In her 2015 MaFLA Essay Contest winning essay, middle schooler Kelsey MacCullum, student of Stephanie Perri of Annie Sullivan Middle School, stated the following, 

"The increase in time and attention being paid to helping students learn more about other cultures is leading more people to want to learn how to speak another language. This inspiration among young students is creating a generation of kids that are going to build strong global connections throughout the world. The development of foreign language speakers is helping to create interconnectedness amongst people from all over the globe, and all of this stems from teachers and peers inspiring students to tackle the daunting task of climbing the proficiency ladder" (http://mafla.org/contest-awards-2/winners/essay-winners/).

Aligned with this call from one of our students, MaFLA members gathered this past October to share and to learn from each other how to further inspire our students to continue tackling the proficiency ladder.

As in previous years, MaFLA members were able to attend and participate in sessions of high quality, which led many attendees to express how glad they were to have the opportunity to come to this conference, MaFLA's last in Sturbridge. Next year MaFLA will join with ACTFL at their national Convention in Boston, and in 2017 MaFLA's 50th Conference will be held in a modern, state-of-the-art facility in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Experienced conference attendees know that at any conference one is likely to encounter some less than inspirational sessions. During the three days of this year's MaFLA Conference, the consensus seemed to be that all the sessions were good and many were great. In their comments, less experienced conference attendees were impressed with how the conference allows for teachers of departments large and small to meet and network with teachers from across the state, and have made the MaFLA Conference a priority in their professional development plans.

Zoe Cabaret-Salameh from Wood Hill Middle School, a first time attendee, described how she participated in the session “Answers Will Vary” (http://sched.co/42Os). During the session, Carlos Luis Brown from Wilmington Public Schools introduced several websites and tools which can be incorporated into language teaching and used as assessments along with, or instead of, traditional paper written/reading tests. The main focus was to create proficiency based assessments. This session provided examples of formal/informal assessments using Google Voice, Google Forms, Flubaroo, PollEverywhere, and Kahoot. Teachers who came with an assessment they typically give.

Congratulations to ACTFL National Foreign Language Teacher of the Year for 2015

Dr. Ted Zarrow

Ted, shown here receiving his award from ACTFL President Jacque Bott Van Houten, is a Latin Teacher at Westwood High School. MaFLA's Teacher of the Year in 2015, he was chosen by the Northeast Conference to represent our region at this year's ACTFL Convention. Dr. Zarrow is the first ever ACTFL Teacher of the Year from Massachusetts and we couldn't be more proud. Read more about Ted inside this issue.
The MaFLA Newsletter

The MaFLA Newsletter is the official publication of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. It is published four times per year - Winter, Spring, Back To School, and End of Year. Subscription is available through membership in the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. MaFLA welcomes short articles, anecdotes, brief reviews of books and other teaching materials, and other items of interest to members of the profession. The opinions expressed by the authors of articles published in this newsletter are their own and are not necessarily shared or endorsed by MaFLA or its Board of Directors.

Deadlines are:
Winter - January 5  Back to School - August 5  
Spring - March 5  End of Year - November 5

All submissions should be sent to:
Ronie R. Webster  Email: ronie@mafla.org  
41 Glenn Drive  Wilbraham, MA 01095-1439  
Tel: 413-596-9284

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in MaFLA is open to anyone interested in the learning and teaching of languages. The basic membership runs one year from date of inception. There are four categories of membership - Individual, Student, Retired, and First-Year Teachers.

Individual memberships:
$45.00 for 1 year
$120.00 for 3 years

Retired memberships: $25.00 per year

Student memberships: $15.00 per year

For more info and/or a membership application packet, contact:
Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin membership@mafla.org  
PO BOX 590193  Newton Centre, MA 02459

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Who is Bobby Arnold?

Want to change something on your profile page? Email me and we will get it done!  
Bobby Arnold did; he wanted his nickname to show up on his badges, not a formal version of his name, so we changed it, just like that! As your Membership/Marketing Coordinator, I am here to help you keep your membership information up to date and accurate. When changes happen in your life, please change your profile! Telephone 617-431-3891 or email membership@mafla.org.
Conference Keynote

The Formula for Success, Learners at the Center
Greg Duncan, InterPrep

Those in attendance at Westfield State University last summer at MaFLA’s first Proficiency Academy will recognize the casual brilliance and entertaining humor that categorize Greg Duncan’s presentations. We sat for hours interacting with our ‘learning community’ seat partner listening to his stories and captivating renditions of language learning. According to his philosophy: “Islands of performance merge into continents on the way to global proficiency”. Latin teachers were also granted a special ‘audience’, since unless the teacher is currently using ‘active’ Latin, it is somewhat difficult to describe what Proficiency in that language looks like.

Having him back at MaFLA’s Fall Conference then was like seeing an old friend and having a very comfortable conversation all over again. His smooth, Southern personality exudes enough warmth and charm to capture and transform even the staunchest critic, not that he has any among us! His 6-hour, and 3-hour Conference Workshops I’m sure were full of fun and witty commentary along with a healthy dose of the essence of what it really means to have command of a language that may not be your own and to be truly proficient in it.

And so it was just as familiar that he brought his particular brand of humor, and depth and breadth of knowledge to those attending the Conference Keynote. Speaking from experience as a ‘baby boomer’ born after World War II, he began by explaining that the United States had enjoyed a great period of prosperity after the Second World War, but now no longer finds itself at the epicenter of the world. These days it has to take its place at a round table where many nations and many cultures also occupy seats.

Statistics for those prepared to speak a foreign language were astounding: 18% of Americans as opposed to 53% of Europeans are able to speak in another tongue. He went on to quote from 1979 stating that ‘the future will belong to nations that are wise as well as strong’. And the US finds itself unprepared, and therefore, disadvantaged.

The truth is that foreign languages are not enjoying strong support and we find that enrollments in middle and elementary schools are dropping by staggering percentages. What is causing this paradox of a rationale for their study not equaling an increased capacity?

MaFLA Fall Conference (cont.)

students, had the opportunity to revise it using one of those tools. Considering the increased use of technology in the foreign language classroom, Zoe left the session with a whole new outlook on how to assess her students’ understanding and proficiency.

In the Keynote Address, nationally renowned foreign language educator Greg Duncan reminded MaFLA members of the importance of motivation (the theme for this issue). Motivation is the most influential factor in keeping our students interested in climbing the proficiency ladder. His presentation, The Formula for Success: Learners at the Center, highlighted that the job of today’s foreign language teacher is to plan to the interests of learners, make it relevant to their lives and within their ability to reach, and further, educators must help students to realize what they are able to do.

Following the current trends in language acquisition research and responding to our students need and desire to be prepared to engage the world, this year’s MaFLA Conference was a clear evidence that foreign language education in Massachusetts is undergoing a significant shift. Our organization and membership are working together to support this shift which this year’s Conference Chair Jessica Clifford described as becoming “more knowledgeable about proficiency.”

Please join us next year in Boston.
Submitted by Jorge Allen

MaFLA 2015 Poster of the Year
Hyowan Kang, John W. McDevitt MS
Teacher: Ismael Colon
Duncan offered the following points to consider as possibilities:

- Funding and
- Computer priorities

But, the most compelling reason is:

“lack of belief that language learning in the US delivers results”

Enter the Proficiency Movement. ACTFL created the World Readiness Standards accompanied by Can Do statements and yet 75% of students are through with language study at the end of the requirement.

_How can we change that direction?_ According to Duncan, the learner is the key and the number one thing students want to get out of their foreign language classes is the ability to speak the foreign language. And, that the motivation to speak is THE most important component in language learning (R.C. Gardner).

_How do we turn this situation around?_ By creating language classes that have interest, that are relevant, and that use student's abilities. According to Greg who quoted nationally known Helena Curtain: 'We can change the world one child at a time, and one lesson at a time.' "Only in this way," Greg concludes, "can our attitudes and perceptions change the future."

Greg will be back next summer to grace MaFLA’s Second Proficiency Academy at Westfield University. Both Alumni and Freshmen are in for another treat as we wend our way along the path to total immersion in providing proficiency for students 'one teacher at a time.'

Submitted by Pat DiPillo.

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### Conference Wrap-up

**MaFLA Teacher Of The Year**

![Ted Zarrow](image)

Madelyn Gonnnerman Tochin, MaFLA Membership Coordinator, gave the following remarks at the presentation of the MaFLA Teacher of the Year Award at the annual Business and Awards Luncheon.

MaFLA's 2015 Teacher of the Year, Dr. Edward Zarrow, has been selected by the Northeast Conference as NECTFL Teacher of the Year and will now go on to be one of five candidates for the ACTFL National Foreign Language Teacher of the Year. [_editor's note: He won!_] With so many outstanding teachers in Massachusetts, what distinguishes Ted Zarrow?

_Quite simply_, in the classroom, on the professional stage, and person-to-person, Ted Zarrow scintillates. As you have heard throughout this conference, both in his addresses and his presentations, he is a profound, eloquent, and memorable representative of our field.

After an Ivy League education with B.A. and doctorate from Yale and Masters from Oxford and Boston College plus several years of teaching on the college level, he began his career at the secondary level in Massachusetts at Westwood High School. Combining his erudition and passionate love of classics, he has created lessons that so captivate his students that each fall more than thirty youngsters wait for a spot in his classroom. One of his students even visited the Vatican and conversed in Latin with the Pope! Embracing best practices and World Languages Readiness Standards, he has set his target for using the language at the 90%+

His workshops for MaFLA indicate his understanding of the need for all of us teachers to articulate to policy makers and stakeholders in education--parents, students and public officials--the value of learning and teaching languages and cultures. His three-hour workshop, _Let Your Students Sell Your Program: Latin Projects Beyond the Classroom_ presented here yesterday, offered ways to harness students' humor and "Latin exhibitionism" in constructive ways that are applicable to all languages. "Our programs," he says, "are only as strong as our ability to forge meaningful connections with the community at large.”

Connecting with people on an individual basis supports Ted’s ability to advocate for languages. From his work with students with special needs, to his one-on-one tutoring for extra help, or advanced work for students who have completed the Latin sequence, he elicits the best from his students. One example close to home involves his own daughter; in a recent CAM session, he showed a clip of his then five-year-old Theodora, reciting hexameter in ancient Greek, alternating lines from the _Iliad_ and the _Odyssey_.

His strong, compelling message beams clearly: languages matter. Cultures matter. Taught together, they support our students in their global lives. As he emphasized at the keynote on Friday, through studying languages, students learn to think critically, to take risks, to be open minded, to listen with humility and to seek the truth. And, as he concluded, only when they do, can they, and we, come to recognize what is good and beautiful when we see it, and even fight for it when we have to.

In short, for his knowledge of the content base of classics and the humanities, his enthusiastic delivery of lessons, and his passion for the teaching and learning of languages and cultures, and for seeking connections and the truth, MaFLA honors Ted Zarrow as the 2015 Teacher of the Year.
Welcome to the End of Year edition of the MaFLA Newsletter. This edition is a celebration of MaFLA’s accomplishments and initiatives in 2015. First of all, we must celebrate with MaFLA member Dr. Edward Zarrow his selection as the ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year. We are so proud of this amazing accomplishment and we know that Dr. Zarrow will be a wonderful representative of our state as well as a knowledgeable and passionate advocate for the study of world languages. We hope to hear of his work in this position. MaFLA sends its sincere congratulations to Dr. Zarrow.

In this issue we also reflect and report on our outstanding Fall Conference which always provides MaFLA members with cutting-edge professional development. Be sure to review what was offered and if you see something that piques your interest but you didn’t get to attend, connect with the presenter and find out more. You can find all of their contact information using our MaFLA Conference app.

Also, celebrate with our numerous award winners. They are all listed on our website (see link on page 13) and consider applying for one of these in 2016. Our Back to School edition focused on Proficiency and we know that you are all keeping the momentum going after our very successful MaFLA Proficiency Academy which took place last July. This issue continues with a focus on Motivation. How do we keep the motivation going, not only our motivation to stay on the pathway to proficiency but also the motivation of our students, our colleagues and our districts? Be sure to spend some time with the various articles we have solicited on the topic of motivation. We have another outstanding article by Marcel LaVergne on Motivating Students in the L2 Classroom. Also we have included an engaging article by Catherine Haut, a recent graduate of Andover High School, who writes about her senior exhibition project in an article entitled Motivational Turning Points. The article explores what motivates students to enthusiastically pursue their language studies. MaFLA President, Catherine Ritz, has shared an article on Performance Assessments to Motivate Learners and we have some articles and resources from Barbara Blackburn, a national expert in the area of instructional rigor, student motivation and student engagement. Dr. Blackburn has been serving as a consultant to my school system for the past two years and I highly recommend that you visit her website where there are over 100 free resources. While there be sure to subscribe to her monthly newsletter. Dr. Blackburn always has great tips and resources to share.

This edition also has our regular news items so be sure to check them out.

This issue also features an update on the Seal of Biliteracy as well as an article by Nicole Sherf on The Seal as a Proficiency Motivator.

As we approach the end of 2015, we hope to keep the proficiency movement and the motivation going. Our January focus will be on What is New? We want to hear what you are doing to innovate, to advance, or to rejuvenate/reinvent your programs, your course offerings, your curriculum, or even your daily lessons. Are you developing some new courses? Are you incorporating new materials into your curriculum? Are you re-writing curriculum with a focus on proficiency? Are you incorporating some new technologies? Have you been creative in growing your program? Are you innovating in your celebration of foreign language week? Share with your colleagues some of those new techniques or assessments you developed as a result of your professional development. We want to hear from you! Submit your articles to ronie@mafla.org.

Editor’s Note

Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.

Lou Holtz

When you look at people who are successful, you will find that they aren’t the people who are motivated, but have consistency in their motivation.

Arsene Wenger

In motivating people, you have to engage their minds and their hearts. I motivate people, I hope, by example— and perhaps by excitement, by having productive ideas to make others feel involved.

Rupert Murdoch

Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.

Jim Ryun

@MaFLAonline
Thank you, MaFLA Board, colleagues from Westwood, teachers of all languages across the state who have provided both support and inspiration over the past year. In a few weeks I hope to represent Massachusetts and the Northeast Conference at ACTFL with distinction, and in the few minutes that I have today, I want to give you a sense of what I hope to share and address at that event.

In addition to providing meaningful opportunities for legitimate professional growth (that’s why we’re here today to share ideas – to serve our students, to put them on the proficiency pathway), a critical focus of MaFLA, NECTFL, and ACTFL is language advocacy.

Language advocacy in the U.S. has never been more important, especially given how at virtually all levels, the study of languages and the humanities is often savaged by individuals who challenge its benefits or see none at all. This is why the work that the leadership in professional language organizations does is so critical. On the national stage, we are engaging law-makers, seeking out those willing to file legislation to promote bilingualism and multi-lingualism in America, encouraging statewide promotion for early language programs, and advocating for state supervisors for languages.

And while all of this is important, I argue that the classroom teacher is the lynch-pin to successful language advocacy in this country. It is my view that real language advocacy begins in the classroom with what we give and teach and show our students every day. And what do we show them?

Every day, we show our students with our passion that the study of languages should not be viewed as an elective. Students may choose the language they wish to study but the study of language should not be a choice. It is the principal window through which we explore and interact with world cultures and it is fundamental for the success of all children in this state and this country.

Every day, in the classroom, we show our students how to be open-minded, how to listen to people, even people with whom we might disagree so that we can find common ground; everyday, we show our students humility, that there is often more than one way to approach a situation or solve a problem; we show our students how to be inclusive and how not to see ourselves in isolation from the rest of the world; we show our students how to be critical thinkers and risk-takers, developing skills which they will be able to apply the rest of their lives; we show our students that by immersing themselves in languages and cultures they will be compelled to reexamine their own values and beliefs. What is the result? Our students come to be scholars and life-long learners, to lead informed lives, to respect knowledge for its own sake, to go beyond a shallow understanding of the world, and to seek the truth – for only then can we come to recognize what is good and beautiful when we see it, and even fight for it when we have to.

Thank you all so very much for your support.
MaFLA Proficiency Academy

now with two strands!

July 18-21, 2016
Westfield State University
PDPs and graduate credits available
Go to http://mafla.org/events-2/proficiency-academy/ for more information!

Proficiency Academy: Novice
Back by popular demand, Greg Duncan—an internationally recognized expert in World Language education—will lead the Novice strand of the Proficiency Academy. In the Novice strand, Greg will guide you through the ACTFL Proficiency levels, show you how to set proficiency targets for your program or course, help you design engaging and authentic performance assessments and rubrics, connect proficiency to course units and lessons using the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, and prepare you to be an empowered educator with the support of the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Project. In addition to Greg’s high-quality sessions, you will join a smaller break-out group during the Academy led by facilitators experienced in teaching for proficiency. Hands-on and interactive, you will leave the Academy invigorated and with concrete materials to use when you return to school! Relevant to teachers of all languages. Come join the Proficiency movement!!

Registration will open online at www.mafla.org beginning in January, 2016. Stay tuned and register early!

"Thank you for providing the most valuable PD I have ever had in 13 years of teaching. I am energized for this school year to work with teachers in my department, and am also well equipped to educate administrators in my district on quality FL teaching and programming."

Proficiency Academy: Principles of Proficiency - Curriculum
New to the Proficiency Academy, Thomas Sauer—a former teacher of German and World Language Specialist in Louisville, Kentucky, now working as an independent consultant and leader of two educational non-profit groups—will lead the second level of the Proficiency Academy: Principles of Proficiency - Curriculum. Designed for those who are experienced in the fundamentals of Proficiency, but who want to go more in-depth into curriculum development, you will look closely at how to effectively integrate the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements while tying in course proficiency targets, design thematic units with authentic, real-world tasks, ensure your curriculum is aligned vertically across your program or courses, and integrate authentic materials to make your curriculum come alive for your students. In addition to Thomas's high-quality sessions, you will join a smaller break-out group during the Academy led by facilitators experienced in designing curriculum and spend time collaboratively developing high-quality curriculum for your own courses. Relevant to teachers of all languages.

Registration will open online at www.mafla.org beginning in January, 2016. Stay tuned and register early!
coins and how these could be incorporated in everyday lessons. Ted Zarrow presided over the fall CAM business meeting where reports and announcements were shared. James Dobreff also encouraged attendees to not only join CAM, but also to join CAM’s November 14th visit to the Worcestershire Art Museum.

All these inspiring sessions equipped attendees with many new strategies that can be used in the classroom and would enable students to demonstrate real growth and understanding of Latin while being fully immersed in and responsible for their own learning.

Submitted by Brenda Cook.

Spanish Strand

At this year’s conference we attended many impressive sessions. As always, we left with many new ideas and perspectives and some reminders about useful resources that haven’t been used in a while. It was a pleasure to spend time with so many dedicated and inspiring professionals. Below are highlights from some of the sessions we attended.

In their Bye-bye to the Teaching by the Book session, Rebecca Blouwolff, Eileen Hawkins and JJ Kelleher of Wellesley Middle School shared their ideas of how to use backward planning and truly authentic resources to foster our students’ proficiency (http://sched.co/42L4). They included many examples of interpretive and interpersonal tasks that participants will be able to make their own.

Alison Carberry Gottlieb and Molly Monet-Viera of Boston University (If I Were You: Connecting Linguistic Proficiency and Intercultural Competency) shared their techniques for how to connect linguistic proficiency and intercultural competence. They offered several examples of texts that can be used to help students move beyond simply comparing and contrasting cultures to creating cultural empathy for people from other walks of life. We particularly liked a graphic organizer that they shared with us called an Empathy Map. Students use this to brainstorm ideas for what a character sees, hears, says and does, and thinks and feels (http://sched.co/42Pg).

In the Spanish strand, Matthew Jones and Sara Amancio of Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School presented a session on how to create thematic units with Hispanic Cinema. They described a year-long course that includes four quarters of films, each with a different focus from Spanish history, to famous Hispanics, to Immigration, to Magic Realism (http://sched.co/42v6).

Jorge Allen (Andover Public Schools) and Kevin Smith (VIF International, North Carolina), shared exemplary global language lessons and resources that allowed the participants to examine globalizing strategies and ideas, and to practice integrating them into world language lessons (http://sched.co/42DP).

Throughout the conference there was the subtheme of digital integration in order to extend students’ contact with the language, as was evidenced in Andover High Tom Powers’ Proficiency on the Go and his use of Google Classroom in his Latin American Studies and AP Spanish courses (http://sched.co/42Rr).

In a time when the teaching profession is under public pressure to report data and increase accountability, it was refreshing to have at the conference sessions like De qué hablamos cuando hablamos de realismo mágico? by Salem State professor Kenneth
German @ MaFLA 2015

Teachers of German were offered a wealth of information and teaching tools for the German language classroom in numerous sessions and a three-hour workshop. Changes to the AP language exam and approaches to teaching for AP success were the focus of the workshop and several sessions. Creative techniques were presented for incorporating STEM (STEAM)/MINT into German language classes, as well as methods of capitalizing on the Science, Math, Engineering, and Technology material already in current lessons.

In their three-hour workshop: Fostering Critical Thinking Through Authentic Materials, Christina Frei and Bridget Swanson of the University of Pennsylvania led participants through the process of devising their own content-based modules based on six global themes aligned with the new AP German exam. They stressed the importance of fostering critical thinking beginning in Level 1. Students need to think critically about themselves in order to understand German culture. Self-reflective journaling is an important piece of this process and is aligned with Backwards Design. An example was the assignment to compare one’s daily routine with the routine of another student. The assignment can include an interview, a blog, a collage, or a graphic organizer. Another example dealt with sustainability. A final project could be: Design a project for our school which promotes sustainability - which could take the form of a permanent installation or suggestions for projects for the future. Christina Frei and Bridget Swanson stressed the use of authentic materials in instruction beyond typical literary texts to include all forms of media with the ultimate goal of effective communication.

In her Skyped-in Session, ably facilitated by Kristin Gillett, Gisela Hoechler-Alden of Boston University presented an engaging program: Folklore and Fairy Tales. In the second and third years of language instruction, there are commonly students of varying levels of competency. Folklore provides a familiar starting point prior to moving on to literature and non-fiction. Students connect their own culture with German culture. Through collaborative activities - storytelling, skits, folk songs and re-telling of old fairy tales - students learn how to build on their own language abilities. They compare Disney versions of fairy tales to the original versions and learn the significance of the numbers 3 and 7 and the symbolism of the apple, mirror, comb, blood red, white and black in "Snow White". Role play using informal language flows easily from a study of "Little Red Riding Hood". What is her name? Where is she going? Which events in the story would not be common today? Who are the protagonists? Who the antagonists? Pictures and videos enhance understanding. A Renault ad turns a spin on a traditional fairy tale into a modern version of the "Happy End" story. The story of Rapunzel is the basis for an ad found on YouTube. The fairy tales provide the starting point for students' own story writing and practice with prepositions and the use of the subjunctive.

Gisela also addressed so-called Kinderbücher - modern fairy tales - many of which were written under dictatorships. The censors apparently didn't examine Kinderbücher as critically as other works. Legendary motifs also played a role in Nazi propaganda. Participants garnered ideas for instructing beginning intermediate level students.

In the Session: AP Assessments at Any Level, Kristin Gillett provided a wealth of strategies to prepare students for the AP Exam starting in the lower levels of instruction. She quickly reviewed the makeup of the new AP exam, noting that the use of audio in instruction is key to preparing students for the listening and reading comprehension portions of the exam.

The four tasks which students must complete are: interpersonal writing, presentational speaking, interpersonal speaking, and presentational speaking. The focus of the task must be communicative and it is essential that the students address ALL the requirements of each task. There are NO "fill in the blank" assessments. The prompts for the persuasive essay on the exam come from 3 sources: audio, video, and written. The students should pick a thesis - not one that they necessarily believe in, but one which they can speak or write about. All three sources must be mentioned in the persuasive essay. Textbook passages can be a starting point for a persuasive piece. Have students compare and contrast (einesetis - andererseits) and learn to take both sides. The students will need to cite a source, which they can quote or paraphrase.

The interpersonal writing section of the AP exam is 15 minutes in length. Students are prompted to write a response to an email which will include: an acknowledgment of the message in the email and a request for further information. To prepare the students for this: brainstorm ideas and start out with informal correspondence, i.e. pen pal letters, teach them just one form of address for the formal/informal, practice with facebook posts, tweets, and Instagram, send them prompts on Google Classroom. Have them practice writing to friends and strangers.

For presentational writing – a 2-minute section – remind the students to keep it specific. They should never generalize, i.e. Never say "In Deutschland..." They should focus on topics which you are discussing in class, school, restaurant etiquette, holidays, etc. mentioning that they read in an article, that... A good example would be: " My exchange partner says." It is helpful to review topics covered in previ...
Conference Wrap-up

uous levels of the language. Compile a list of these topics and use them to practice.

For presentational speaking use the same list of topics. Training should start in Level II with 30-second speeches. Teach them the phrases that they will need for the task, such as transition words and fillers. Phrases such as "Frau G. sagt, dass..." can be taught in Level 1. Students can call their teachers and leave a message in German on "Google Voice phone" (in Google Drive). Other ways for students to record their responses from home are: Audioboom, Vocaroo, and Voicethread.

Students must also practice handwriting in class. If AP can’t read their writing, they won’t score well. Circumlocution is important. There are some topics, such as GMOs that students have never considered. Kristin brings in articles and asks students to identify which AP topics could be addressed by these. She also hands out topics (i.e. homelessness, environmental issues, etc.) and students are required to find German articles and podcasts about these. Each student writes comprehension questions to go with the article/podcast and then the students take turns leading a discussion about their article/podcast in class.

As Kristin superbly demonstrated, it is worthwhile to align your whole curriculum with the AP standards.

Susanne Powers of the German Saturday School Boston enthusiastically presented My Kids Are Learning?!?! Energetic Songs for Teaching German - a wide range of self-composed songs for teaching German to young learners. The songs were engaging and full of practical vocabulary for beginning German at any level. Susanne spoke of the importance of music to memory and brain development and explained how she came to compose her own songs. Many folk songs are inappropriate for young learners and have antiquated vocabulary. Her songs are relevant, appropriate and easy to learn. Participants at the session agreed that all the songs would be great for beginning students of German at any level.

Devon Ellis of Wellesley High School presented Creating and Incorporating Proficiency and Performance Speaking Assessments Throughout the Curriculum to an enthusiastic audience. Teachers learned the difference between proficiency and performance assessments and what that means in terms of speaking. They were shown how to help their students bring their level of speaking up to match (or even exceed!) their level of writing at every level of language while still maintaining grammatical and contextual accuracy. Attendees saw examples performed and had the opportunity to participate in speaking activities, so that they knew how to most effectively incorporate proficiency into their lesson plans and classroom.

STEM in the German Classroom: Language Across the Curriculum was presented by Joan Campbell of Lincoln-Sudbury High School, Nathan Pritchard of Nashoba Regional High School and Britta Roper. Nathan opened the Session by reporting on his involvement in two courses on teaching STEM aka STE(A)M (MINT in Germany) in German class. The Goethe Institut, Chicago offered the STEM-Institut für Deutschlehrer in Saarbrücken where Nachhaltigkeit - sustainability was the focus. One topic involved the planting of regional plants in order to support the bees of the region. His final project was the building of a solar house with a German I class. At the Deutsche Woche in Bar Harbor led by Gisela Hoccher-Alden, he learned how bad weather influenced history in the 19th Century in Europe causing, for example, the Potato Famine in Ireland. Pictures from this period show that even in summer it was cold in Germany. Resources mentioned for STE(A)M (A=Art) were the AATG Webinar Series 1. Green German Studies - Resources and Strategies that work, 2. Focus on STEM (Packet) and two thought-provoking books: Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver and The Minds of Boys - Saving our Sons from Falling Behind in School and Work by Michael Gurian. Both books provide insight into teaching with STEM in mind. Other resources mentioned by Nathan were 4teachers.de, unterstuufe.de, (science for the German elementary schools) and Pinterest. A “Sachkunde” search online would also yield a wealth of materials. Britta, also at Bar Harbor, and Joan reminded attendees that as German educators we are not the experts, but the facilitators and guides providing the language tools for the students to write their observations. In teaching German, we are always referring to STE(A)M subjects: in Science: cooking, health, weather, environment, in Technology: transportation, traffic, kitchen devices, GPS, solar tech, in Engineering: city planning (Mannheim & NYC), bridges, highways, transportation, in Art: comparing pictures from different eras, moon images and body shapes from different centuries, in Math: calculations Fº & Cº, pocket change, measuring, recipes, surveys, percentages. Joan mentioned an excellent program on WDR (TV) KIKANeuEinhalt, a 9 ½ minute long news program on Saturday mornings. Topics deal with nature, health, etc. and worksheets are available with the program. A program about raising pigs led to questions: How much meat do you eat every week? What do you eat when you don’t eat meat? Where does your family buy meat? and resulting calculations. As Nathan, Joan and Britta wonderfully demonstrated, German easily becomes the entry language into the world of STE(A)M!

In a dynamic presentation Multicultural Germany: Teaching with Afro-German Texts, Theresa Schenker of Yale University introduced a variety of Afro-German texts that
can be used at different levels of German to teach about this important minority group in Germany. Participants were introduced to poems, short stories, novels, interviews and a variety of other texts which can be included in units on multicultural Germany. Theresa suggested how and at which level teachers could include the materials offered. She studied Afro-German and Afro-American poetry with a German-American exchange group and organized international Skype chats. Among other materials, she showed a film clip from "Roots Germania" about being black in Germany. The question "Was bedeutet Deutschsein?" "What does it mean to be German?" included interviews with Afro-Germans. In conclusion, she summarized a teaching unit on Afro-German poetry for the Intermediate level.

At the conclusion of the Saturday sessions, the Massachusetts Chapter of the AATG held its Fall Business Meeting to discuss the program for the coming year. Joan Campbell, Chapter President and Northeast Regional Representative, led the meeting.

Kristin Gillett, Treasurer, reported on expenses over the past year including the new AATG Awards Ceremony, stipends for teachers attending the Deutsche Woche in Bar Harbor as well as the 3-hour workshop at MaFLA. The annual Immersion Day is being planned for March. Joan Campbell and Sarah Fetterhof of Lincoln-Sudbury High School will represent MA-AATG at the ACTFL Conference in San Diego in November.

The Committee addressed attempts to increase German presence and MA-AATG participation at MaFLA. Incentives for new teachers to attend, emphasis on PDPs, and rescheduling the Lehrkraftetag to Winter might boost attendance at MaFLA.

Donna van Handle mentioned the need to find a new site for the annual Deutsches Theaterfest, which has been held for many years at Mt. Holyoke College. Among new chapter initiatives, it was suggested that a Share Center for ideas and information be created on the Chapter Website and that a Welcome Package be presented to new German teachers in MA.

The Immersion Meeting and AATG Board Meeting will be held in mid-January. The MA-AATG Website maintained by Colin Ashby is the main source of information for teachers of German in MA. There is also a MA-AATG Facebook page.

Katharina Kayser reported that November 13 is a Tag der Offenen Tür Open House at the Goethe Institut in Boston. From mid-January to mid-February, there will be a World Cultural Exhibit at the GI addressing STEM-topics for all instructional levels. Also on Friday, December 12, there will be a Christmas Exhibit and Wine bar at the GI.

At the Business and Awards Luncheon on Saturday, Cherie Baggs, former German teacher at Natick High School and dedicated MA-AATG and MaFLA Board member, Conference Chair, and Past-President, received the MaFLA Distinguished Service Award. Herzlichen Glückwunsch und Alles Gute!

Submitted by Kathleen Gallogly

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Longtime Board Member Cheryl Baggs Recognized with 2015 Distinguished Service Award

Cherie Baggs epitomizes leadership and service to the profession. She is selfless, whole hearted and thoroughly committed in all she has done for MaFLA in her decades on the Board. Cherie has had numerous roles in her MaFLA Board participation, from Board member to Clerk to Resource Coordinator, through the Executive Track, Acting Second Vice President and Presidential Appointee. Cherie willingly takes on the role that matches her expertise and MaFLA’s need at the time.

Cherie has represented Massachusetts teachers and MaFLA well at the state, regional and national levels in her participation in GEAC, the Meeting with the States at NECTFL and the Delegate’s Assembly at ACTFL, through the JNCL NCLIS Legislative Day and Delegate’s Assembly, and with DESE. She speaks strongly and proudly of Massachusetts foreign language teaching and programming. Her strength is her global vision combined with an amazing recall and attention to detail. She is considered the MaFLA historian, the finder of answers and documentation, the best proofreader around, and an amazingly giving collaborator in a wide range of projects and endeavors. She is never one to toot her horn, but she is always there to complete a task, answer a question or fill a void. She is a quiet leader who collaborates well with everyone.

Though she retired from teaching some time ago, Cherie Baggs has maintained active connections with colleagues and has kept her finger on the pulse of high quality pedagogy. She knows what MA teachers need and want to see in a presenter and in professional development. She has worked tirelessly to advocate for languages and help to provide strong professional development opportunities, with special focus on German, for which she coordinates the yearly conference strand and has strong outreach and connections with the national and state American Association of Teachers of German.

MaFLA is proud to honor Cherie Baggs with the 2015 Distinguished Service Award.

Submitted by Nicole Sherf
At the MaFLA Business and Awards Luncheon, Nancy Aykanian, a French teacher at Westwood High School, received the French Teacher of the Year award. This is the first year that the Eastern MA Chapter of AATF has presented this award, which includes a $750 cash prize to be used for travel to a francophone country or a national foreign language convention, a three year membership to AATF and a one year membership to MaFLA. While on an exchange trip to Western France last April, Nancy and her students participated in the launching ceremony in Rochefort of the French frigate the *Hermione*, the replica of Lafayette's ship, which sailed to the United States in 1780 and has become a symbol of Franco-American friendship. Nancy’s students spoke in French at the ceremony and were congratulated by and photographed with French President Francois Hollande. When the *Hermione* arrived in Boston in July, Nancy and her students were given a special tour of the ship. At Westwood High School, Nancy chairs *le Cercle de français*, and teaches several levels of French including AP. *Toutes nos félicitations, Nancy!*

Submitted by Joyce Beckwith

**MaFLA Distinguished Service Award – Thank You**

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone who thought I should receive the Distinguished Service Award. I especially want to recognize our MaFLA President, the officers and members of the board of directors, past and present. And my heartfelt *danke schön* to my friends and former colleagues, some of whom are here today – Ulrike Brisson, Inge Buerger, Kathy Gallogly, Marlies Stueart and Donna Van Handle.

When I came on to the MaFLA Board in 1995, I had already taught German in NJ and here in Massachusetts, first in Shrewsbury and then in Natick, for 25 years. I had been traveling to Germany annually with students or adults and for professional development opportunities offered by the Goethe Institut. Ulrike, Inge, Kathy, Marlies, Donna and I were frequent participants in workshops at the Goethe Institut Boston. In addition, I had served on the national AATG Executive Board and chaperoned prizewinning high school German students from across the nation to Nürnberg, Germany, for eight summers.

And then I arrived at my first MaFLA Board meeting where our late German colleague Georg Steinmeyer was serving as president. And shortly thereafter I was given two boxes of exhibitor files and assigned the task of managing the exhibit hall, an assignment done by a member of the board, usually for a one year period.

What I do want to say is that MaFLA opened up a whole new world to me. It was no longer important just to promote German but rather to promote all languages and be sure that each one was as well represented as possible here at the state level and beyond. We have all worked hard as volunteers to serve our profession. I applaud each one of you. Together with Donna and Inge, we established the Massachusetts German Educator of the Year Award and it is our pleasure to recognize the 21st recipient of this award today.

And so I accept this Distinguished Service Award on behalf of all of you who serve our profession and our students each and every day. Thank you. *Cherie Baggs*

**French Government Honors MaFLA Member**

At a special ceremony which took place on Friday afternoon, October 30, at the MaFLA Conference, Nancy Holden-Avard, a long-time French professor at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA, was named a *Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques* by the French government – an order established over 200 years ago by Napoleon to reward devotion and accomplishment in promoting the French language and culture. French Consul Valéry Freland presented her with this award. Two members of the French Consulate in Boston, Cultural Attachée Emmanuelle Marchand and Linguistic and Educational Assistant, Magali Boutiot were also present at the ceremony along with members of Nancy’s family, colleagues and students from Mount Holyoke and MaFLA members who also are members of the French Academic Palms: Joyce Beckwith, Phyllis Dragonas, Janel Lafond-Paquin, Mel...
Conference Wrap-up

End of Year

Chinese Strand

At the Greg Duncan’s Pre-Conference proficiency Workshop, fourteen Chinese teachers from all over Massachusetts attended thanks, in part, to a donation from an anonymous donor, whose generosity provided eight participants complimentary registration to the 6-hour professional development. Yanhong Li, Dover-Sherborn High School, expressed her gratitude for the workshop scholarship and was impressed by Duncan's thought provoking presentation. Angela Shek of Notre Dame Academy at Worcester said, “I really enjoyed Greg Duncan's talk. His workshop made me think about what I can do to make my students more proficient. I especially liked the analogy he used about learning languages being like the process of making cotton candy. It takes time, effort and dedication.” Friday and Saturday at the Conference, the number of Chinese teachers attending was greater than any year previously. In addition to the more experienced teachers, there were also many new faces. The topics the presenters brought in this year were not only practical, but also were thought provoking. Many teachers were eager to participate in the discussions, and took much away from this meaningful event.

Submitted by ChinHuei Yeh

AATF E. MA Chapter Annual Meeting

On Saturday, October 31, the E. MA Chapter of AATF held its Annual Meeting. The following officers were elected for 2016: President: Brian Thompson (UMASS/Boston Ret.); Vice-President: Carole La Pointe (Boston Latin School); Secretary Johann Sadock (Boston College), Treasurer: Joyce Beckwith (Wilmington Public Schools (Ret)); Contest Administrator: Amy Coombs (Sharon Middle School [on leave]) and Hospitality Chair: Beckie Rankin (Lexington High School). The following Board Members were also elected: Magali Boutiot (ex officio – French Cultural Services) Andrea Javel (Boston College), Kathleen Turner (Sharon High School) and Jada Williams (Wayland Middle School). The meeting was also attended by Margarita Dempsey, AATF New England Regional Representative, who announced that AATF is finally moving into the 21st century with online testing for Le Grand Concours! Updated information can be obtained by emailing Contest Administrator Amy Coombs at mmeccoombs@yahoo.com.

Jon Shee, President of the AATF Connecticut Chapter, gave a dynamic presentation on “Advocacy, Activities & Action.” All French teachers should check out the chapter's website: aatfct@gmail.com for advocacy resources. Mr. Shee is World Language Chair at St. Luke's School in New Canaan, CT, which won the AATF Exemplary Program Award with the highest distinction.

Other announcements at the meeting included the dinner and reception at the Elephant Walk, a franco-cambodian restaurant in Cambridge on Thursday, November 12. During the reception, Chef Gérard Lopez will be giving a cooking demonstration of some of his culinary specialties and information on the AATF National Convention which will be held in Austin, Texas from July 3-6, 2016 at the Hilton Hotel. Conference proposals will be accepted online at www.frenchteachers.org.

SAVE THE DATES

May 7
Diversity Day, Lasell College

July 18-23
Proficiency Academy
Westfield State University

August 12-14
Summer Institute, Lasell College

Submitted by Joyce Beckwith
Advocacy At The MaFLA Conference

The Advocacy Booth at the 2015 MaFLA Fall Conference had another productive and dynamic year promoting strong foreign language teaching and programming in the state. Nicole Sherf, MaFLA Advocacy Coordinator, organized the materials for the booth with activities including a Capwiz sponsored by ACTFL in order to generate support for the seal of biliteracy. Sinikka Gary created a Speak up, which highlighted proficiency activities from departments and classrooms. You can find selected attendee responses in this issue of the Newsletter on pages 22-23.

In addition to these activities, conference attendees browsed an array of new pamphlets and received free gifts from the table. Brochures included the explanation of the new Teacher of the Year award sponsored by MaFLA. Check it out and nominate a fabulous language teacher you know! Also featured was a brochure with great information to better inform non-foreign language administrators on the special needs of foreign language programming. We have assembled a bunch of great articles promoting what you can do with foreign language study that can be shown to parents or students, or posted on the wall of your classroom. All of these brochures can be downloaded from the Promote Your Program tab under Advocacy on the MaFLA Website. We also had handouts for upcoming events, such as Diversity Day, Proficiency Academy, and Summer Institute. We had useful giveaways, such as writing pads, highlighters, pens, and lanyards with the MaFLA logo. A raffle was also held for a fantastic Advocacy gift basket, which among some delicious and fun goodies also included four different gift cards! We are pleased to announce that Kevin Sano of Hamilton Wenham High School won the Advocacy gift basket. Be sure to check conference mailings for the 2016 Conference to find out how to enter the raffle next fall at ACTFL.

The booth was a dynamic place to be with educators from all over the state and beyond stopping by to participate in advocacy activities. Many thanks to all of our members for your constant support and for making the advocacy table a huge success at the fall conference.

By Vilma Bibeau, Jessica Massanari Sapp, 2015 Advocacy Interns and Sinikka Gary, MaFLA Board

Awards And Scholarships

MaFLA offered numerous awards and scholarships during 2015. All winners were honored at our Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon on Saturday, October 31, 2015.

Check out our Award Winners 2015 HERE.

Watch for the announcements of our 2016 awards and apply or encourage a colleague to apply.

Take advantage of your MaFLA membership
Why endorse the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Project?
The new Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation is now the norm across the state. While the Teacher Rubric it uses is of high-quality, it provides no specific guidelines for teachers of world languages. The TELL Project supports foreign language teachers, curriculum leaders, and administrators by providing a “common language and definition of the model world language teacher,” including “a clear description of the behaviors model teachers exhibit” (TELL Project, 2015). MaFLA is working to develop a cross-walk document that shows the clear alignment between the TELL Project Framework and the Teacher Rubric from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). We anticipate the release of this document in 2016. While not a tool for evaluation, TELL can provide teachers with articulated language around what each of the indicators on the Teacher Rubric looks like in the world language classroom.

How can I use the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Project?
The TELL Project supports world language teachers with a number of resources to facilitate teacher growth. There are self-assessments that can be used as a way to reflect on teaching and set meaningful goals for improvement. TELL also includes an EPIC Growth Plan which supports teachers by providing a framework for reflection on professional growth and for developing action plans. For use by teachers working in small groups or administrators trying to provide feedback on meaningful topics, TELL has a suite of feedback tools focused on specific areas, such as student or teacher target language use, learner engagement, or pair and small group work.

The Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Project will help world language teachers and curriculum leaders to continuously strengthen teaching and learning across the state.

Go to www.mafla.org for more information!
I have to admit that I was feeling pretty cranky last weekend at this time. I was procrastinating about doing the ungodly amount of laundry that had accumulated in my hampers, drowning in 18 letters of recommendation due on November 1, correcting 42 3-minute AP French orals... and trying to draft two days of clear, meaningful lesson plans for a substitute teacher who undoubtedly would rank as weak Novice Low according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. I am sure that many of you were in the same boat.

Just when I was ready to throw in the towel and go into hiding until Thanksgiving, a friend called and asked me about the Conference. I told her that I would be spending three days with 800 other language teachers from across the state and going to amazing workshops lead by local and national leaders in our field... and I found myself getting really excited. I forgot about my crankiness and got my laundry and my work done, keeping my eyes on the prize. And what a prize it has been! These past few days have been wonderfully enriching, both professionally and personally, thanks to everyone with whom I have had the chance to interact. Now I REALLY want to go into hiding until Thanksgiving so that I can spend some time digesting everything I have learned!

In these Notes to the Profession, I’d like to briefly recap what MaFLA has accomplished this past year, give you a preview of upcoming events, and announce the theme for our student poster, essay, and video contests this spring.

As you can see, MaFLA has had one of its busiest years yet. As soon as last year’s conference was over, we started planning a full slate of Professional Development opportunities for 2015. I think that one of the great strengths of this year is that the fall conference theme of Climbing the Proficiency Ladder has been woven both practically and theoretically into all of our professional development offerings. Our annual Diversity Day in May promoted cultural proficiency and our Summer Immersion Institute in August allowed participants to strengthen their own language proficiency. We certainly cannot guide our students to move up the proficiency ladder if we have not attained a high level of proficiency ourselves. Additionally, as you all know, we sponsored our first Proficiency Academy in July, a 4-day “camp” for teachers to come together to learn about the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and to begin the process of setting proficiency targets, reworking curriculum, and planning integrated performance assessments. I was unable to attend, but I have heard from countless people that this was hands-down the best professional development they had ever had. The fall conference has been the perfect culmination of all of the threads of the past year.

As we were structuring our Professional Development opportunities, we provided additional tools and support to our members. We published teaching tips, advocacy links, and award/scholarship opportunities in our newsletters and on the mafla.org website. MaFLA endorsed the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning – TELL – Project. The mission of this project is to define what effective language teachers do and facilitate their growth to prepare for, advance and support language learning.

We have also begun to collaborate with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Craig Waterman from DESE reached out to all of the state professional associations in an effort to provide support to different content areas as they grappled with the new Educator Evaluation plan. He initiated contact with MaFLA about a year ago. He was subsequently part of a workshop at last year’s Fall Conference, he presented at the summer Proficiency
Academy, and he has worked with a small group of language teachers to help them revise DDMs and Common Assessments. You can find these models on the MaFLA website, and they will soon be linked to the DESE website. As a side note, I learned that Mr. Waterman is extremely impressed by MaFLA. He said that we are the most organized of all the state professional associations and that we really know our stuff!

The MaFLA Advocacy Team has been active this legislative session with new Seal of Biliteracy legislation. This bill will provide for a Seal on the diploma of graduating seniors who demonstrate biliteracy in English and another language. You - our members - responded in great number to our call to reach out to your legislators, and the bill has strong bipartisan co-sponsorship. The Joint Education Committee hearing was on May 12, and students, language professionals and legislators provided strong testimony for the bill. The call is out again to our membership to contact legislators to encourage the Joint Education Committee to move the Bill out of Committee. If you have not yet sent your message, there is still time! Go to ›Advocacy News‹ under the Advocacy tab of www.mafla.org and follow the link.

This year we also recognized a record-breaking number of teachers and students for their outstanding accomplishments. I extend my sincerest congratulations to all, but I would like to recognize two individuals who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to our field: Cherie Baggs, who received the MaFLA Distinguished Service Award, and Ted Zarrow, the MaFLA Teacher of the Year. Ted is the first Massachusetts foreign language teacher to be one of five finalists for ACTFL Teacher of the Year. ACTFL will be announcing this year’s national winner at the Convention in San Diego in a few weeks. Ted, we are so proud of you and wish you the best of luck!

So... where do we go from here?

We are also planning PD offerings to help our members fulfill the new relicensure requirements of 15 credits each in Sheltered English Immersion and Special Education.

I am thrilled to announce that ACTFL will be hosting its annual Convention And World Languages Exposition in Boston from November 18-20, 2016. ACTFL had originally told us that they would come to Boston again in 2020, but they opted to come again in 2016 -- a testament to our strength as an organization!

Due to the large number of attendees that Boston always draws, ACTFL has chosen a new venue for next year: the Boston Convention and Exposition Center and Westin Boston Riverfront Hotel.

Our MaFLA members have tremendous talent and expertise. Please consider presenting a session at ACTFL 2016 in Boston. The call for proposals opens on November 9, 2015 and the deadline for submissions will be Wednesday, January 13, 2016.

And finally... 2017 will be a big year! MaFLA will be celebrating its 50th anniversary! After careful consideration and deliberation, we have decided to change our conference site. We will be at the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel in 2017 and 2018. We look forward to welcoming you to a beautiful, newly renovated space as we continue to offer you a high quality professional development experience.

Finally – I would like to conclude by sharing the theme that I have selected for this year’s essay, poster, and video contests. Please look for details of these contests in our upcoming newsletters and on the MaFLA.org website.

Languages Are The Keys To Global Understanding

Our world is shrinking but its problems are growing. Global collaboration is the key for combating hunger, disease, climate change, terrorism, and economic instability. However, effective collaboration can only occur when there is a foundation of respect and trust among people who have diverse backgrounds and beliefs. We need to capitalize on our unique ideas and consider our challenges together from multiple angles in order to find creative solutions.

So how do we gain this respect and trust? We need to understand cultural perspectives to erase our fear of what is "different" or "unknown". And how do we best come to understand these cultural perspectives? We need to effectively communicate with others. And how do we do THAT? Through our knowledge of other languages. LANGUAGES ARE THE KEYS.

Kathy Turner, MaFLA First Vice President 2016
Complimentary MaFLA Member Reception

The MaFLA Member Reception was a very popular and enjoyable event.

Thank you to the following for making this reception possible

ACTFL  AATF  AATG
CAM  EMFLA  MITA

The Sturbridge Host Hotel
New England Association of Chinese Schools
MaFLA would like to express its sincere thanks to the following companies and organizations whose loyal support makes our conference possible.

**CORPORATE SPONSORS**

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CAM – Classical Association of Massachusetts

EMFLA - Eastern Mass Foreign Language Administrators

MITA – Massachusetts Italian Teachers Association

New England Association of Chinese Schools

AATF Eastern Massachusetts Chapter

AATG Massachusetts Chapter

ISE – Intercultural Student Experiences

Passports Educational Group Travel

Host Hotel and Conference Center
Many Thanks To Our Exhibitors!
Seal Of Biliteracy Update

MaFLA, as a member of the Language Opportunity Coalition with MABE and MATSOL, is working hard to get legislation passed for a Seal of Biliteracy in Massachusetts. Under this law, students who demonstrate biliteracy in English and at least one foreign language will get a Seal on their diploma that they can use to demonstrate this important skill for college and career readiness.

The legislative piece includes visits to legislators along with messages being sent from you, our members, to legislators encouraging the Joint Committee on Education at the State House to move the legislation out of committee. We hope that you have followed through with this important task of contacting your legislation. If you haven’t or if you know a colleague, friend or family member who will follow through, there is still time! Just follow this link, which is housed on the Advocacy News page of the Advocacy tab of the MaFLA Website.

Concurrently with the legislative efforts, MaFLA is very involved in preparing parameters for districts to use the Seal within the various levels and types of programming. MABE’s Past President Phyllis Hardy and I are Co-Chairing what we call the “Seal Workgroup.” We have been having online meetings since last spring with a variety of representatives of the various foreign language and dual language programs in the state at the various levels of instruction. MaFLA Board members Pat DiPillo, Jorge Allen, Ronie Webster and Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin are participating in the Committee. Foreign language teachers Kim Talbot of Melrose, Terry Caccavale of Holliston, Tim Eagan of Wellesley, Rita Oleksak of Glastonbury, CT, and Kristina Dahlen of Sharon, represent foreign language programming in the Seal Workgroup.

The Seal Workgroup has discussed parameters for the Seal to allow for maximum use within the districts and also to promote the idea that language learning is a lifelong process and should be a part of all levels of formal instruction from Preschool through College level. To that end, certificates for the Seal are the first level to be given at the elementary level where immersion, dual language or FLES programming is available. The idea is to have students document their proficiency through portfolios and other tasks at that level. In the middle, high school and college levels a three tiered Seal would be available to those students who document the acceptable level of English through MCAS and foreign language: a Silver Seal for those who document Intermediate Mid proficiency, a Gold Seal for those with Intermediate High proficiency and a Platinum Seal for those with Advanced Low.

The Seal Workgroup is delineating the list of acceptable tests in the variety of languages to maintain the integrity of proficiency focus of the Seal. An important document, the Seal of Biliteracy Guidelines, released by ACTFL, NABE, TESOL and NCSSLF on March 23rd of this year, is guiding our work. The Seal Workgroup is creating a promotional PowerPoint and instructional booklet for Seal implementation in district.

Thirteen states have enacted Seal of Biliteracy legislation. It is incomprehensible that Massachusetts has not yet acted on the legislation that is currently in the Joint Education Committee. Help us by contacting your legislator (just follow this link) to tell them how important it is to foreign language teaching and programming in the state. Visit the Advocacy News page under the Advocacy tab of the MaFLA Website and www.languageopportunity.org for information and updates.

Submitted by Nicole Sherf
“How do you and your department teach towards proficiency?”

We use proficiency-based curriculum and we set proficiency levels as department goals. We design many activities to help students achieve proficiency. 
Lin Wu - Andover Public Schools

We have developed common presentational speaking assessments done twice a year to help us determine student proficiency levels for all levels. Teachers listen to samples together and decide the level with a common rubric based on the proficiency levels. This will be our third year gathering info and focusing on creating more speaking activities in our classes across all levels and languages. We also use AP data to figure out how our students are doing compared to the global mean. – Christine Kelley - Boston/Boston Latin

We are organizing our levels and our assessment in alignment with national proficiency standards. Jean Shirley - Ayer-Shirley

We are making proficiency a goal of all our professional development this year. We are instituting midterms for the first time and these midterms will be proficiency-based speaking and writing assessments so all PD is focused towards that. All teachers are revising lesson plans to focus on can-do statements and speaking goals. Deborah Leavitt - Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

In Brookline Public Schools, we are aiming more than 90% target language from K-12. We have extensive curriculum design and meet and discuss regularly to further our understanding of proficiency. Wan Wang – Brookline Public Schools

Speak Up!
We want to hear from you about a variety of topics. It is exciting to share new and interesting ideas and we look forward to hearing from you on upcoming questions. Selected responses will be shared in the newsletter and on the website. It is easy. Check out the MaFLA website for a link to our questions. Don’t be afraid to “Speak Up!”
MaFLA is proud to endorse the...

World-Readiness Standards
for Learning Languages

for use in guiding curriculum and instruction
in place of the Massachusetts State Framework.

Why endorse the World-Readiness Standards?

The Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Foreign Languages has not been updated since 1999... yes, that’s over 15 years that the guiding document for world language curriculum and instruction in Massachusetts has not been revised! With little expectation that our Framework will be updated in the near future, MaFLA made the decision to endorse the national World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages to provide teachers and curriculum leaders across the state with a high-quality resource that can serve as a “roadmap to guide learners to develop competence to communicate effectively and interact with cultural competence to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world” (ACTFL, 2015).

How can I use the World-Readiness Standards?

In addition to the Standards which guide curriculum overall, there are language-specific guidelines for all of the major languages of instruction (from French and Spanish to Latin, Arabic, and ASL). When aligning curriculum with the World-Readiness Standards, you will also be able to more easily integrate other national resources and guidelines, such as the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners, the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, and the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. This suite of resources can be used across languages to assist in the development of high-quality curriculum and assessments, as well as teacher professional development.

The World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages will help Massachusetts teachers design high-quality curriculum and assessments to continuously strengthen and improve teaching and learning across the state.

Go to www.mafla.org for more information!
Motivating Students In The L2 Classroom

Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

Extrinsic Motivation

According to Elliott and Covington, “Extrinsic motivation comes from influenc-es outside of the individual. Common ex-trinsic motivations are rewards (for example money or grades) for showing the desired behavior, and the threat of punishment follow-ing misbehavior. Extrinsic motivators include parental expectations, expectations of other trusted role models, earning potential of a course of study, and grades (which keep scholarships coming).” (3) In brief, the motivation comes from something outside an interest in the subject matter.

Huit (2) writes that the following are actions that teachers can take to increase extrinsic motivation in students:

1. Give corrective feedback.
2. Provide valuable rewards for simple learning tasks.
3. Make rewards available.
4. Allow opportunities for students to observe more correct exemplars.
5. Allow for opportunities to engage in social learning activities.
6. Provide for scaffolding of corrective feedback.

Although at first extrinsic motivation may help students to do well in the subject matter, the learning is usually temporary unless at some point the students really de-velop an interest in the subject matter for its own sake rather than for a short-lived reward. Achieving success in the subject matter will often turn the extrinsic motiva-tion into intrinsic.

Success Breeds Success

It is a common axiom that success breeds success. There is nothing as discouraging as failing the first test of the year. It often causes students to give up immediately, to drop the course, or to ask for a transfer to a lower level. Because the teacher’s role is not to weed out those who fail (thereby reducing one’s class size and purging the class of those who can’t make it) but to train all students to succeed, that can be achieved if you make sure that the students will pass the first test that you give, and then, as the year progresses, if you gradually increase the difficulty level of the tests. Student motivation and self-esteem will definitely increase as the students try to hold on to their success and try to improve upon it. By rewarding the students with a good grade (extrinsic motivation), this strategy hopefully will give rise to a liking of the subject (intrinsic motivation).

The following questionnaire will measure the L2 teacher’s belief in the “success breeds success” axiom:

1. Do you believe that frequent daily quizzes are as good an indicator of student progress as the unit or chapter test or do your tests count more than your quizzes?
2. What else besides tests and quizzes do you factor into the student’s grade? Do you count class work?
3. Do you believe that everything that goes into determining the student’s grade should have equal value?
4. Do you believe that tests measure what the student knows and can do or what the teacher did or did not teach?
5. Do you give the students’ an opportunity to retake a similar test to improve their grade?
6. Do you allow the students to do extra credit work to make up for poor grades?
7. Do you ever discard the poorest grade that a student received?
8. Do you believe that some students are poor test takers? If so, what adjustments do you make to compensate for this?
9. Do you believe that all students have the right to fail but that you will do everything in your power to prevent that from happening?
10. Do you plan activities that recognize the various multiple intelligences or do you focus mainly on the verbal/mathematical intelligences?
11. Do you evaluate the students based on what they know and can do or do you grade primarily based on what they don’t know and cannot do?

Positive student motivation depends greatly on the L2 teacher’s belief system upon which lesson plans and evaluation strategies are formulated.
Activities to Increase Intrinsic Motivation

Student involvement in the subject matter is one of the best ways to increase intrinsic motivation. The more involved in the activities, the better the chances are that the students will develop a liking for the subject matter. And the more the students like the subject matter, the more likely their grades will increase.

I offer the following two activities that were successful for me in developing an intrinsic motivation in the students towards *Le Petit Prince* and the French Impressionists.

**Le Petit Prince**

At one time, Natick High School had a planetarium that afforded my French 3 students the opportunity to create a dramatic presentation of *Le Petit Prince* that they performed for the other French classes at the school. In class they rewrote the novel into a play depicting the travels of *Le Petit Prince* from one asteroid to another which they plotted in the sky with the help of the planetarium director. With a background of appropriate music, the students performed under a starlight sky and succeeded in capturing the magical and mystical journey of *Le Petit Prince* as he went on his voyage of discovery from one planet to another.

*Le Petit Prince* became more than just a book to be read and discussed in class. It became an educational experience for the students as they depicted, explored, and lived *Le Petit Prince*’s educational adventures and his confrontation with the various characters that he met. This activity transcended the usual extrinsic motivation question/answer format, the read the following pages for homework, and the paper and pencil test prerequisites for a good grade. It was evident that the students enjoyed what they were doing by their enthusiastic and creative responses to the activities required for the successful performance of *Le Petit Prince*. The usual “Why are we doing this?” and “Is this going to be on the test?” was replaced by “This is fun.” and “What about if we do this in the play?” As a bonus, there was a great deal of discussion about the philosophical and sociological aspects of the book. With very few exceptions, I know that the end result was that the students had a better understanding and appreciation of the novel because they liked and enjoyed it.

**The French Impressionists**

For my Needham High School’s French 5 AP class, I planned a visit to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts to see the French Impressionist collection. To prepare for this trip, I sent away for the MFA’s booklet showing each of the Impressionist paintings in their collection which I shared with the students. The class was divided into groups of two and told that they would be expected to prepare a 15 minute presentation about their assigned artist to be given at the museum to include the following:

1. A brief biography of the artist
2. An explanation of his/her technique
3. A description of two of the artist’s paintings on display
4. A critique of the artist’s work indicating if they liked or did not like it and why

In addition, the students were given a worksheet to be filled during each presentation according to the following:

1. Indicate three things that you learned about the artist.
2. Describe briefly the artist’s technique.
3. Describe briefly one of the two paintings that were explained.
4. Indicate which of the two you liked better and why.

Using only notes, each student fulfilled the role of a French-speaking docent for this activity. As we went from painting to painting, our group grew in size as visitors to the museum joined in to listen to the presentations so that our original group of 16 students swelled up to approximately 30 people, including our bus driver. As the size of the group grew, so did the seriousness of the presentation increase. As an observer to this activity in which French was the only language in use, standing in the back of the group I heard some of the people say “I think they are a bunch of exchange students from France visiting the United States and are on a field trip to the museum.”

It soon became apparent to my students that they had acquired an audience who were interested in what they were saying and that they were involved in more than a school activity. I learned that most of the people in the group spoke French and were impressed at the French language ability of the students.

As a final activity, after the presentations, each student was asked to complete the following about a painting of their choice from any artist but their assigned one:

1. The name of the artist
2. The name of the painting
3. A brief description of the painting
4. A five-sentence paragraph explaining why they chose that painting
5. A list of 5 things they learned about French Impressionism as a result of their visit to the MFA

Although I had intended the next day to consist primarily in learning what my students had learned about French Impressionism, they wanted to talk about the experience of having all those people join the presentations. They admitted that they were naturally nervous at first but that the experience boosted their self-confidence in their ability to communicate entirely in French about such a subject as French Impressionism. They felt good about themselves and they enjoyed the experience of speaking before a crowd of strangers in French.

Other than for the parameters set by the teacher, the success of the activity depended completely on the involvement, the hard work, and the seriousness of purpose of the students. Although at the beginning the extrinsic motivation of getting a good grade inspired them to action, the positive side effect of discovering their ability to communicate in French to strangers and the increase in their self-confidence with the language transformed the motivation from extrinsic to intrinsic.

**Conclusion**

Transforming the students’ motivation from extrinsic into intrinsic is an essential component of the L2 teacher’s task. Although getting a good grade is the hope of most students, developing a liking and an appreciation for the subject matter is a more desirable goal. That can be achieved if the teacher creates an atmosphere in the classroom of “success breeds success” and encourages the students to take control of
At the end of a long day of touring the city, I walked between two Spaniards. As I walked, I was suddenly astonished by my situation: American girl who had, in a few short weeks, forged deep relationships with non-English speakers. I stopped walking and the two Spaniards turned to me. In Spanish I said, "It's incredible, that I'm here with you. It's phenomenal that I, just taking a few classes, doing my homework, studying a little, can talk to you now." Like recognizing the rich flavor of chocolate cake two bites in, I suddenly saw the beauty of learning a world language. Awe-struck I continued, "I had the desire to learn Spanish and I could. I studied some words on paper, and because of that I have made wonderful friends." The Spaniards agreed and laughed at my marvel, and began to talk about our upcoming visit to Toledo. I joined in their conversation, but the awe of my precious realization bounced around in my head for the rest of the afternoon: I had begun to truly understand the scope of the value of speaking another language.

I was so impressed by my epiphany that I wrote about it that night and when I arrived back in Andover it was one of the first stories I wrote about it that night and when I arrived.

"Language is so powerful," I gushed. My mom smiled and dove into a story of her own. As a teenager, her family had hosted one of twenty Spanish students who came to Andover for the summer. The Spaniards each lived with a different family but they often spent time together at different gatherings. My mom told us about one night at a party when she had been speaking Spanish with a group of the exchange students. She recalled, "All of a sudden I realized that I was communicating purely in Spanish and that I was having this engaged, enthusiastic, and really exciting conversation." She continued on to say that she was inspired by that moment to pursue Spanish, all the way up to a college degree. I was first shocked, then enthralled to hear that someone had a similar kind of realization.

That school year, I delved deeper into my study of Spanish with a new gusto. In class I read excerpts of Borges and memorized and performed plays. I kept in touch with my Spanish host family through frequent Skype calls, changed my phone's language to Spanish, and began to dream in Spanish. I often returned to the memory of walking through Madrid to arrive at my linguistic epiphany. As I thought more and more about my experience, I wondered if anyone else besides my mother and me had similar moments. Was my realization the reason I now drank up Spanish so fervently?

When it came time to pick classes for my senior year, I knew I wanted to do a Senior Exhibition project related to Spanish. I discussed various ideas with Mr. Powers and one day I realized that I now had a chance to answer my own questions about linguistic epiphanies. After long talks with Mr. Powers and Dr. Allen, our language department head, I made a plan. I was impassioned, and ready to discover all of the secrets of language acquisition. One year later, I have only skimmed the surface of the subject, but feel enriched and rewarded by the stories I have heard and the things I have learned. Certain interviewees have generously allowed me to share their names and experiences in this paper.

I began my Senior Exhibition project early during the spring of last year after my proposal was approved. My plan was to conduct a number of basic interviews with people who had studied a second language to try to identify critically important moments in a person's linguistic development. I planned to interview both competent speakers and speakers who were still in early stages of their linguistic development and hypothesized that accomplished speakers would be more likely to have had realizations similar to my own. I wanted to interview as many people as possible about their experience learning a second language. In order to assess the interviewees' proficiency, dedication, and future plans in regard to their second language, I developed an outline of questions. Most importantly, I wanted to find out if the interviewee had experienced an epiphantic moment like my mother and I had. However, I did not want to explicitly ask them if they had a linguistic realization, so I asked open-ended questions I hoped would lead the interviewees to share their experiences.

My first interviews were students at Andover High studying a second language. I targeted the juniors in high level classes, hoping to find the strongest language students that would still be at Andover High the following year. In May and June of 2013, I conducted interviews with A.P. Spanish students and Chinese 4 students. I was surprised by the lack of interest of

Motivating Students (cont.)

the many activities planned. A reward that comes from inside the student has a far more lasting effect than one that comes from outside of the student.

References


About the author

Marcel LaVergne, Ed.D., retired, was a high school teacher of French, a Director of Foreign Languages, an adjunct professor of Foreign Language Methods, a textbook author, and a consultant on Foreign Language Teaching and Learning. He was recently associated with the National Capital Language Resource Center as the author of the Sound Bites for Better Teaching column.
some students and impressed by the passion of others. In later interviews with subjects whose native language was Spanish, I also conducted the interviews in Spanish. When the 2013 school year ended in June and I surveyed my results, only one of the students had told me about moments that might be classified as epiphanic. After the summer break, I resumed the project and did some basic research on language acquisition. Because I considered the field work a more important aspect of the investigation, I resumed interviewing shortly afterwards. In the fall I conducted additional interviews with a variety of people. I interviewed Andover High students as well as my mother and my uncle, who lives in Tokyo and speaks fluent Japanese.

At the end of the interview period, I had conducted 33 interviews. Interviewees spoke English, Spanish, Mandarin, German, French, Italian, Russian, Arabic, Yoruba, Chadian Arabic, Berber, Twi (Akan), Beria (Zaghawa), and Japanese. Six subjects had learned English as a second language, and of those six, four had studied three languages or more. I identified five subjects that had experienced a critical moment in their linguistic development and decided to focus on three of them. All three were students at Andover High School. I developed a second set of interview questions to focus on the essential moments of their language development and conducted the second round of interviews.

To begin the interview, I reminded the subject of the important moment we had discussed in our first interview. Meriz was an 11th grade student who had studied English as a second language. Meriz grew up outside of the U.S. speaking Spanish. Beginning at the age of six, she learned basic English in school. When her father moved to the United States, she began to take greater interest in English. However, she never studied English earnestly until one certain event. Meriz’s aunt brought her to the movie theater to see the American movie “Aquamarine” with Spanish subtitles. Meriz was only nine and couldn’t read the subtitles quickly enough to understand everything that happened. She felt frustrated and said, “From then on forward…I seriously wanted to learn.” Meriz explained to me that her experience in the theater, “opened her eyes.” She and her aunt watched more movies in English and Meriz started to seek out music in English to practice her language skills. Later on, Meriz got even greater motivation to learn when her father married and Meriz got new step-siblings. Her step-siblings did not speak Spanish so she was driven to improve her English so she would be able to communicate with them. However, Meriz was first motivated to study English by her singular experience in the movie theater.

My second subject was Esmeralda, a 12th grade student. Esmeralda’s first language was English and her second was Spanish. She had taken Spanish classes since 6th grade, and was taking the Advanced Placement class, equivalent to her fifth year of Spanish. Esmeralda had always liked Spanish class, but began to really enjoy it once she could, “really communicate, and really speak.” On a plane ride last summer, Esmeralda was sitting in front of two brothers with their elderly mother. The men spoke Spanish but Esmeralda believes that their primary language was English. Esmeralda sat directly behind the woman and found out that she was Colombian after striking up a conversation. In our first interview Esmeralda excitedly explained, “If I hadn’t known Spanish, I would not have been able to communicate with her except through signs. But it was really cool to connect and share with someone who has grown up with such a different culture and has such a different life.” Esmeralda’s experience was reminiscent of my own epiphany in Madrid. We both considered our respective experiences important because our language skills allowed communication that could not have occurred without our knowledge of Spanish. In essence, our language skills broke down barriers to allow rich human interaction. During the second interview, Esmeralda told me that the event was important in her linguistic development: “It was inspiring to want to learn more Spanish and have the chance to have more connections like that.”

My last subject was Talal. Talal grew up speaking Arabic and Berber in his home country of Sudan. Including his two native languages, he now proficiently speaks Beria (Zaghawa), Kalam Arab (Chadian Arabic), French, and English. During our first interview, Talal told me that there is a story he often shares with students in his ESL class. When Talal was 15, he started in a new school where they spoke English. Talal had never studied English before so he was placed in a class with many younger students. One day in class, Talal was thinking in French and called the “Labor Party” the “Labuer Party.” He told me, “everyone laughed at me and I was like, ‘oh my God, I need to learn how to speak English.’ That was when I really took it serious.” Talal used his mistake as motivation, and devoted himself to learning English. He credits some of his success in English to that singular mispronunciation, “If I hadn’t made that mistake, probably I wouldn’t have pushed myself so hard…that’s the reason why I took English seriously and started to learn.”

Despite variation in time, place, and situation, Talal, Esmeralda, and Meriz’s turning points in their linguistic development shared certain characteristics. The three moments were instances of intense emotion. In Meriz’s case it was frustration and in Talal’s case it was embarrassment. Esmeralda was empowered by her ability to engage in a fulfilling conversation. Additionally, all three students recognized their respective moment as important in their linguistic journey. Talal, Esmeralda, and Meriz had vivid memories of their moment, and were able to share specific details about the event with me. The three moments were also the result of a challenge. Meriz struggled to understand what was happening in the movie before she resolved to study more English. In Esmeralda’s case, her conversation with the Colombian woman was her first conversation with a native Spanish speaker who could not speak English. Esmeralda had trouble during times in the exchange, but afterwards felt inspired to continue her study of Spanish. Talal’s turning point was the product of a period of greater challenge: going to school conducted in a language he was just beginning to learn. Lastly and most importantly, all three students were inspired by their experience to study the foreign language more seriously. Meriz and Talal are now fluent in English and Esmeralda speaks Spanish fluently. My own experience shared all of the common characteristics of the subject’s experience. Like Meriz, Esmeralda, and Talal, my experience was emotional: I felt elated by my ability to communicate in Spanish. I also recognized the importance of the moment in my linguistic development. I remember my realization clearly.
MaFILA has been working to pass Seal of Biliteracy legislation in MA with the goal that a state focus on proficiency will inspire programs across the state to transform programming to meet the needs of developing proficiency in their students across the levels of the program. Students, motivated by their developing proficiency and by the potential of the Seal Award, will work harder to meet the new standards set by their teachers. This law is especially important in light of the fact that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in MA doesn't have a dedicated foreign language Coordinator position on staff and that the MA Foreign Language Framework is in need of a major update, and there is no funding to change either of these deficiencies.

The Seal of Biliteracy relies on specific, nationally recognized proficiency tests to document the level of proficiency developed by the students in the program over the course of their years of study. The process is not immediate, however. Students won't become proficient at our goal level just because we want them to, as our Keynote and proficiency workshop presenter, Greg Duncan points out. Programs need to orient programming to the goal of proficiency and teachers need to orient their teaching objectives to the proficiency targets they set for each lesson, unit and level of learning.

It is one thing to set a target and it is a whole other thing to ensure and validate that the target is being met. There must be a test in place and a process by which to assess where the program completers are in relation to the target. Some programs will be pleasantly surprised to verify that their students are meeting their targets, but I would assume that many other departments will have to adjust their teaching and programing to better address the needs of the developing proficiency of their students at the various levels of programming. It is through the ‘washback effect’ of testing that a teacher or a program sees the gaps in the teaching or programming because of the assessment in place, and makes the necessary adjustments to be able to meet the mark on subsequent assessments.

I have been involved with several departments in the process of setting of proficiency targets and testing to ensure that targets are being met. My experience is that the first time the test is rolled out and students undergo the process of being assessed to see if they are meeting the standard set by the department, it is not pretty. Students need orienting to the test taking process itself, something that comes more easily to teachers over the years of test administration. Additionally, students need to understand the testing process and buy into the fact that they need to elaborate and expand as much as possible to give a big enough language sample to be assessed at their actual level. Finally, teachers in the program learn more about the standards that they have set by the very process of assessing students. Herein enters the ‘washback effect’ in which the teaching necessarily gets calibrated to better prepare students for the demands of the test. In other words, teachers need to be thinking to their proficiency targets as they prepare the activities of their lessons so that students are moving up the proficiency ladder in their class practice.

It is an exciting time in foreign language teaching and programming! The top national focus of professional development is proficiency teaching and programming. We know that our students want to speak the foreign language that they are studying. They are not in our classes to get a better grasp of grammar! The Seal has the exciting potential of motivating teachers and students alike to be psyched about language learning with the purpose of proficiency development and being rewarded for their efforts! The recognition is validation for the college and career readiness skill that we give our students by being rewarded for their efforts! The recognition is validation for the college and career readiness skill that we give our students by being rewarded for their efforts!

See the update on the Seal of Biliteracy legislation process on page 21 in this Newsletter and follow the reports in the "Advocacy News" page under the Advocacy tab of the MaFILA Website. Please contact me at advocacy@mafla.org if you have any comments or questions.

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**Motivational Turning Points (cont.)**

and can still tell you that it happened on the street called “Monasterio de Oseira.” My turning-point was the result of the continuous challenge to communicate exclusively in Spanish and just like my subjects, afterwards, I pursued Spanish with greater gusto. I can now read, write, and speak Spanish articulately and confidently.

When I began my investigation, I had hoped to find that a large percentage of fluent language students had revelations that greatly enhanced their interest and dedication to that foreign language. I found that the majority of students have not had watershed moments in their learning. However, some students had experiences that proved to be essential to their language development. Instead of the epiphanies that I had predicted, some students experienced a linguistic challenge that became a turning point. The challenge took place in a real-life setting and resulted in either positive or negative consequences. In moments when students succeeded, they were inspired to increase their language studies in order to have similar experiences in the future. Those students who had negative experiences were motivated to improve their language skills to avoid repeating similar incidents. Each turning point was critical in propelling students to the next level of interest in the language.

I believe that all students have the potential to experience a turning point similar to what I have described. In order to motivate students to greater success in language, they should be presented with opportunity for challenge in a real-life setting. That means that language classes should integrate opportunities for students to be faced with “do or die” scenarios. In situations in which the student has no choice but to communicate in the foreign language, they will either succeed or fail. In success, their feeling of accomplishment may allow them to appreciate the value of language. If students are unsuccessful in their attempts to communicate, perhaps in their failure they will understand why they need to study language. In either case, situations that challenge students may allow them to recognize the power of language, and accordingly inspire them to the admirable pursuit of fluency.

Catherine Haut, Andover High School 2014
Thomas Powers, Senior Exhibition Advisor
Submitted by Jorge Allen
Performance Assessments To Motivate Language Learners

Catherine Ritz

Too often we teachers spend hours carefully correcting student tests and essays, painstakingly editing away, fixing muddled verb endings, correcting accent marks that are either missing or pointing in the wrong direction, and double or triple underlining that adjective ending that keeps getting botched, all in the hopes that our students will finally remember what we’ve taught them and get it right! And then, our neat stack of papers is returned the following day to students who (at best) give them a quick scan and promptly shove them in their backpacks, toss them in the trash can, or let them slip, sad and forgotten, onto the floor. I remember picking up one such essay off my classroom floor a few years ago. It had by then been stepped on a few times, so had a lovely shoe print on it that felt like a big fat stamp of rejection. Why didn’t they care? Couldn’t they see how hard I was trying? How much I cared about them getting it right? That this would help them learn?

Before we give up on this new generation that doesn’t seem to value Rimbaud or Goya or Voltaire as much as we do, and doesn’t have the work ethic we think we had as students, let’s consider a few things about what we’re asking our students to do, and whether we are in fact actually helping them learn.

Consider the following essay prompt: “Write a short letter to your penpal about what you like and don’t like in your own culture or country. Write at least five sentences using which, that which, for whom, and who as a conjunction.” I’d like you to take a few minutes and actually try to do this. And as you do, think about this: When would someone ever actually ask you this in real-life? If they did, you’d probably call up the local looney bin because this person is just nuts. Yeah sure, let me tell you all about my imaginary friend’s emotions and desires!

Students would never encounter these prompts in real-life, and they know it. Their first reaction would most likely be a big sigh and a discreet eye roll. Wait a minute, you say, my students respond to these types of assignments all the time and they’re doing fine! It’s important to consider whether your students might actually be what are called “compliant learners.” These are students who “simply follow directions and finish the necessary paperwork on time,” functioning “like low-level bureaucrats…[who] complete each allocated task to make space for an endless litany of new tasks until the day they quit or get promoted” (Zmuda, 2008, p. 38). Rather than accept compliant, let’s get our students engaged and motivated through meaningful and authentic assessments!

Here’s another speaking prompt. As you read it, think about how it compares to the two samples above: “It’s almost the end of your first week studying abroad in Paris! You’ve met a few people in your classes from different countries, but you haven’t made a lot of friends yet. It’s Friday, and you’re not sure what you’re going to do this weekend. One of the program coordinators gave you a weekend guide with some great ideas, but you don’t really want to go out alone. Before everyone leaves for the weekend, you turn to another student in your class to see if you can make plans with them. Hopefully, you will have some common interests and can invite them to do something with you so you don’t spend the weekend by yourself!” Notice anything different? This prompt is couched in a real-world situation where our students can imagine themselves actually using their language skills. Furthermore, there are no grammatical restrictions that will inhibit communication or make the conversation feel forced. We want to see what students can do with their language skills. Welcome to a performance assessment!

MaFLA’s 2015 Keynote Speaker, Greg Duncan, notes the power of performance assessments in transforming instruction and motivating students: “When teachers use performance-based assessments, they find that, rather than injecting a ‘testing’ element of fear and dread, assessment becomes an energizing addition that provides focus, clarity, and purpose” (2014, p. 19). By developing performance assessments that are embedded in real-world, authentic tasks, teachers can harness student motivation and increase engagement.

When I think back to my old chapter tests and quizzes and essay prompts riddled with grammatical requirements, I wince at what I must have put my students through. While I always tried to focus on communicative activities in class, my assessments didn’t match my instruction, and every test, quiz, and essay was a powerful punch of demotivation to my students.

Students would never encounter these prompts in real-life, and they know it. Their first reaction would most likely be a big sigh and a discreet eye roll. Wait a minute, you say, my students respond to these types of assignments all the time and they’re doing fine! It’s important to consider whether your students might actually be what are called “compliant learners.” These are students who “simply follow directions and finish the necessary paperwork on time,” functioning “like low-level bureaucrats…[who] complete each allocated task to make space for an endless litany of new tasks until the day they quit or get promoted” (Zmuda, 2008, p. 38). Rather than accept compliant, let’s get our students engaged and motivated through meaningful and authentic assessments!
Helping Students See Value in Learning

One of the key elements of intrinsic motivation is value. Students are more motivated when they see value in what they are doing.

Students typically see value through the relevance of the lesson. That’s why we strive to show real-life applications when we are teaching. In fact, most students have a streaming music station playing in their heads, WII-FM—what’s in it for me? That’s why they ask you, “Why do we need to learn this?”

Next, there is value in the type of learning activity you are doing. Students are generally more motivated by doing something, than by simple “sit and get”. Engaging activities such as building rockets motivates students more than reading about rockets or watching a video.

Finally, students find value in their relationships, with you and their peers. I heard a speaker say that the teacher-student relationship is foundational to everything else that happens in the classroom. I believe that is true. The old adage, “they don’t care what you know until they know how much you care” is true. Students need to feel liked, cared for, and respected by their teachers. Many students also need the same from their peers. If they feel isolated from other classmates, they are disengaged and less likely to see value in what they are doing.

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Barbara R. Blackburn is a nationally recognized expert in the areas of instructional rigor, student motivation, and student engagement. A sought-after speaker for her positive humor and audience interaction, she regularly presents to teachers and principals across the nation. She is also the author of fourteen books, including Rigor is NOT a Four Letter Word, Rigor in Your School: A Toolkit for Leaders, Rigor for Students with Special Needs, as well as her popular A-Z series on classroom motivation and instructional strategies.

For more information about her speaking and writing, visit her website.

9 Ways to Motivate Students

1. Have a positive, caring relationship with students
2. Use positive reinforcement
3. Empower and build ownership
4. Develop a growth mindset
5. Have high expectations for students
6. Engage learners
7. Provide support and scaffolding
8. Build resilience
9. Celebrate diverse groups of students.

Recommended Resources

Motivating Struggling Learners: Ten Keys to Success (book)


21 Simple Ideas to Improve Student Motivation

Motivating Gifted Students Who Are Not Achieving

Performance Assessments (cont.)

Since transitioning to performance assessments that are meaningful, engaging, and focus on real-world situations where students can imagine themselves actually using their language skills, I’ve seen a higher level of student motivation to do well. More students are asking me for feedback so that they can do better, rather than the other way around. And there has definitely been a decrease in crumpled up papers littering my floor!


MaFLA Student Video Contest

Theme
Languages are the Keys to Global Understanding

Premise
In the state of Massachusetts, students need to demonstrate the ability to use technology for the purpose of communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. Consequently, through the use of a variety of media formats students develop technology skills that enable them to communicate effectively, to multiple audiences, a variety of information and ideas to satisfy both foreign language and technology standards.

Summary
Video production is a method of communication that is more and more used and it allows anyone to create video files and post them to the Internet for others to download and view at any time. MaFLA is pleased to offer an exciting opportunity for all students in the public and private schools in Massachusetts to participate in a video contest.

Contest Specifics, Categories, and Prizes
All foreign language teachers of Massachusetts are invited to get their students involved in celebrating the 2016 theme.

In a two-minute video, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate in English or a foreign language, how they understand and interpret the current theme in order to raise awareness of the role that foreign languages play nationally and internationally.

Students may be entered in one of three specific categories corresponding to their grade level.

- Category 1: Elementary School – Students enrolled in K through grade 5
- Category 2: Middle School – Students enrolled in grades 6-8
- Category 3: High School – Students enrolled in grades 9-12

In order to enter the contest teachers who are members in good standing with MaFLA can mail only one entry per category to Jeanne O’Hearn, Contest Chair. Only the first 15 entries will be considered in each category.

Please note: Students should only submit their own original work (no copyrighted material should be included).

List of suggested activities for all categories:

- a speech/soliloquy/address
- a poem,
- a song (raps included),
- an advertisement,
- a public service announcement,
- other
- a skit,

The contest will take place during Foreign Language Week in March 2016. It will begin on March 1, 2016. The submission deadline is March 15, 2016.

A MaFLA committee will select one winner in each of the three categories. The prize for the winner in each category will be $50.00 awarded to the student creator of the video (to be split if there are 2 students). The videos of the winners, and up to two runners-up from each category, may be showcased in an area of the MaFLA website.

Submission Guidelines - Submissions that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered

1. Participation is limited to students attending public or private schools who are enrolled in a Pre-K–12 foreign language class at the time of submission.
2. The total video length is not to exceed two minutes in English or the foreign language.
3. A maximum of 2 students can perform on one video entry.
4. Participating teachers need to fill out and mail or email the Contest Entry Form to the contest chair Jeanne O’Hearn. Mailing instructions can be found on the entry form.

Judging Criteria - videos in all 3 categories will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Content: Is the audio/video clip engaging and appropriate to the theme of the contest?
2. Creativity: Is the message innovative and creative?
3. Execution: Is the use of technology effective and appropriate?
4. Effect: Was the overall effect achieved in communicating to the audience?
MaFLA Video Contest Entry Form

Please submit this form along with your video and mail to the address indicated below. Mail videos and forms together in a single package. Please use a separate entry form for each video submitted.

#1. General Information:  (please type or print legibly)
School:___________________________________________________         School Phone #: (____)_____________

School Address:  (street)________________________________________________________________________
                              (city/town)____________________________________________       (zip) __________________
Superintendent’s Name: ________________________________   Principal’s Name: ____________________________________
Superintendent’s Address: __________________________________________________________________________________

#2. Entrants’ and Teachers’ Information:  (please type or print legibly)
Student’s Name                 Grade                Language and level(s) enrolled for 2015-2016
1. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________

Teacher’s Name:_______________________________________________________     Dues Paid through __________________
Teacher’s Email:_______________________________________________________

Release

I, the undersigned, hereby grant permission for my/my child's video entry to be used and posted on the MaFLA web site. I understand that the videos of finalists and winners are to be archived in a public area on this web site to promote the teaching and learning of world languages. The video shall be used for educational purposes only.

I hereby release MaFLA, their agents, personnel, directors, and officers from any claims or liability regarding any use that may be made of the video in accordance with this consent and release.

Student Name: (please print)   _____________________________________________________
Student Signature (18 or Older): _________________________________________            Date: ___________________
NOTE: by signing above, student attests that he/she is 18 years of age or older.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print):  _____________________________________
Signature of Parent/Guardian:  __________________________________________             Date: ___________________
(required if student is under 18)

Mail your completed application to:
Jeanne O’Hearn
19 Broadway
Beverly, MA 01915

Entries must be postmarked by March 15, 2016
MaFLA Poster/Essay Contest Rules

THEME: Languages are the Keys to Global Understanding
DEADLINE: Postmarked by March 15, 2016. NOTE: MaFLA will begin accepting entries March 1, 2016.

GENERAL RULES CHECKLIST

____ Each entry must be an original work of a current foreign language student (including students enrolled in an ESL class) whose teacher is currently a MaFLA member. No group entries will be accepted.
____ LIMIT: 5 (five) entries per contest per school.
____ Teachers must submit the official entry form on the following page with their entries.
____ Teachers are required to put the requested information on the back of the poster/essay. (See next page)
____ All entries become the property of MaFLA.

Poster Checklist

____ All posters must incorporate the exact wording of the theme.
____ Posters must measure the standard poster size of 22” x 28” & have a flat surface with no moving parts. No three-dimensional posters will be accepted
____ Use lightweight poster material. Posters should be mailed in a 3” or larger tube.
____ Paints, markers, pencils, crayons, inks, gel pens may be used. Glitter, glue, charcoal, or tape on the front of the poster will not be accepted nor will computer generated posters.
____ Illustrations must be used in addition to words and must be relevant to the theme.
____ There must be a two-inch margin on all sides free of design and/or lettering.
____ No copyrighted figures such as Snoopy, Disney characters, Family Guy, Simpsons etc. may be used.

Essay Checklist

____ Essays must be written in English.
____ Essays must state theme and content must be relevant to the theme.
____ Teacher must scan and submit a completed copy of the official entry form, including the required item identification information, with each entry.
____ Essays must have a title, be typed/word processed (12 point Times New Roman font), double spaced.
____ No identifying marks are allowed on the face of the essay.
____ If outside sources are used they must be cited appropriately.
____ All entries must be scanned to pdf files and emailed to Stuart Gamble at the address below.

ESSAY LENGTH - By Division

• Grades K-5: Maximum 150 words
• Grades 6-8: Maximum 250 words
• Grades 9-12: Maximum 350 words

Judging Criteria Checklist

Posters

- Visual impact, overall appealing effect
- Theme relevance
- neatness
- Originality
- Accuracy

Essays

- Theme relevance
- Clarity of thought
- Organization of ideas
- Creativity
- Overall impact of message

Poster information contact:

Gloria Blanco
745 Washington Street
Braintree, MA 02184
gblanco@thayer.org

Essay information contact:

Stuart Gamble
646 Granville Road
Westfield, MA 01085
gamble_stuart@hotmail.com

Prize Information:

• One poster will be selected as Poster of the Year; artist will receive a check for $50.00; poster will be displayed at the MaFLA Conference.
• One essay will be selected as Essay of the Year; author will receive a check for $50.00; essay will be featured at the MaFLA Conference.
• There will be only one winner per division. (grades K-5, grades 6-8, and grades 9-12) For the division producing the Poster of the Year and the Essay of the Year no division award will be given.
• Division winners for the essay and poster contest will receive a check for $25.00. These awards may be presented by a MaFLA Board Member at the student's school awards ceremony in the spring.
• Several honorable mention posters and essays will be selected and featured at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
• All entrants will receive a certificate of participation.
• A letter of appreciation will be sent to all MaFLA members whose students participate in the contests. In addition, letters of appreciation will be sent to the principal and superintendent of participating schools.
• Winners will be posted on mafla.org. Certificates and acknowledgements will be sent out at a later date.
MaFLA Poster/Essay Contest Entry Form

Please submit this form (make a separate copy for each contest) along with your 5 (maximum) posters and/or essays and mail each to the appropriate person at the address indicated below. Mail posters and forms together in a 3” (or larger) diameter tube.

#1. General Information: (please type or print legibly)

School:___________________________________________________         School Phone #: (____)_____________

School Address: (street)_______________________________________________________________________________

(city/town)_______________________________________(zip) __________________

Superintendent’s Name: ____________________________   Principal’s Name: ________________________________

Superintendent’s Address: __________________________________________________________________________________

#2. Entrants’ and Teachers’ Information: (please type or print legibly)

Student’s Name                 Grade  Teacher’s Name/dues paid through
1. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
3. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
4. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
5. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________

#3. Item Identification: (Photocopy the form below, fill it out and attach it to the back of each essay and poster)

Student’s Name:_______________________________________________________ Grade:____________________

Language:__________________________ Level:____   School:________________________________________

School Address:________________________________________________________________________________

School Phone #: (_____)(______)______________________ Teacher’s Name:____________________________________

Teacher’s Email:__________________________________________________

Deadline for both contests is March 15, 2016

NOTE: Only five entries per school (in each contest)

Send Posters to:

Gloria Blanco
745 Washington Street
Braintree, MA 02184

Send Essays to:

Stuart Gamble
646 Granville Road
Westfield, MA 01085
We Know MaFLA’s GOT TALENT!

MaFLA members have amazing talents and it is time to share!
Submit a proposal by January 6, 2016, to present at the
ACTFL 2016 Convention and World Language Expo which will be held in Boston!