

# Foreign Language Week

## Celebrating For Enduring Understanding

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It's that time of the year again. The morning announcements will feature phrases translated into a variety of languages. The cafeteria staff has planned to serve lunch items from around the globe. International music is heard through the intercom during passing time, and every classroom door is decorated with a different flag. A Chinese teacher and a Spanish teacher have planned to swap classes for a day. These are just a handful of ideas for celebrating Foreign Language Week. A simple search on the Internet will yield plenty of other activities. As educators we

scenario demonstrating how knowing a foreign language proved to be useful during a workday. Two benefits here are that students think about foreign language in their lives, and career possibilities begin to open up.

### Tuesday:

1. Teach your standard lesson.
2. Reference the driving question.
3. Show another short YouTube video that advocates foreign languages or substitute this with another activity that celebrates language.

### Friday:

1. Teach an abbreviated version of your standard lesson.
2. Refer to the driving question.
3. Set up the class in an inside outside circle format. The outside circle faces in while the inside circle faces out. Students are paired in this format.
4. Partners share their careers emphasizing how knowing one or more foreign languages helps them to do their job.
5. The inside circle rotates, and the students talk to a new partner.
6. Allow 5 minutes for a whole class discussion about using foreign languages in their future career.
7. Wrap up by asking students to write a 5 minute reflection.

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need to go further than a Google search and further than the German word of the day in class. With just a few simple steps, we can increase the likelihood that students will be left with an enduring appreciation for foreign languages.

Here is a day by day lesson plan to guide your classes through a meaningful experience with Foreign Language Week.

### Monday:

1. Teach your standard lesson.
2. Allow for twenty minutes to set the stage for Foreign Language Week.
3. Post the "Driving Question" on the board throughout the week. How does being multilingual and multicultural help you in your future career?
4. Hook the students personally by showing a short YouTube video. There are many available that showcase the need for multilingual and multicultural employees in the workforce.
5. Assign a mini-project that is due on Friday. Give the students a career. They are to research how foreign languages would be useful in that career. Then, they can make up a

4. Dedicate time to discussing the mini-project. Clarify any uncertainties. Ask a few students to share their preliminary ideas with the class.

### Wednesday:

1. Teach your standard lesson.
2. Reference the driving question.
3. Use Google Earth to show famous landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, the Great Wall of China and the pyramids of Teotihuacán. This will stimulate their curiosity about global education.
4. Allocate time for students to write a reflection. They can write about or even "visit" places that they would like to explore on Google Earth.

### Thursday:

1. Teach your standard lesson.
2. Don't forget to reference the driving question.
3. Have classroom items labeled in a different language from what they are studying. Consult with a colleague to help you, or use the Internet to look up these words. Send the students on a scavenger hunt around the room. You can also trade classrooms with a colleague to do the scavenger hunt.

Foreign Language Week may have come to an end but not before your students were immersed in meaningful experiences. The driving question provided the glue, and the career based theme supplied a real world connection. Outside of the classroom, students dined on French, Spanish, Chinese, Italian and German fare. The Spanish Club hosted karaoke after school, and students performed songs by Shakira, Marc Anthony and other popular artists. The Italian Club hosted a bake sale offering authentic Italian pastries. Students from a Chinese class visited an art class and taught them the basics of Chinese calligraphy. The main bulletin board had "Welcome" written in a variety of languages. Classroom doors were decorated with flags and photographs from around the world. As a culminating activity, nobody will forget the flash mobs conducted at each lunch period. AP students from each language met after school and practiced for several hours to make that a huge success. The international music montage they created was well received. We celebrated. We took a virtual trip around the world. We understood for years to come.