?

The answer is a great deal, starting with facing the problem together.

The challenge is enormous and crucial. America’s schoolchildren today are regularly out-tested on math, science, history and even English scores by students around the world. Those global students often graduate bilingual or trilingual, armed with what experts have come to call a “global mindset”: the ability to operate comfortably across borders, cultures and languages. Many times, they have the best of both worlds: a multilingual upbringing with a post-secondary education here in the United States. Competition is fierce and by the time today’s toddlers join the workforce, the ability to work globally and cross-culturally will be mandatory — not just the “nice to have” that was years ago.

Foreign language and other types of global education are crucial for our children in the 21st century. Yet, as a nation, we don’t seem to be heeding the call to revamp our education systems to create globally-minded graduates who will be able to compete with multilingual, multicultural, international peers. This is a country whose own defense department called foreign language education “an essential component of U.S. national security in the post-9/11 world,” but whose Congress has cut funds for the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP). And although there are pockets of advocacy for change, it’s not enough.

The burden of building tomorrow’s global citizens today rests squarely with parents and elementary and secondary schoolteachers and administrators. Parents and educators need to have a growing array of resources they can use individually to strengthen global awareness among the children in their care. Books, DVDs, blogs, tweets and websites are dedicated to early childhood foreign languages, global studies and multicultural understanding. Libraries offer an array of materials on life and cultures around the world. World traveler associations can introduce visiting speakers and enriching home-stays and study and work-abroad options are proliferating. We can do tremendous good for our children by making use of these resources to enrich their education about, exposure to and interest in the world, and making those choices should be a priority.

However, more important than simply tapping resources, we must advocate for change. We must band together to demand better of our government, politicians, school districts and communities. It is counterintuitive to cut funding for Arabic education under FLAP as we struggle to exit Mideast wars where our troops suffered from insufficient Arabic language and cultural training, and where the Arab Spring is turning in Islamist directions that may further complicate our standing abroad. It is short-sighted that many U.S. states require foreign language education (if at all) only after age 13 or 14, precisely when rapid decline. And while so many U.S. businesses continue to invest, and expand, in China, our universities are building relationships with the Chinese government through the Confucius Institute and accepting government money and teachers to fill the vast void for Chinese language instruction. These are just a few of the issues that face American parents and teachers today when it comes to teaching our children through a global lens that will enable them to deal with these issues and so many more.

For every parent or teacher who already has the means to encourage global thinking, probably 1,000 appreciate the value but have little international experience or connections themselves. These concerned adults are also wondering if the children in their care are learning what they need to do well in our ever more tightly-woven world, while coming from a country many believe is No. 2 in the global race for jobs and economic prosperity. Parents and teachers today need to help their children look ahead, down the road to a time when globalisation will no longer even be seen as a trend, but will simply be part of the fabric of how we all live.

I write from experience as an international business person, someone who has worked in more than 50 countries around the world and who now speaks on college and university campuses across the country on this very topic: How can administration, faculty and staff help today’s graduates compete with a growing global workforce? What skills do they need? How can they build a global mindset?

I am no longer surprised when campus counselors tell me that their students don’t understand the critical importance of study abroad, exchange programs, foreign language learning and internships abroad. There is always a small pocket of students on every campus that “gets it,” and I surmise, although I don’t have data-driven proof, that it has everything to do with how they have been brought up — globally-minded or not. We need to grow this group of students who may not know how important a global mindset is and that their competition is not at another school across the state or country, but students halfway around the world who know a lot more about the United States than our students do about their own country’s geography, religion, borders, economics, regulation or political situation. I worry about the students who are slipping through the cracks now, graduating without learning how to navigate their careers in the global economy.

I feel compelled to do something about it. As a parent of twin 12-year-olds, I am part of a community where there are pockets of parents who get it. These parents fight against cuts to budgets that would reduce foreign language programs. They participate and broaden the scope of international nights so they are truly global in nature and not just hokey immigrant events. They encourage participation in the annual geography bee and own atlases and globes. They try to take their children on internationally-minded and inter-culturally-inspiring vacations even if they stay within their own state. My conversations with fellow parents and like-minded teachers have flowed naturally as any parent's demand better

www.
The hallmark of a good language teacher is the ability to permeate anything and everything with connections to the target language.

by Jay Crowell
An opportunity to use Spanish outside the classroom and have hundreds of students take part in a community celebration began with an idea and a phone call.

by Tammy Dann and Amy Murphy

TYING INTO A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

In 2000, the Des Moines Art Center first hosted a celebration for Day of the Dead to honor the deceased Hispanic leaders in the community. The celebration, which began as a community engagement project to attract people who might not visit the Art Center, included altars, traditional foods and refreshments, art activities, live music and dancers with about 1,800 people in attendance.

The West Des Moines Community School District’s Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) teachers wanted an opportunity for their students to use their language skills outside of Spanish class and to learn more about the Day of the Dead celebration. Promoting the Art center event was not enough. They wanted to involve their students in the celebration.

Tammy Dann, one of the FLES teachers, called the Des Moines Art Center in 2003 to investigate opportunities for student participation. Day of the Dead co-chair, Paula Hurton McKinley, was excited about collaborating with the West Des Moines FLES program. They developed a plan to designate one studio for the West Des Moines students’ performances and invited Tammy to serve on the planning committee for the celebration.

GETTING READY FOR THE CELEBRATION

FLES teachers in the West Des Moines schools incorporate the Day of the Dead into the fourth grade curriculum each year. The teachers discuss the Day of the Dead celebration at the Art Center, and many ask for volunteers from fourth grade to participate in the event. They emphasize the level of commitment and outside class time needed to create a high-quality performance. Students either volunteer or are chosen based on performance and character demonstrated during Spanish class. Due to the limited performance, the number of volunteers is limited to 10-20 students.

Once the student volunteer selection process is complete, the FLES teacher creates a schedule several weeks prior to the Day of the Dead event, scheduling practices before or after school or during recess. Students willing to give up recess are usually very dedicated to the performance. At practices, speaking parts are assigned, props constructed and CDs passed out so children have resources to practice at home. Several days prior to the event, reminders are sent home with expectations and tips for the big day.

Most teachers call the performers’ parents the night or morning before to answer any questions or concerns. All of these steps help to provide a high quality and memorable performance for students, their families and the community.

CHALLENGES

Setting a practice schedule is often very difficult. The FLES teachers have found they need to be flexible and creative when scheduling around the many conflicts before, during and after the school day. This involves teamwork between FLES teachers that work in the same building, and often one teacher will meet with students she does not normally teach in order for those students to be adequately prepared for the performance. The FLES teachers also count on the cooperation of their teaching colleagues be-
before the performance have greatly reduced the number of students who have not shown up due to a lack of transportation. While better communication does not guarantee 100 percent attendance for the performance, it has proven to be beneficial.

THE BIG DAY

Student presentations include a wide range of activities in the Spanish language. Many demonstrate the traditions of the Day of the Dead through poetry, crafts, drama and music. Students use Spanish to describe crafts they have made for the audience to enjoy, such as miniature skeletons (calacas) dressed in costumes that illustrate favorite activities. The students, some of whom are dressed in homemade skeleton costumes, recite and act out traditional stories and poems. Incorporated with the songs about the Day of the Dead are actions and pictures to help with comprehension for those who may not speak the language. Audience participation and presentation interpretations are encouraged.

Students perform in a studio decorated with art from their peers, creating a festive atmosphere. Many art teachers from the West Des Moines schools send art inspired by the Day of the Dead to hang in the studio as a cultural background. Many of the young artists and their families attend the event in order to see their artwork displayed at the Art Center.

BENEFITS

The Day of the Dead celebration continues to grow, with more than 2,700 people attending the event in 2011. The West Des Moines FLES presentations are of a very high quality and bring in about 200 visitors each year that likely would not attend, expanding the cultural understanding and appreciation of an additional 1,600 people over the past eight years. For these reasons, the Day of the Dead planning committee has a standing invitation to the West Des Moines Community School District to continue its role in the event.

This event is the perfect setting for performances in Spanish that help highlight the skills developed in the FLES program. It gives the children the opportunity to learn more and share their knowledge of the Day of the Dead with the audience. Children of different races, cultures and languages have volunteered to take part in these performances. Many of the children who participate return in the future to enjoy this celebration with their families.

Amy Murphy is a Spanish (FLES) teacher at Fairmeadows and Clive Elementary in the West Des Moines Community School District.

Tammy Dann has been a Spanish (FLES) teacher in the West Des Moines Community School District since 1999. She served NNELL as a state and a regional representative and is currently NNELL’s Early Language Learning Advocate.
M y family and I spent a few weeks traveling through Central America last summer. A few years back, we had been to Guatemala, Belize and Costa Rica yet that was it, not much more exploration of our neighbors to the south. We decided on a short tour of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama and realized this would be a great opportunity to teach the girls how to be adventurous travelers and give them an opportunity to use their nascent Spanish language skills. We packed only what we could carry: backpacks for me and my husband, day packs for the girls, an iPhone and iPad with downloaded e-books from our local library, and one guidebook.

We flew into Managua, Nicaragua, without any reservations and just a general itinerary.
My daughters have taken Spanish for six years – about 20 minutes a day since first grade. Like many students, they didn’t really appreciate the value of speaking another language. Being in a Spanish-speaking country changed that from day one. They began to read the signs in the airport and listened as we negotiated with a taxi driver to take us downtown. They quickly learned that traveling was a great way for them to actually use what they had studied so far. It boosted their confidence as it surprised them how much they could communicate. They ordered food in restaurants, chatted with local people we met, were able to read a percentage of signs and understand those guides who spoke slowly and without a pronounced accent. They even used Spanish with a surf instructor in San Juan del Sur.

To me, their realization of the benefits of foreign language was priceless. I’ve written frequently about the importance of foreign language competence for today’s graduates seeking to enter the increasingly international workplace. As you might imagine, my daughters listen to me go on about the importance of foreign language and how it’s easier for English speakers to learn than, say, Mandarin. We have a Spanish-language education infrastructure in our school system with teachers, curricula and studies to improve efficacy. The Hispanic population is growing across the United States and, according to Pew Research Center, by the year 2050, 29 percent of the population will be Hispanic. As the United States increasingly integrates economically with Latin America, Spanish will become essential.

My daughters are lucky we live in a progressive school district that has been fighting for foreign language for more than 30 years – fighting against budget cuts and for improved curriculum. Spanish is mandatory beginning in first grade. A second language can be picked up in seventh grade, and in high school the selection widens to include classical languages as well. But for many American students, their school district’s language programs are being cut. For most others, the Spanish language program is not intensive enough; perhaps it’s only a two-year high school requirement or only 30 minutes a week. Knowledge of and appreciation for another language and culture will help our children grow up ready for a complex and multi-cultural global economy.

Spanish is the logical choice for most American children. As a romance language, Spanish is easier for English speakers to learn than, say, Mandarin. We have a Spanish-language education infrastructure in our school system with teachers, curricula and studies to improve efficacy. The Hispanic population is growing across the United States and, according to Pew Research Center, by the year 2050, 29 percent of the population will be Hispanic. As the United States increasingly integrates economically with Latin America, Spanish will become essential.

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In an effort to help my daughters on their way to their all-important fluency, I’ve asked several foreign language experts what we can do. Their response: immersion beginning as early as possible.

According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, immersion programs are effective and inherently more interesting for the student by accomplishing two goals at once: language acquisition and content learning. And so we’re seriously considering an immersion stint in Central America this summer. I’m not sure whether we’ll do a language-study program, a volunteer-language combination, or possibly create our own combination of local classes with some local fun. I’ve asked two of my nieces about joining us as well. There is no shortage of language programs being offered, including the highly respected Concordia Languages Village program in Minnesota, and we checked out a few schools on our travels. Right now, we’re zeroing in on Central America due to proximity, off-season summer timing and a manageable price – in case we plan to repeat this adventure for the next few years.

So many people remark that they just can’t travel like we do as a family; it’s too expensive. When I break down the costs of our three-week trip to Central America, noting that it cost significantly less than a seven-day stay in Disney World, they begin to think it’s possible. It becomes less about the money and more about the mindset, desire and a bit of fearlessness. My husband and I want to do everything we can to prepare our daughters for the global marketplace – and this means living comfortably in the world beyond Glastonbury, Connecticut. Language skills help, but so does a greater appreciation and understanding of others. An open-minded approach to the world — where different does not mean bad, just not the same — is a value that we hold dear in our family.

As parents, we have a responsibility to work with our school districts and teachers to ensure that our children are learning the skills necessary to compete. We must also take it upon ourselves to do what we believe is right to enhance their education. Traveling, learning foreign languages and exposing our children to a world that is exciting and necessary to understand are at the top of our list.

Stacie Nevadomski Berdan is a seasoned global executive and an expert on international careers. She is the author, most recently, of “Go Global: Launching an International Career Here or Abroad” and the upcoming book “Raising Global Children from Tots to Teens.”

Learning Languages ~ 17
In our efforts to improve, expand and inspire language learning to become a basic and essential component of the landscape of our educational system, we must reach out beyond the walls of the classroom to engage learners early.

Real-world learning and energized, playful, interactive language experiences that inspire can drastically change the perception of language learning for students and their families and eventually all community members. American communities have many of the natural ties that can help us create opportunities for learning that get our students out of the mindset that language learning is confined to the academic year or day.

We have to harness the partnership possibilities and put them to work for our students by building interactive pathways to learning through content, immersion experiences, and fun!

In this article, I will explain the role, development, implementation and observed outcomes of local summer language camps. You will see the bridges formed by this out-of-classroom experience will strengthen all language programs in your community.

**How I began doing this and why**

In 2002, I was thrilled to be the recipient of a county-based small grant to do a pilot Spanish program in my local library. Public-private partnerships were a significant part of the work I did under a grant in Virginia for the diverse area of Bailey’s Crossroads, and I had seen just how powerful community-based learning could be. The pilot parent-interactive class for my MARACAs program, supported by the small grant, allowed me to have 15 participating families. When 45 families showed up to register, I knew that I had to look for a more permanent home for this program. I forged relationships with the local recreation department, and as the years have passed, I have continued to provide language classes both in the recreation department and as a part of many private preschools and elementary schools in my area. There was a need to present a parent-interactive experience for children at the time and families were looking for ways to learn alongside their children. This was the beginning of filling what I saw as a void in our educational system here in New Jersey.

The summer presented an important chance to reach out to more students and more age groups to provide the type of interactive language learning experience I hoped would inspire them to want to learn more throughout the year. The creation of a local summer camp linguistic experience had to be carefully done in order to keep in mind that this was a vacation from the traditional school year. I relied on my own experiences as a camper to develop my programs in a way that used movement and play as a vehicle for learning. Camp conjures the ideas of fun, outdoors, new friends, food, games and sports. In order to have students want to join, I had to design Spanish curriculum and programs that mirrored those images.

I took a good look at the specialty camps offered in my area in English and determined that these types of thematic camps could be engaging and exciting ways to build interest and improved proficiency in the target language. By balancing the need for a true
camp experience with clear but realistic linguistic goals and outcomes, I was able to develop a model that serves my community well.

There were, and continue to be, many factors that contribute to the development of my summer camps and to those roots, experiences cropping up all around the country to immerse children in language in an engaging and stimulating way. Let’s examine the who, what, when, where and why of creating a learning language experience outside of the walls of a traditional classroom. This will hopefully inspire you to develop your own.

**Why A Summer Camp**

Summer camps are a perfect way to extend learning beyond the school year. We don’t have enough time with our students during the academic year, and the summer is a great time to open new opportunities for students to experience language in a movement-based and conversational setting that is designed differently than at school. There are no grades, no assessments, and no specific guidelines to which you must adhere. The primary goals are learning and fun.

The learning experience you provide through a language immersion summer camp should be enjoyable and exciting for your students and for you as an instructor. Building and teaching in a summer camp model makes teaching a creative, unconfined experience and can renew your energy and enthusiasm.

Summer camps are needed. Our educational system truly does not yet grasp and recognize the essential nature of language learning in our global economy. As language educators, we see this need and many parents do as well. By creating language learning experiences outside of the school system, we are fulfilling a need and connecting with parents who support our field. Their support will help our programs grow locally, regionally and nationally. Language immersion summer camps are not only a unique and effective way to extend learning, they also provide grassroots support to further advocacy for language learning beyond the walls of a classroom.

Teachers also benefit from summer camps as they provide a means of financial support during the months outside of the academic year. Summer funds: Nothing bad about that!

**Essential Components of Planning**

Four considerations when planning a summer camp must be taken into account and carefully considered when establishing your summer camp.

**Audience:** community, age, students, linguistic level

**Location:** where to hold camp and what partnerships are necessary

**Information, registration, and advertisement:** how to set-up registration, where and how to advertise

**Curriculum decisions and schedule development:** activity timing, thematic choices, keeping it interactive

**Audience:** If you can construct the actual tangible pieces of your camp, it is important to first consider whom you are targeting. What are the age range, linguistic level and language of interest in your community? Visit your local schools and talk to as many parents as possible to assess these factors and find your target audience.

**Location:** Where you hold your camp will be primarily based on the partnerships you have and can create in your community. Schools in my community were not available for summer programs. Therefore, I established partnerships with the local recreation department and some private preschools and panchinal schools in the area. Other great locations and partnerships include community centers, churches, synagogues, Ellis lodges, YMCAs and Jewish community centers.

**Information:** Wherever you end up holding your camp, be sure that it has as many options as possible to allow for creativity. Check to see if there is a kitchen, a playground, wi-fi access and a stage. These are all extra resources and spaces to incorporate into your curriculum and planning.

**Curriculum and Scheduling Development**

Summer camps provide great opportunities to offer programming. The middle of June, when many private preschools end their academic year, about a week before many public elementary schools are finished, is a great opportunity for a preschool summer camp week. This is also true for the last week in June, immediately after the public schools let out for the summer. Parents may not be traveling yet and often relish the chance to extend their children’s learning another week.

However, by the latest time to offer a summer immersion camp is in August, after all of the other camps have finished. Day camps and sleepaway camps tend to end the last week of a full month. Depending on when your public schools begin their academic year, you can usually find that the week immediately prior to the start of school is a fantastic time to offer a camp. It is a great transition for children as it does not have to be a full day and is a wonderful bridge back into the world of school.

Be sure that whatever dates and times you choose; you pay close attention to building a daily schedule that is fluid and interactive and does not spend too much time on any one activity. The more you can vary the activities and topics as many different ways of learning is possible, the better your results will be.

**Results, Resources, and Advocacy**

Summer immersion camps can yield significant results on several levels. Students learn some content language knowledge that is functional as opposed to a static group of words or ideas. In addition, they have interacted and responded physically to the language all week, which gives them a greater level of comprehension. Perhaps the most important outcome of the summer immersion camp model is a strengthened interest and desire to learn and use the target language. Enthusiasm for language learning is hard to measure with data. However, the reactions of your students and their families to a strong immersion experience can have extended effects on language education in your community and beyond.

Any resources provided to families for continued study, exploration and involvement will bolster their ability and potentially increase the likelihood of speaking up for enhanced language learning opportunities in their schools and communities. Parents expect their children to experience a fun and exciting summer program that will make them happy. By creating a summer immersion camp model, you are also providing grassroots support to further the development of the students’ love of language and fostering the growth of parental advocacy for world language instruction. Parents are an untapped resource. Their voices are essential to inciting positive change in language education.

The existence and development of immersion summer camps around the country promote world language learning beyond the walls of a classroom and prove that they are an effective and invigorating and creative means that are authentic to children can motivate learners and yield linguistic results.

Summer immersion camps, when created with the aforementioned goals and ideas in mind, can truly function as a bridge to end the gap between the waves of support to advocate for the transformation and growth of language programs across the academic year. The partnerships and connections that sprout from this type of grassroots, local program development will help make a difference in your community for all learners.

Amanda Seewald, MEd, is the author and director of Spanish Program for Young Learners, www.maracas123.com. She has been teaching and developing curricula for pre-school and elementary students in several private New Jersey schools for more than 10 years, has worked with many educators and schools across the country, providing interactive professional development workshops, and presented at national, regional and state conferences. Additionally, Amanda has developed programs to engage parents in advocacy and in their children’s educational experiences. Prior to developing MARRACAS, Amanda taught in the Arlington Public Schools Spanish immersion program in Virginia and completed her Master’s degree in multilingual multicultural curriculum and instruction at George Mason University. She speaks Spanish, French and Japanese. Amanda was named a Maracas Inc./MEAD Leadership Fellow by the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Amanda is a current member of the Board of Directors for NECTFL in 2009 and serves as the New Jersey State Representative for the NNELL. She is a strong advocate for language education and works with legislative representatives to further policy changes. Amanda hopes that through engaging and dynamic language experiences, young language programs for young children will continue to grow.
I am a Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLes) Spanish teacher and work with students from K-6 at Little Run Elementary School in Fairfax, Virginia. FLes is a program that had been implemented in my school district six years ago. I meet with my students in two 30-minute sessions a week. Finding ways to motivate students to use and practice the foreign language outside the classroom is the effective way to help them learn. Therefore, one of the biggest challenges I encounter as a teacher has been finding these creative ways.

Our school district provides students, parents and teachers with an online resource called Fairfax County Public School 24-7 Learning (FCPS 24-7) that allows the district’s students to extend learning beyond the traditional school day and beyond school facilities. Students, parents and teachers use FCPS 24-7 Learning, also known as “Blackboard,” to access homework and classroom assignments, view class calendars, explore links to enrichment activities, update emergency contact information and much more.

In the same manner, all specialists, such as physical education, music, art and FLes teachers, are required to create a tab within each grade level for their specific content area. I update my FLes site every week by adding new samples of songs, videos or new words in the vocabulary lists.

**THE BLOG TOOL ON BLACKBOARD**

Among the features that Blackboard has to offer, the one I considered very interesting was the “Creating Blogs” tool. On one occasion when visiting the FLes tab within the fifth grade Blackboard site, I clicked on the blog tab and read many entries from students answering a question posted by the classroom teacher. I immediately thought, “This could easily work for me to get the students to interact in Spanish.” After a discussion and approval from the teacher, and with assistance from the instructional technology person, I added a “Spanish blog” within the fifth-grade blog tab entitled “Clase de Español.”

Social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and others are the trendy way to connect with family and friends and to interact with people, close and far, all around the world. Quality blogs must be interactive and should allow visitors to leave comments and even message each other.

**TO BLOG OR NOT TO BLOG: IS BLOGGING AGE- AND CONTENT-APPROPRIATE?**

In terms of psychosocial development, according to developmental psychologist Erik Erikson, children between 6 and 11 are in stage four of development. During this “Industry vs. Inferiority” stage, children become capable of performing increasingly complex tasks, and they strive to master new skills. Children who are encouraged and commended by parents, teachers or peers develop a feeling of competence and belief in their skills. School and social interaction play an important role during this time of a child's life. Through social interactions, children begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments and abilities.

Is blogging appealing for 11-year-old students? Yes, it is, because it combines the technological piece and the social piece into one. Blogging satisfies the social need of interacting and connecting to others, communicating their thoughts and making comments to other student’s postings. Moreover, for many shy and introverted personalities, it is the “safe way” to get their words out.

In terms of content, a creative teacher can easily make the blog tool become the most useful instrument in many ways. In my case, starting from the title of the blog
icon “Clase de Español” (Spanish class), I use the foreign language I teach as much as I can when blogging. When posting questions or blog entries, I use vocabulary we have just practiced in class. Students know they are expected to answer in Spanish.

For example, the week we learned about animal classification, I posted the question “¿Qué película de animales te es favorita y porqué?” (What is your favorite animal movie and why?) One of the answers I received was, “Mi película favorita de los animales es ‘Alvin y las ardillas,’” “el cuento de los delfines,” and “Madagascar.” (“My favorite animal movies are ‘Alvin and the Chipmunks’, ‘Dolphins Story’ and ‘Madagascar.’”) The simple fact that the student took the time to read and understand the question and then to elaborate a complete sentence with the right grammar components makes the time I invest in doing this worthwhile. I use creative ideas to connect the material learned in class with things people like and admire in their everyday life, such as movies, famous athletes, world leaders, world events, sports, etc. In short, using content that is taught and combined with an interesting question that will attract their attention is the key to the success of any blog posting. Spark their curiosity, nudge them with thought provoking questions and you will get great results.

ARE THERE ANY DOWNSIDES?

I consider the only risk to be the use of inappropriate or inconsiderate language by the students, whether it happens when creating a posting or as a comment to a classmate’s posting. However, I consider it extremely important, in order to avoid these problems, to talk to the students very clearly about the expectations, the boundaries and the right way to interact with each other. Modeling the interaction and walking the students through the steps really sets the stage for things to happen as expected. Teacher supervision is necessary on a constant basis, that is, reading the blog entries and making sure they are appropriate. That being said, teachers have the necessary tools to erase a blog entry permanently when something inappropriate is posted and impose any disciplinary actions against the student. I have not faced any such problems to date.

ABOUT NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

As cited in their website, www.ACTFL.org, one of the five Cs of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning is “Communities.” Standard 5.1 states that students should use the language both within and beyond the school setting. Moreover, Standard 5.2 affirms that students should show evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment. I consider both goals achieved when combined with blogs. The students basically do it out of personal gratification because they are in tune with the use of the web to connect with others.

I started posting easy questions in the beginning, such as what is your favorite food, beverage, etc., and the responses were amazing. My fifth graders enthusiastically answered the questions using their vocabulary to create basic sentence structure, all in Spanish. The advanced students elaborated with sentences that were more complex, and the beginners posted short and simple answers. However, the goal, which was attained, was to get the students to practice and use the Spanish they had learned in class. As I read each of their postings, I evaluated how much Spanish has been retained, the level of discourse and the language control. The use of Blackboard also presents me with an additional way to assess their performance.

POSITIVE INTERACTION

Another positive side effect of the Spanish blog site has been the interaction among the students. They feel proud of their achievements, and they compliment each other on how well they are doing. For example, when a quiz was given in class, I posted the names of the students who had the highest scores on the blog. Those students wrote simple sentences stating how happy they were, and then many of the classmates wrote positive comments congratulating them. When I found comments written in English, I replied rephrasing the words in Spanish to model correct use. Many times, I found my correct wording to be used again when responding to my comments.

Another time I asked the students to write their top 10 favorite things, such as sports, food, restaurants, colors, season, subject, etc., and was delighted with the results. Again, I try to answer every posting with some type of comment, either rephrasing something that was not correctly spelled or using prompts in order to continue the conversation and promote reflection. For example, when writing comments about basketball being a favorite sport, I answered, “¿Quién es tu favorito basketball player?” or “¿Cómo te gusta jugar basketball?”
A Concordia Language Village experience simulates a trip to a country where the target language is spoken. Therefore, the curriculum is the entire program experience. Arrival at the Village begins with the campers proceeding through “customs.” Students participate in daily life activities such as eating and cleaning and learn in more formally designed educational activities before packing their suitcases to go back home, while being reminded in the target language not to forget their towels. In the culturally rich Village environment, participants learn through authentic activities, such as sports, dance, songs, theater, and crafts. For younger participants, the games played by children in the target country and the songs they sing attract particular interest. Students are surrounded by native and highly proficient speakers in the camp staff, just as they would be in the target country.

Mealtimes not only deliver authentic cuisine but also provide opportunities for comparing American and target-language mealtime customs using authentic tableware and communicating for both utilitarian needs and pleasure. The same cultural and communicative contexts exist for exchanging money at the Village bank, shopping in the store or ordering juice at the café.

Returning to the arrival that simulates a border crossing, immigration and customs, rather than the typical camp check-in, the experience really begins before the students leave home. Students receive a Language Village passport, and they and their parents pack for the experience. Upon arrival, they present their passport for entry, and it is stamped; they select a target language name. They then proceed to exchange their American dollars for the currency of the target country and to have their luggage pass a customs inspection—where English-language books are considered contraband. They visit a travel agency (to confirm their departure plans) and a clinic (for medical reasons necessary to a residential program for youth).

Teachers, when taking class trips outside of school, may be able to incorporate some elements of entering a country. For example, rather than checking students’ names off a participant list, teachers could verify a visa or other travel document that has been provided ahead of time to each student. Thinking more broadly of trips abroad, teachers may be able to seed experiences out of the classroom with elements that are authentic or similar to traveling in a target country.

Experiencing a simulated trip to a country where the target language is spoken provides plentiful occasions for real communication about real needs and real interests. Crossing the border and answering questions about their passports are real needs; students really are arriving to stay for a number of days. Singing a song that children their age sing is a real interest. Taking photos to document their “trip” is real and can prompt the target language. Real communication occurs due to the simulated trip nature of the program, it also occurs because the program is residential. Being residential is the second key aspect of Concordia Language Village.

by Denise E. Phillippe
photos by Kathy Olson-Studler

CONCORDIA LANGUAGE VILLAGES: ONE EXAMPLE OF LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

A Living Language and Culture
What does a typical day look like? Students wake in their cabin, perhaps to target language music being played. They are likely to be greeted in the language even before arising. After getting ready, they join in morning exercises or another culturally appropriate activity. After a typical target-culture breakfast, they are challenged to try to speak only the target language all day. While they clean their cabin, they are directed or cajoled in the language. The morning includes language-focused small groups and activity groups.

The ethnic mid-day meal is preceded by ritual songs to enter the dining hall and a lively skit to introduce the menu followed by various skits and presentations—free-time options, weather, target language proverbs and fables. As the session continues, after students have observed staff members making these announcements, they are encouraged to make their own. Afternoons include rest time, free time, Village soap opera, song time, cultural activities and study time for students in the credit-bearing program. Occasional afternoon or evening time is devoted to reflection, including ELVA (a language that is specific to Concordia Language Villages) and portfolio development. After a target culture evening meal, replete with skits, and portfolio development. After a targeted activity, students make a decision for themselves to accept the challenge of speaking the target language from breakfast to the evening meal. A special nametag is worn to alert others of this distinction. Depending on the level of the student, in a variation on using places or times as natural motivations to use language, staff members at Concordia Language Villages also invent motivators. Programs have some variation of “language heroes” in which students make a decision for themselves to accept the challenge of speaking the target language.

Concordia Language Villages Senior Researcher Heidi E. Hamilton found that the program gives students courage to take risks in language. Hamilton identified six guiding principles at Concordia Language Villages. Curriculum and programming: (1) are learner-centered so that learners become invested in their own learning; (2) take place in linguistically and culturally authentic surroundings; (3) take place out of a real need to interact and communicate; (4) are experiential and hands-on, involving multiple senses and drawing on multiple intelligences; (5) are embedded within extended projects; and (6) give learners courage to participate and use the language. Teachers can consult Hamilton’s Doing Foreign Language for more information.

In taking learning outside the classroom, or even when keeping it in, teachers can consider the application of the six guiding principles, the building of a strong sense of community, and the identification of places and times where language use is natural.

A third key way in which students learn outside the classroom at Concordia Language Villages is simply and powerfully that they are not only outside the classroom, they are outside. An increasing body of research indicates that time out of doors has positive benefits for learning. Interested readers can consult the Children and Nature Network, www.childrenandnature.org.


**Concordia Language Villages**

**Websites:** www.ConcordiaLanguageVillages.org


**Environmental education and global issues**


**Learning Languages ~ 29**
Many language teachers look for ways to extend their students’ language learning and practice beyond the school day. Creating a language club is one way for students to practice the target language outside of class. It is very important to provide opportunities for extended learning and additional time in the language to engage students and keep them seeing the benefits of language learning.

**Setting up a club**

Foreign language clubs can be set up before or after school, although it depends on district policies. If the district has a community education program, the club may need to be structured through that. If a community education program is not in place, a teacher will need to consider where and when to meet, and how to publicize the club. The language club can be publicized in many ways: posters that advertise the club sent home with students, postcards, flyers or mass emails. It is important to include information about cost, location and times in all communications with parents.

**Planning club meetings**

Once students have registered for the club, the teacher must determine what to teach each session. Most of my Spanish Club students are repeat attendees; therefore, I need different themes to cover during the regular class time. Several websites aid in curriculum development, such as: [http://www.suksi.com/share/indexes/spanish](http://www.suksi.com/share/indexes/spanish) and [http://www.spanish4teachers.com](http://www.spanish4teachers.com). Collaboration with classroom teachers or special area teachers is helpful in creating curriculum that spans across grade levels and content areas. It is important to plan to fill the entire time and create back-up materials in case students finish work on projects early. It is also important to differentiate, since you will be working with different grade and skill levels. Native speakers will sign up with novice language learners and having one activity will not work for both of them. You can use the native speakers to create culturally authentic tasks, as well as create a real-life need to learn the target language.

**Benefits of Spanish Club**

Early language students who stay after school for Spanish Club reap multiple benefits. Students who sign up for the club multiple times have demonstrated more confidence in their classroom Spanish class. These students are using the language more and develop a better understanding of different cultures. Parents enroll their children in the language club because they recognize the need to speak a second language and want to give them more opportunities to practice their skills.

**Creating a newscast**

Creating a newscast in the target language allows students to go more in-depth when learning about a country. The newscast can be videotaped and used in regular language classes when speaking about the chosen country. When my students created a newscast about Puerto Rico, they developed different stories, including breaking news, sports, children’s information, weather and interviews. When we watched the video at the end of Spanish Club, students were impressed with the amount of writing and speaking they were able to do in the target language.

**Spanish websites**

Access to computers during the regular language class time is not always possible, but there are so many incredible websites out there for students to use. I spent time finding age-appropriate sites to share with students, but I have found that students also are a wealth of knowledge and using websites already that incorporate Spanish. A couple of the websites that my students really love are [http://www.quia.com/shared/spanish](http://www.quia.com/shared/spanish) and [http://cvc.cervantes.es/u侣a/mimundo](http://cvc.cervantes.es/u侣a/mimundo). Part of the excitement of using the websites was when students realized they were listening to and navigating through websites completely in Spanish. This activity is easy to adapt to other languages by simply using the internet to research websites and games in the target language. This is especially effective because students usually use these same websites at home.

**Plays and songs**

One year, my older students decided to write a play in Spanish for the kindergartners who did not receive Spanish instruction. This is an excellent example of the presentational mode of communication and a way to show that our standards can guide early language clubs, as well as lessons in the regular class. They each chose roles, wrote up the play and practiced during Spanish Club. The kindergartners were very excited for this show. Plays can be written in any language on any topic students are interested in.

Listening to music during meetings allows students to hear the language, as well as get up and move. It is easy to find culturally relevant songs on the internet for students to listen to. When material is put to music, students retain it longer and can use it at home. We sing children’s songs in Spanish, as well as listen to popular Spanish artists. We perform cultural dances and games along with the music. Songs are great for any language club because children tend to remember the music and lyrics and practice. As well as learning dances from different countries, it is important for students to actively move around.

**FOOD**

Probably the best part for the students who sign up for Spanish Club is discussing and eating the cultural food. We have discussed chamoy and chocolate, had pastries from the Mexican grocery store, drank Mexican hot chocolate and ate Mexican candies. Ideally, any language club could have a food theme, and students could participate in preparing food from the cultural/language or have parent volunteers who make ethnic food for the whole class.
As you walk down the hallways of a busy middle school you see walls decorated with student projects and you hear laughter and cheerful singing coming from the classrooms. It all seems quite normal but wait … it is the second week of July! It’s summer. Where did all the enthusiastic students come from?

Foreign Language Elementary Summer Camp, according to a very vocal third-grade student, is a fantastic way to spend part of the summer: “You do new things every day, and if you don’t know everything in that language, you can learn more.”

Does your school offer a summer language camp? Have you considered offering this enriching opportunity to students in your community? Would you like to offer a summer camp but are not sure where to begin? Perhaps our experience will help.

For the past ten years in Glastonbury, Conn., we have offered a variety of foreign language elementary camps that meet daily for three hours for three to four weeks during July. Currently, we offer camps for Chinese, English Language Learners (ELL), French, Latin and Spanish, and this summer, we will add a Russian elementary camp. The registration fee for the camps is minimal with scholarships available based upon need. Generally, we have about 10-15 campers per language camp.

Many variables make an elementary camp a success, and the excitement level of students is certainly number one. However, other elements need to be in place long before the arrival of the youngsters. A critical question: Who teaches these camps? Teachers are on summer vacation during July and August, yet the expertise of a trained foreign language teacher is integral to a successful language learning camp. One option available for hiring highly qualified teachers to work for the summer camps is through a teacher preparation program. Glastonbury has partnered with the Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) program in Hartford, Conn., which specializes in preparing “talented individuals from fields outside of education to enter teaching” (http://www.ctoe.org/ARCoiline/Overview.shtml). The foreign language summer camps are a great opportunity for ARC students to gain classroom experience in a supportive environment as they take on the responsibility of planning and implementing daily lessons and activities for the campers. The ARC students thus become the camp teachers.

In addition to the summer camp teachers, Glastonbury has a camp coordinator who is familiar with the district’s foreign language program and is also an experienced foreign language teacher. The coordinator oversees the camps and the teachers, acting as a cooperating teacher for the ARC students as they navigate the classroom experience. The camp coordinator is instrumental in the administrative aspects of the camp and supports the camp teachers by providing model lessons and offering ideas and suggestions on lesson plans and units. The coordinator assists in classroom activities and encourage a variety of language learning opportunities for the campers.

Over the years, it has proven beneficial to include parents and student volunteers. The camp teachers and the coordinator welcome the outside experience and knowledge. This past summer, a high school senior, soon to be majoring in French in college, volunteered daily in the French summer camp. She shared her enthusiasm for French and her own experiences in French class with the camp teacher and the campers.

The ARC program in Hartford prepares professionals with non-teaching degrees to enter the field of education. Similar programs exist all over the country and allow future teachers to obtain certification in a time-condensed path. We encourage you to find one in your area and reach out to them as a resource. ARC student teachers plan
instruction and assessments are responsible for all the teaching tasks from day one of the summer camp. It is quite an adventure! Imagine a hot, summer day (albeit the camps take place in an air-conditioned building), a three-hour class session and 15 energetic and eager elementary students. What would you do to engage and excite them for the next three to four weeks? ARC teachers know the answer.

It is the hard work and collaboration of the camp teachers, the coordinator and the campers that make the foreign language summer camps a successful experience. The camp is an unusual classroom that requires more than the traditional daily lesson plan for a foreign language class. The words “summer” and “camp” become important in thinking of activities to engage the young learners during the summer in a camp-like environment. The three-hour session time slot allows for a built-in snack time, a language-themed recess break and many opportunities for learning in a less structured setting. The campers eagerly participate in many games, arts and crafts and projects combining the social aspect of camp with a culturally embedded language-learning theme.

In Glastonbury, because each year there are new camp teachers, the camp’s themes, units and lessons change. With the guidance of the coordinator, the camp teacher develops a general theme and plans fun, camp-like activities through the appropriate cultural lens incorporating vocabulary, language control and communication in writing, reading, speaking and listening.

This past summer, Spanish campers learned about the house in Spanish, comparing their American houses with a typical house in Mexico. While practicing the house vocabulary, students also used cardboard, construction paper and craft sticks to construct three-dimensional houses. This hands-on experience allowed them to interact socially with each other, use the language skills they were learning to label and describe their houses, and also integrate some cultural comparisons between the United States and Mexico.

The French summer camp focused on Paris. A highlight was building a three-dimensional map of Paris using household items students brought, as well as lots of paint and colored paper. This culminating project incorporated their knowledge of the many structures in the French city, their vocabulary for naming the different places and the opportunity to use their artistic, creative skills. The summer camp environment is a great opportunity for such activities since fewer students are in the classroom, and they are always such enthusiastic and eager learners.

The Chinese summer camp focused on the Shaodong Province in China and the exploration of Confucius’ hometown. It is important to mention that the Chinese camp is part of the ACTHar/CLASS STAR-TALK Discover Chinese Student program and has a yearly overarching theme that student teachers follow. One of the highlights was building and exploring communities and discovering connections between their members. Students designed, built and described three-dimensional models of their vision of communities. Students’ vocabulary, cultural perspectives and empathy expanded as they interacted with each other to create the models.

In order to implement the many different activities over the course of the language learning camp, advance preparation for this unusual classroom environment is key. Preparation includes securing a location for the camp, gathering necessary supplies and, of course, recruiting students to come to camps.

The camp coordinator is instrumental in taking care of the logistics of securing the classrooms and ordering the supplies, since that person is a district foreign language teacher. The supplies required for the camps vary from year to year depending on the activities teachers incorporate into the lessons. For each camp, a supply box is provided with markers, colored pencils, crayons, construction paper, craft sticks, glue, tape, stickers, children’s books in the target language and other general items that are needed for arts and crafts projects.

Of course, the most important ingredient for the camps is to have willing, eager, enthusiastic young language learners. Program advocacy becomes important, not only as a means to advertise the foreign language summer camp offerings, but as an opportunity to highlight the importance of language learning for our students in the 21st century. Our summer camps are advertised in foreign language classrooms, in school newsletters and on school and teacher websites, as well as in the town paper beginning as early as March. This enables parents to make their summer plans, and what better way to do so than sign their children up for French, Spanish or Chinese summer camp? The benefits of the summer language camps are virtually endless. Student teachers get to experience teaching and learning, putting theory into practice in the unique camp classroom. The most obvious benefit is reflected in students’ confidence and tremendous cultural enrichment. Students often sign up for a camp to get a head start in a language for the following school year, as in French and Chinese programs. Some want to keep their skills sharp all summer or desire extra practice. Children share what they learn and accomplish every day and bring projects, crafts and other evidence of their hard work home to share with the family. Parents welcome the opportunity to have their children involved in a high quality, well-structured summer activity. Many parents now plan summer vacation around the camp dates to enable their children to be a part of this language learning experience. Last, but not least, there is a benefit for the community as well as the school district’s advocacy efforts. Parents, friends and neighbors hear about the excitement and the quality of the camps and recommend them to others.

Feel free to reach out to us with further questions or comments about orchestrating summer language camp experiences in your district. Visit our website, www.foreiglan- guage.org, for more information, or contact us at kroetz@glastonburyus.org or kremiem@glastonburyus.org.

REFERENCES
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Weaving culture and core content into FLEX programs

by Kenneth M. Schultz

While immersion programs provide some of the greatest benefits to children learning a new language, many school systems have yet to dedicate the financial and personnel resources necessary to plan and implement such programs on a wide scale. In areas where immersion or formal FLEX programs does not exist in the school, often opportunities to explore language and culture exist outside of the classroom through Foreign Language Exploration (FLEX) programs offered during regular school hours. Such programs may be available as school clubs or as classes through community education departments or private businesses.

FLEX programs strive to provide engaging activities that integrate culture, vocabulary and communication in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. However, just because it is “fun” doesn’t mean that a program lacks substance. In fact, there are many ways to integrate language learning into daily life.

Core content from math, reading and social studies helps students, parents, teachers and administrators understand the connections that can be made between early language learning and core curriculum. Combining language learning with core content is good for the students, too, as it provides young learners with an extra opportunity to reinforce the skills they are learning in their regular classrooms.

A MULTI-COLORED FABRIC

There is a tendency to think of FLEX programs as having a single focus such as a solid-colored fabric. The focus may be a cultural topic or a vocabulary theme, but there is often an expectation that a FLEX program cannot provide a substantive experience due to time or personnel limitations. However, just because it is “fun” doesn’t mean that a program lacks substance. In fact, there are many ways to integrate language learning into daily life.

Weaving together each element of your overall curriculum takes a bit of preparation to ensure that students who participate in a language-learning program outside the classroom not only enjoy their experience, but also learn skills that can be applied to their daily lives and interactions with friends and families. Let’s suppose a FLEX program occurs during an afterschool or evening time frame. When planning activities, take into account that during a regular school day a child’s time is carefully structured, so children must follow rules and guidelines to ensure that they complete all the learning goals scheduled during the day. When school ends, children look forward to being with friends and family, and there are often new skills and core skills into which they will be more culturally rich. In learning about Italy’s geography and weather, students can make connections to their own environment and apply the task to their own lives.

In many regions, students have so much fun learning about the celebration and accomplishing their tasks they don’t even realize they are reinforcing math, social studies, language arts, and connecting to other areas of content, cultural and social studies helps students, parents, teachers and administrators understand the connections that can be made between early language learning and core curriculum. All the core skills necessary to complete a task can fit into the same cultural context.

A TAPESTRY OF POSSIBILITIES

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Please include your name and a short biography with each piece.

Photos used must be provided in separate files and must meet high-resolution standards (5MB minimum).

Please send all material to journal@NNELL.org. The theme for the next edition is “Literacy Through Language Learning: Connecting with the Common Core.” Go to http://www.nnell.org/publications/docs/learning_language_theme_deadlines.pdf for more information.

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