MaFLA’s 46th Annual Fall Conference
October 17 – 19, 2013

There are so many exciting developments in the conference planning process to share with you! We have selected almost all of the workshop presenters and our Keynote Speaker, and can guarantee that there will be something for every conference attendee this year! Conference Co-Chairs Nicole Sherf and Cherie Baggs attended the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) in Baltimore together from March 7 to 10, with seven other members of the MaFLA Conference Team. The MaFLA group worked to promote the conference to prospective presenters and collaborated with our northeast neighbor state leaders on conference program ideas among other things. The MaFLA contingent in Baltimore actively reached out to exhibitors, potential presenters and other NECTFL leaders with your needs in mind to make this another phenomenal annual conference experience for you!

We are so honored and pleased that the 2013 Keynote Speaker will be Helena Curtain, nationally known presenter and co-author of one of the most referred to texts for language teaching, Languages and Children: Making the Match. Though her book focuses on elementary programming, the characteristics of effective language teaching that she describes apply to all levels as a model of high standards. She has worked with teachers of all levels and languages from her home state of Wisconsin to all corners of the world, spreading the message about the importance of target language use and the need to work together to develop student proficiency. Her spirit and enthusiasm will inspire you as she elaborates on our Conference theme Collaborate to Promote Languages with a Collective Voice.

Our workshop presenter list is just about finalized. In addition to the workshop presenters we announced in our Winter Newsletter, we are excited to tell you about the following presenters that we have added to the program:

- **Terry Caccavale** (K-12 Foreign Language Specialist of the Holliston Public Schools) will present our James Powers three-hour workshop on the research of effective teaching of vocabulary, a topic on every foreign language teacher's agenda. She will provide activities and ideas backed by the research to get your kids mastering vocabulary.

- **Kathleen Turner**, 2013 MA Teacher of the Year and French Teacher from Sharon, will share her Tips from the TOY to get your kids motivated, talking and performing to your high expectations in her Thursday afternoon featured workshop.

- **Renee Dacey** and **Daniela DeSousa**, Burlington High School Spanish teachers who wowed you in 2012 with their session on iPad use in the foreign language classroom, will be back for a Thursday featured workshop on the same important and exciting topics in the expanded timeframe.

- **Kara Jacobs** (NECTFL Best of NH) and **Michelle Davila** (Professor at Salem State University), both back by popular demand, will collaborate to present a six-hour workshop on thematic units for a Spanish Culture and Civilization course that incorporate pop culture and authentic documents. It will be highly interactive and engaging.

You should be hearing from our Strand leaders shortly through the language specific organizations about the great three-hour workshops that we have planned for Friday morning in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Latin and Spanish. And please refer to the Winter Newsletter for information on the preliminary workshop presenters announced then. All of this information is updated often on our website at www.mafla.org.

We heard you in your evaluations! In response to your needs as expressed in your comments, we have made some exciting changes to the program and schedule:

- Technology is an important part of the language learning and teaching process. In addition to a very strong technology strand for the workshop, we are again offering wifi free to attendees. And this year we will offer an LCD projector in every session room, free of charge to the presenters. We know how technology enhances presentations and we want to encourage the most engaging conference experience we can!
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
- Spring - March 5
- Back to School - August 5
- End of Year - November 5

All submissions should be sent to:

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41 Glenn Drive
Wilbraham, MA 01095-1439
Tel: 413-596-9284 Fax: 413-596-9513
Email: ronie@mafla.org

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Scroll to the bottom of the page where you will find a reflection of our Facebook and Twitter feeds. Click on the MaFLA logo under Find us on Facebook and/or the title TWITTER in the center column to be taken directly to the respective pages.

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
$85.00 for 2 years
$120.00 for 3 years
$25.00 for 1 year (first-year teacher)

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

HAVE YOU . . .
MOVED?
CHANGED SCHOOLS?
CHANGED YOUR NAME?

Please notify Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, PO BOX 590193, Newton Centre, MA 02459, Ph. 617.964.6141, (membership@mafla.org), to update your membership information.

OR
You can do it yourself. Just go to mafla.org and click Membership/Update Profile and login to update your profile.

Now you can join, renew or update your profile online!
Just visit mafla.org

MaFLA 2013

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The Art of Collaboration

2013 Conference Co-Chairs
Nicole Sherf and Cherie Baggs

In the last Newsletter, we included a summary under this same name in which we discussed what we are learning from each other as co-chairs in this collaborative process of conference planning. We certainly all know that collaborating as department teams is the best way to effectuate the changes that will help our students to attain even higher levels of proficiency. When we are all on the same page, we provide a united front and make it easier for students to progress up the levels of language study. Hopefully, our collaboration increases our enthusiasm as we see our hard work pay off in stronger student performance and longer sequences of study.

Cherie and Nicole continue to collaborate and to stamp a special brand on this upcoming conference. Our excitement in each new presenter proposal, decision made or task accomplished is shared as we both deliberated in its planning and the execution. We hope, for example, that you liked the postcard that we developed together asking you to save the conference dates (October 17-19, 2013!) and remind colleagues of the April 1 proposal deadline. In this newsletter, we will give you some more lessons learned in our collaboration.

What We Have Learned About Collaboration So Far…

• The old adage is true that two heads work better than one. We are lucky in our particular case that one of us is detail-oriented and the other is big picture, but this is not necessary for successful collaboration. Having two or more people to talk things out helps to ensure that all the issues are overviewed and connected.

• Goal setting is important in successful collaboration. We have established a time line of when we want specific tasks completed and have a fair idea of what we want the task to look like. Luckily, the detail-person of us keeps an eye on the list deadlines!

• Sometimes in collaboration, a decision just has to be made. Flexibility is so important, and even if a meeting of the minds is not complete, the decision must be made to the best possible outcome for the conference.

We look forward to sharing our conference planning as well as lessons learned with you as we move forward. Please check our conference page (www.mafla.org/events-2/annual-fall-conference/current-year/) often for updates and exciting news!

Cherie Baggs and Nicole Sherf
2013 Conference Co-Chairs.

Thank You

Thanks to all who submitted session proposals for the 2013 Annual Fall Conference!

We would like to thank our members for adjusting so well to the change in timeline for Conference proposal submission. We launched the session proposal form immediately upon conclusion of the 2012 conference and the April 1 deadline has just passed. Members will hear in May whether their sessions were accepted and will be given a tentative day and time for their presentation.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: Also in May, watch your mail for the trifold mailing with workshop and registration information, as well as the process to sign up to volunteer at the conference. The conference planning timeline will be further adjusted with the opening of registration by the start of June. At that time, we offer the best deal for the conference registration – our “Super Saver” pricing so that you can spend down your budgets and reserve your spot for your top workshop choice. Our usual ‘Early Bird’ pricing will be back in the fall.

Do not hesitate to contact us at conference@mafla.org with any questions or comments! Nicole Sherf and Cherie Baggs, 2013 MaFLA Conference Co-Chairs.
Happy spring!

Did you have a good time celebrating Foreign Language Week with your students this year? It’s a great reminder to celebrate language learning and an important opportunity to advocate for the teaching and learning of languages in your school, district and community. I don’t know about you, but I often have a difficult time fitting in all of the celebration ideas into one week! Our department often renames it as ‘Foreign Language Awareness’ – a celebration that we try to kick off in conjunction with ACTFL’s Discover Languages Month (February) that often goes through May (or June!). Why limit this important advocacy opportunity to a week? It’s always the right time to celebrate language learning!

Foreign Language Week had a special treat in store for me this year! As MaFLA President, it was my honor to attend the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL). While at this regional conference, it was my mission to attend as many sessions as possible and to assist this year’s Conference co-Chairs, Nicole Sherf and Cherie Baggs, and the 2014 Conference Chair, Catherine Ritz, in finding possible presenters for future conferences. The NECTFL Conference was, as always, an amazing opportunity to connect with colleagues and participate in high quality programming. Several other MaFLA members presented at the Conference as well: Jon Aske, Joyce Beckwith, Steven Berbeco, Joshua Cabral, Charlotte Gifford, Kara Jacobs, Yu-Lan Lin, Rita Oleksak, Catherine Ritz, and Nicole Sherf, Terry Caccavale and I presented together!

It was a pleasure to attend Jon Aske’s session, Studying Vocabulary with Electronic Flashcards on Smartphones and Other Computers. Jon was selected as this year’s Best of MaFLA and was MaFLA’s guest at the NECTFL Conference. Jon’s presentation was phenomenal in that it was presented in Spanish and offered a number of tools such as ANKI that help students to learn and remember vocabulary.

In addition, I’d like to take this opportunity to congratulate Jeanne O’Hearn, a Spanish teacher at Masconomet Regional Middle School who was selected as this year’s NECTFL MEAD fellow. Jeanne’s action research will focus on the goal of 90% target language use in the classroom with a focus on middle school levels. If you’re not familiar with the MEAD fellows program, it’s an excellent opportunity to nurture and develop potential leaders in the field. You can go to the NECTFL website or click here to learn more.

If you weren’t able to attend the NECTFL Conference, you should consider attending next year! It’s an amazing experience to be able to collaborate with colleagues from all over the northeast. Another great way to learn about some of the amazing presentations and access information about the sessions is to use Twitter. If you aren’t on Twitter – you might find it a fascinating resource to compliment your other professional development. Login to twitter (or join first and then login!) and then type in the hashtag #nectfl or #nectfl13 – since attendees were tweeting using both hashtags, you’ll be able to find a number of tweets for each. In the tweets (as shown below) you can access session handouts and resources from the NECTFL conference sessions.

MaFLA is working hard to meet your professional development needs. We know that you are looking for more opportunities to learn and practice technology and we are working hard to develop options for you to do so. As such, this June we’ll be offering a Technology Day on June 28th – it’s a Friday and we hope that you’ll join us at Bay Path College in Longmeadow and take advantage of this training. We have some great options for you to choose from! We will continue to plan technology options for you in the future.

Be sure to check the website often and keep up with MaFLA happenings! Have a wonderful rest of the school year!

Tiesa M. Graf
MaFLA President 2013
What is NCSSFL?
The National Council of State Supervisors for Languages

What is its mission?
The mission of NCSSFL is to provide leadership in facilitating and promoting policies and practices that support language education. Source: NCSSFL website, January 6, 2013

What is the purpose of NCSSFL?
-Identifying and advocating positions on key issues in support of the vision of the organization;
-Collaborating with other organizations to advance and support quality teaching, learning and leadership;
-Communicating best practices across international boundaries; and
-Fostering and promoting the establishment, maintenance, and effectiveness of state-level positions in languages.
Source: NCSSFL website, January 6, 2013

What are the roles of MA in this organization?
Lacking a State Supervisor, MA has representation but no voting rights.

How is the representative chosen?
The State Association (MaFLA) is allowed to appoint a representative who is then approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin is the Massachusetts Representative to NCSSFL.

When does NCSSFL convene?
NCSSFL holds its annual meeting in conjunction with the ACTFL Convention and Expo. This year it met November 13-16, 2012 at Philadelphia, PA. NCSSFL also joins with delegates at the ACTFL Delegates Assembly and meets with NADSFL to discuss common issues.

What topics were examined at this year’s meeting?
NCSSFL considered the themes of World Languages as Gateways to Economic Competitiveness; NCSSFL’s Role in Advancing Interculturality; NCSSFL’s Vision in Creating and Trademarking LinguaFolio; and along with ACTFL and NADSFL, World Languages and Teacher Effectiveness.

World Languages as Gateways to Economic Competitiveness
Maureen McLaughlin, Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Director of International Affairs, U.S. Department of Education, addressed the group by conference call, on Skype, on The Role of World Language Learning in Educational Reform Across the Globe and Its Impact on Economic Competitiveness. McLaughlin emphasized that 21st century skills must be applied to the world, saying that educators must teach students how to investigate the world, recognize world perspectives, communicate ideas and take action, and that one should look to the Singapore model as an exemplar for how to create educational reform that will impact economic competitiveness.

Why Singapore? Answers are contained not only in McLaughlin’s remarks but also in Vivien Stewart, A World-Class Education, ASCD, 2012. Stewart attributes Singapore’s greater influence to “a clear and persistent vision of the importance of education to economic development and social cohesion” p. 44. Further, citing Lee Sing Kong, Dean, National Institute of Education, she argues that the transformation could be accomplished in part, because it was a complete turn-around, like “turning around a kayak rather than a battleship.” p.44.

State Programs as Exemplars: Several states discussed their programs as models of Educational Reform’s impact on economic competitiveness. These included Maryland for its work with science and technology (STEM); Kentucky for its International Job Shadowing with the watch words of “Global Standards, Global View” and the logo, “Education Drives America”; Georgia for its Global Work Force Devel-
NCSSFL Report (cont.)

This three-fold approach, based on the European Language Portfolio, enables language learners of all ages and levels to document their language learning as they move along the continuum towards greater proficiency. LinguaFolio can also be used by native speakers of languages other than English to document both their progress in learning English as an additional language and their proficiency in their home language or languages.

Over the past several years, NCCSL has successfully trademarked this instrument.

NCSSFL: Measuring Teacher Effectiveness

District perspectives of several states regarding how teacher effectiveness will be measured based on student growth measures were presented. Maryland’s New Teacher and Principal Evaluation System Reform Act of 2010 based Teacher Evaluation on the following chart:

50% = Professional Practice
Planning and Preparation
Instruction
Classroom Environment
Professional Responsibilities

50% = Student Growth
35% Student Learning Objectives
15% Assessments

Ohio, according to Ryan Wertz, World Language Consultant, Ohio Department of Education, will see the following trends:
1. 50% of teacher’s future evaluation will depend on the national certification standards.
2. Student achievement will not measure students’ growth.
3. Student growth will be quantified in very specific terms.
4. Ohio will use Linguafolio to capture students’ growth with check lists, i.e., evidence through digital means.

What is the significance of NCSSFL and its meeting for Massachusetts and MaFLA Members?

Two lessons emerge: Massachusetts is among the leaders of educational reform. With its new teacher evaluation guide-lines, the state is bringing the educator into the process, giving each room to document progress, both their own and their students. The other takeaway is what Jon Valentine, Program Manager for World Languages and Global Initiatives at the Georgia Department of Education, deems the value of global language. It is, he says, "the new resume differentiator." With that in mind, we could all benefit from engaging our local business leaders in dialogue, initiating economic activities that privilege world language development, and tying our discipline to activities of the world. In this way, Massachusetts and MaFLA members can benefit from the wisdom of the gathered national world language supervisors.

Best of MaFLA Shines at NECTFL

Every year, the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA) selects a "Best of MaFLA" session to send to the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL). MaFLA traditionally has a facilitator in every session and workshop to introduce the presenter(s), trouble shoot technology, if needed, and run a session evaluation of selected attendees. The MaFLA Evaluations Committee painstakingly documents the results of the session and workshop evaluations and then mails the actual papers to the presenters so that they can see how their session was received. MaFLA is proud of the consistently highly rated sessions and workshops and works hard to ensure that the quality remains high in future years by selecting future sessions based on the past evaluation results.

Best of MaFLA John Aske

The Best of MaFLA session this year was presented by Dr. Jon Aske, Associate Professor of Spanish at Salem State University. His session was called Studying Vocabulary with Electronic Flashcards on Smartphones & Other Computers. The session overviewed the research behind vocabulary acquisition and the role of vocabulary learning in foreign language study. Jon Aske presented an electronic flashcard tool that allows for many applications related to vocabulary review and mastery including the use of images, sound, word families, translations and definitions, among others. The application of focus was Anki, which is available for use in smartphones, tablets and other devices, and free on most platforms. It was an engaging and interactive session that was very well attended and received.

Best of MaFLA John Aske with MaFLA President Tiesa Graf

The criteria for the session designated Best of MaFLA are that the presenter must be a member of MaFLA, have presented a 75-minute session, have a critical mass in attendance at the session and receive at least four “Best of” nominations. The presenter(s) of the session receives support from NECTFL and MaFLA to attend the NECTFL Conference the following spring. The 2013 NECTFL conference was held at the Baltimore Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore, MD, from March 7-10. Attendees from the fourteen northeast member states flocked to Baltimore to attend the variety of sessions, workshops and teaching labs on the program as well as puruse the Exhibit Hall and participate in a variety of events, ceremonies and celebrations. It was the 60th year Jubilee Celebration of the NECTFL Conference and the occasion was feted appropriately.

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2013 NECTFL SANS Inc./MEAD Leadership Fellow Jeanne O’Hearn Honored

MaFLA congratulates Jeanne O’Hearn, Spanish teacher at Masconomet Regional Middle School in Topsfield, MA on being MaFLA’s 2013 NECTFL MEAD Fellow based on her project *How does immersion during the first year of instruction affect students’ speaking proficiency and use of vocabulary and grammar concepts?*

The SANS Inc./MEAD Leadership Fellow program is administered by the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) and sponsored by SANS Inc, the licensor of Sony Language Learning Systems. Each of the fourteen member state organizations of NECTFL can forward a state-sponsored winning MEAD proposal, and then NECTFL selects the top candidates to support in their project over the coming year. The MEAD proposal that MaFLA selected to forward this year to NECTFL was designed by Jeanne O’Hearn.

Jeanne O’Hearn was oriented to the MEAD Leadership Fellow process in a pre-conference meeting with former MEADs. There she met her NECTFL mentor. She was celebrated by NECTFL at the Awards Ceremony with three other state MEAD Awardees. Over the coming school year, she plans to conduct an action research project with her 7th grade Spanish classes which will involve a major change in instructional technique. To develop more communicative competence in her students, the majority of class time will be spent immersed entirely in Spanish starting from the beginning of the school year. The research question driving her action research project is: *How does immersion in the foreign language during the first year of instruction affect students’ speaking proficiency and their use of vocabulary and grammar concepts?* She says; “I am striving to promote increased communicative competence in my classes so that students will truly own the language. My goal is to adhere to ACTFL's recommendation that communication in the target language should comprise at least 90% of instructional time. By doing so, I expect my students to achieve an improved level of proficiency in Spanish. At the same time, I hope to foster a true interest and excitement about the language so that my students will want to continue their studies for many years.”

Jeanne O’Hearn adds, “Attending the 2013 NECTFL conference was a wonderful experience from beginning to end. I attended five sessions, several of which will be useful for my action research project. One session focused on building vocabulary through classroom debates. Another presented ways to set and assess performance targets. I also attended a workshop that offered techniques for use in an immersion classroom – perfect for what I plan to do. I used an activity from that session the very next week with my classes. At the breakfast for the MEAD recipients, I met my mentor and past MEAD fellows. Rather than feeling overwhelmed by what I have planned for next year, I feel confident thanks to the huge amount of support I received from that very first day at the conference. I am truly fortunate to have been granted this opportunity to work with so many talented and dedicated professionals.”

If you are interested in competing to be MaFLA’s 2014 NECTFL MEAD candidate, please check the information on our website under Contests/Awards and in the next newsletter.

Nominations Sought
For 19th Annual MaFLA/AATG 2013 German Educator of the Year Award

MaFLA, in cooperation with the AATG Massachusetts Chapter, announces the nineteenth annual *Massachusetts German Educator of the Year Award*. If you are interested in nominating someone for this award, please send a one-page resume and a cover letter explaining why the person you are nominating should be considered for the *Massachusetts German Educator of the Year Award* by May 1, 2013, to: Inge Buerger, AATG MA Chapter Awards Chair, 5 Pinewood Lane, Groveland, MA 01834. The Massachusetts Chapter of the AATG will determine the recipient. (S)he should be a member of MaFLA and AATG. This year’s award will be presented on October 19, 2013, at the MaFLA Luncheon to be held during the Annual MaFLA Fall Conference in Sturbridge, MA.
**NEWS**

**Helena Curtain Will Give Keynote Address At 2013 MaFLA Fall Conference**

The MaFLA 2013 Fall Conference co-Chairs Nicole Sherf and Cherie Baggs are thrilled to announce that Helena Curtain will be the Keynote Speaker for the 2013 Fall Conference.

Dr. Helena Curtain has a wealth of experience as a foreign/second language educator and has taught at the elementary school, middle school/junior high and high school levels. She was Foreign Language Curriculum Specialist for the Milwaukee Public Schools for many years and in that capacity coordinated and supervised elementary, middle school and high school language programs. She is also an internationally known expert on second language teaching methodology.

As an Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee she was responsible for the Foreign Language and ESL teacher education programs. She is a frequent conference presenter and inservice trainer, helping teachers implement ideas for improving language instruction in foreign language, immersion, indigenous and dual language programs. She is the author of various articles dealing with language instruction and the co-author (with Carol Ann Dahlberg) of *Languages and Children: Making the Match*.

Helena Curtain is active professionally as the president of her state language organization and as a member of the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) executive board. She is a founding member of NNELL (National Network for Early Language Learning). She also has served as speaker, consultant and visiting professor both nationally throughout the United States and internationally.

**Foreign Language Teachers Western Mass**

Greetings from Western Mass! The Collaborative for Foreign Language Teachers of Western Massachusetts (FLTWM) continues to meet at Elm’s College in Chicopee. Once again, we are having a great year with an outstanding line-up of presenters. We started in October with a super “kick-off” session sponsored by Pearson Publishers.

Thanks to Joyce Szewczyński’s persistence, and the generosity of the Pearson folks, we were fortunate enough to have had Fran Pettigrew, Curriculum Specialist for World Languages, facilitating our first session. Her PowerPoint, *Spiraling Themes across the Levels – a Thematic Approach to Language Learning*, set the tone for the program and established the approach. She focused primarily on the theme *Global Challenges* (how appropriate!) while directing us to create projects that could be used in a “global sense”, and to build vocabularies that will articulate from level to level. Fran was a big hit with the membership. She had a lot of good ideas to revisit, new ones to posit, and plenty of activities to work on in groups. We were busy and enjoyed every minute. It provided a great opportunity for teachers of each level to collaborate on similar themes, underscoring the notions that “proficiency begins in level one” and “we are all in this together.”

The session reinforced a lot of what we already know, and gave us some new aspects to consider; it was awesome. Plus, we got some cool stuff from Pearson! (The PowerPoint® is available from me if anyone cares to see it. At Agawam High, where I teach, we have used it in department PD with great success.)

In November, Terry Caccavale continued Fran’s preliminary discussion of “spiraling” the same themes across the levels. Terry stressed the importance of developing these vocabularies from level to level, in multi-modal approaches. The group was awed by her enthusiasm, excitement, dedication, and commitment – not just to her school and district, but to the profession overall. Terry continued with the idea that we have to keep building on these AP themes, not because we are teaching to “the test”, but we are teaching about life – we’re just doing it in L2. She pointed out that these new – and not so new – themes are all part of the 21st century skills. While Terry’s focus was essentially on *Science and Technology* (again so à propos) Terry reminded us that Foreign Language education reinforces everything from the Common Core. A timely message; it was inspiring.

Her materials are also available to readers through the FLTWM blog that Tiesa Graf has created for us. Check that out here: http://fltwm.blogspot.com/ and let us know what you think!

December’s session, focusing on *Contemporary Life*, was facilitated by Dr. Karolina Kopczynski, language maven and Department Chair/Spanish teacher at East Longmeadow High School. Once again the membership was reminded about the importance of our work as FL teachers: it reinforces everything the students do in so many other academic (and not so academic) areas.

Working in small groups, by level of instruction, and by language, we created a PowerPoint® document that suggests methods of instruction and assessments from level to level – spiraling and building on the vocabulary from year to year. Karolina then collated every group’s project, embedded them in one single document/PowerPoint®, and sent a copy to every participant.

A tremendous wealth of resources came out of that day’s work, along with lesson ideas to use the next day. Each member received a copy of this PowerPoint® which is available from me, or any of the members, should anyone care to take a look. It is extensive and filled with great ideas. You will be impressed! We look forward to having Karolina facilitate our next session on April 11 where we will focus on the theme of *Family and Community*.
Rounding out this phenomenal list of presenters, we will have Adina Alexandru with us on May 9 to explore the theme of Personal and Public Identities. And, we will bring our year to a close on May 16 with a "swap shop" that will focus on some of the suggestions we have tried, activities we have created as a result of our work together. The suggested theme is Beauty and Aesthetics, a topic with which we are all pretty comfortable. Our hope is to combine our past practices with new ideas to continue the sharing and collaboration that have marked this year.

It has really been a privilege to work with so many dedicated professionals and adept, dynamic presenters. It has been a very exciting year for us out here. We feel so fortunate to have gotten the kind of support that we did, to make this program so useful. It imparted an important message, alleviated a lot of anxiety about the changes in AP and FL instruction as a result of the focus on 21st century skills, and brought all of us "on board" in terms of working with the end in mind.

As for future plans, there are a few things "percolating". We continue to work on the blogspot, and we are building a webpage where we can share the work that we do, as well as keep people informed of our schedules, programs, existence. We are hoping to get a Facebook group up and running, too. There is some talk of a summer session; we will keep you posted.

We still have three sessions left. If you want to come and check us out, feel free. If you want to join up now, we can “prorate” the dues. At $30 a year, for 12 PDPs, it is quite a bargain. For the cost of a yoga class you can earn PDPs, talk shop with like minded educators, be re-energized about your profession, and just have some fun. PD doesn’t get much better than that!

Submitted by Nancy Kundl. Nancy can be reached at nkundl@aol.com.

AATG Chapter Grant For Bar Harbor 2013

The Maine Chapter of AATG will once again be hosting its annual Deutsche Woche in Bar Harbor, a summer immersion program for German teachers at all levels of instruction. This 28th summer program will be held the week of August 4-10, 2013, conducted by Karin Baumgartner (University of Utah) “Teaching about Switzerland and Austria” with workshops and discussions. The end goal of the seminars is for attendees to leave with classroom-ready materials on this topic. Attendees live in the quaint Seafox dormitory at the College of the Atlantic, directly on the ocean. The cost includes full accommodations and meals for the week and all materials needed for the seminar. Check the AATG website for links to AATG Maine Chapter for information and registration forms.

The Massachusetts Chapter has generously decided to fund a grant to defray the cost of attending Deutsche Woche at Bar Harbor for one Massachusetts teacher. This is an excellent program offering valuable teaching resources, networking opportunities and an immersion atmosphere in a truly beautiful setting, just a few hours’ drive away. It is casual, fun, relaxing and re-energizing – everything you would want a summer learning opportunity to be!

If you would like to apply for a grant of $300, please submit a letter of interest to Kristin Gillett, AATG-MA Chapter Treasurer, stating interest, your current teaching level and location, and whether you have participated at Deutsche Woche in the past (please include the years).

Letters can be sent via email to kgillett@westfordk12.us or via regular mail to: Kristin Gillett, 477 Main St., Groveland, MA 01834. The deadline for applications is May 1, 2013.

Goethe Institut Bar Harbor Grant

The Goethe-Institut Boston will offer one $300 stipend toward room and board for a participant of the Deutsche Woche in Bar Harbor 2013. Please submit a one-page proposal, outlining your teaching interests, your involvement in the field, your plans for your German program etc. by May 1, 2013. Christine Moeller-Sahling, langdir@goethe.org.

Not To Miss At The MFA!

On loan from the Capitoline Museum in Rome is the bust of an early Roman statesman who, in fact, may be that of the first Roman consul, L. Junius Brutus, who ushered in the Roman Republic. The head sculpture dates to about 300 B.C. and, though carved long after the death of this man, it may have been an early Etruscan piece. If this is that of L. Junius Brutus, he would possibly have been a distant ancestor to Julius Caesar’s assassin. The Roman Republic began about 509 B.C. after the overthrow of the monarchy brought on by the death of Lucretia. Brutus, related to the king, Tarquinius Superbus, was so outraged by Lucretia’s death brought about by the actions of the King’s son, that he immediately called for an overthrow of the government. With the fall of the monarchy, L. Junius Brutus established the Roman Republic on which so much of our own form of government is based. The bust will be on display at the MFA until May 1st. This is one of those sights not to be missed!
Free Materials From Miraflores

The free Miraflores materials can be found on their website, www.miraflores.org under Free materials.

1. NEW. El Camino de Santiago. SER and ESTAR have always been hard to teach. This interactive computer game allows students to take a virtual walk along one of the most important pilgrimage routes in Europe while learning culture and grammar and having fun.

2. El Libro Total. This Colombian site includes many hundreds of books, organized by country, author and title. (They are free to educators and students because they are now in the public domain.) It includes the classics as well as some music and painting. It’s amazing. (El principlito, Don Quijote, Vallejo, Picasso and much more.)

3. Viaje al pasado: los aztecas. A computer game that allows students to combine culture, grammar and technology. Very worthwhile with excellent visuals and many interesting choices and exercises.

4. Photographs. The pictures, all from the Spanish speaking world, are organized by theme. For example, transport, school, the family, etc. Most photographs include some written text meant to be used as a teaching tool.

5. Painters and their paintings. The virtual art gallery includes many great painters and great paintings. It allows teachers to find and show paintings to the class and students to browse and enjoy.

Miraflores also recommends their new oral presentations on cultural themes, Presente, which can be downloaded directly from their website. In addition, there are writing assignments, their well-known thematic units (updated) and more. These are not free.

Feel free to share this information with your colleagues.

Miraflores, culture in the curriculum. Everything in the target language.

Plans For German Immersion Days

Before the Deutschlehrkräfte-Tag theater workshop started last fall, a number of high school teachers met upstairs at the Goethe-Institut to start planning the 2013 German Immersion Days, now held as two separate events at separate sites: North of Boston at Phillips Exeter, and Metro West at Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School.

The Immersion Day gives high school students an opportunity to speak German for a whole day, working with students from all over Massachusetts, New Hampshire and beyond in diverse workshops, at play and at lunch. Metro West's second German Immersion Day took place on Saturday, March 16, 2013, while North of Boston’s third took place in Exeter, NH on Saturday, April 6, 2013.

Richard Schieber, Joan Campbell, Nathan Pritchard and Anne Paganetti

Registration for the Immersion Days will be completed online, thanks to online design by Colin Ashby. Teachers will then need to submit a single check for the group.

A T-shirt design contest is also in effect. Any student wishing to win free entrance should submit an electronic design—color or black & white—to Jared Maul at jmaul@newburyport.k12.ma.us by February 15. Guidelines for design submissions can be requested from Jared Maul at the same address.

Any teacher who wants to bring students but has not attended the planning meetings needs to get in contact a.s.a.p. with plans for his/her workshop.

For Metro West on March 16, please contact Joan Campbell at goldenfrau@comcast.net.
For North of Boston, please contact Richard Schieber at rschieber@exeter.edu or Doug Guy at JDouglsGuy@aol.com.

MaFLA Needs Your Talents!

Are you interested in keeping up with the most current foreign language teaching methods? Are you an advocate for foreign language studies? Have you considered giving back to our teaching profession? Would you like to work with a group of dedicated foreign language professionals? Please nominate yourself or a colleague for the MaFLA Board. Fill out and submit the application form on page 19 and send it by June 1, 2013 to Jane Rizzitano, MaFLA Nominations Chair 2013, 6 Wood Street, Upton, MA 01568, or by email at Jinetica@hotmail.com.
Implementing The Writing Process
To Improve L2 Writing Skills
by Marcel LaVergne, Ed.D.

Writing tasks are generally a burden to both student and teacher. Students often don’t know what to write about and teachers do not look forward to the long hours of corrections they present. Assignments such as: “This weekend I want you to write a 3 page composition describing a typical Saturday at your house” are usually accompanied by a collective groan from the students and on Monday by a feeling of regret by the teacher who adds those papers to his/her never-ending pile of work.

Writing tasks are the mainstay of most L2 lesson plans and yet writing is the skill that the students will use the least in the L2 world. Other than the writing you do in connection with your job, how much writing in L2 do you do as an individual? The goal of writing should be to encourage students to communicate their ideas, thoughts, and comments with one another rather than to be a way to assess the grammatical and lexical accuracy of students. When writing is given its proper place in the language learning process, it can become a more pleasurable and worthwhile experience for all.

This article will examine the following topics and suggest Writing Process in Action activities designed to help students develop their writing skills:

1. Reasons people write
2. Types of writing
3. The Writing Process
4. Evaluation of writing skills

I. Reasons for writing

There is often a clear disconnect between why people write in the real world and why they write in an L2 classroom. In the latter, writing is usually an exercise designed to develop grammatical accuracy and/or to assess knowledge of vocabulary. According to Holmstad and Thorson, when correcting student papers teachers “still are focusing on problems of grammar and vocabulary rather than on content or critical thinking skills.” (1) The writing sample is read only by the teacher who usually comments on the grammatical and lexical qualities of the writing. In the real world, people write to communicate their thoughts, opinions, research, and ideas to be shared with an audience of readers. Some of those reasons (1) are:

Social: People write to communicate with others by means of letters, e-mail, postcards, social media, notes, etc. It’s a way of keeping in touch with family and friends.
Business: People write as a requirement of their job: reports, proposals, resumes, reviews, critiques, articles, predictions, etc.
Creative: novels, poetry, plays, screenplays, biographies, history, non-fiction, etc.
Personal: diaries, journals, to-do lists, resolutions, etc.
Academic: compositions, term papers, dissertations, exams, essays, summaries, etc.

Teachers need to make a greater effort to plan their writing tasks to the needs of the students once they leave the classroom.

II. Types of writing

Writing style varies according to the different writing genres that exist in the real world. Consequently, teachers need to plan activities that develop the ability of students to match their writing style to the reasons why they are writing. Some of those styles are: (2)

Narrative: tells a story, describes events or actions e.g., “Write about something you usually do on a Saturday.”
Descriptive: depicts qualities and attributes, e.g., “Tell us what you like about Saturdays.”
Expository: lays out the facts, gives information, e.g., “Tell us four things you usually do on a Saturday.”
Persuasive: makes an argument, sells a point, e.g., “Convince us why Saturday is the best day of the week.”
Formal: requires adherence to strict grammatical protocol, proper orthography, and rules of composition and can be found in business, creative, and academic writing.
Informal: more closely resembles oral speech and can be found in social, creative, and personal writing.

When assigning a writing task, teachers need to set the parameters to be included in the task, i.e., who, what, where, when, how, and why.

III. The Writing Process

Although writing is an important ingredient of the L2 curriculum, teacher preparation courses rarely include how to teach writing to L2 students in a systematic way. Teachers need to become familiar with and to apply the Writing Process to their writing tasks. Teachers need to break the habit of accepting the rough draft as the final work and to put the task of correction into the hands of the students. Holmstad and Thorson state that “research on foreign language writing assessment has shown that micro correcting does not improve language skills in any quantitative way.” (1) As they go through the various stages of the Writing Process, the students have a greater investment in their work, improve the quality of their work, and have a better grasp of the structure of the foreign language.

The following illustrates the Writing Process in Action with the assignment being to write a one-page paper describing a typical Saturday at their house:

A. Pre-writing: time spent in class generating and organizing ideas

The pre-writing stage is designed to get the students actively involved in generating and organizing ideas and the associated vocabulary to be included in the writing assignment. Those vocabulary words and phrases can be shown in the form of word lists, word splashes or asscociograms. As the students generate the words, the teacher lists them on the board or on the overhead master. Then, the students are told to choose only those ideas or words...
Implementing The Writing Process

that they want to include in their paper. It's a positive first step toward the actual task of writing the paper.

Pre-writing in Action:

5. The teacher solicits from the students examples of activities which are written on the board as follows:

**Typical Saturday**

sleep late watch TV do house work go out with friends
play video games have breakfast go bike riding
do homework go for a walk go shopping play sports
go to work go to McDonald’s for lunch see a movie
spend time with my parents do nothing stay up late
go bowling visit relatives text my friends

6. The teacher asks the students to elaborate on those topics by asking further questions designed to add more details. This will encourage students to speak in complete sentences.

7. The teacher asks the students to include no more than 5 topics in their composition and to make sure that they cover at least 3 of the w-type questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how. They must also include the activities of the whole family, and not just of themselves.

8. The teacher sets requirements such as double space, typed, 6 paragraphs, due on Monday, etc.

9. In class, the teacher tells the students to begin to organize their thoughts by writing complete sentences on the topics they chose.

B. Writing: composing the rough draft at home or in class

The pre-writing stage is intended to facilitate the actual writing which for many is often problematic. Having decided which ideas and words to incorporate, the students can now more easily begin the task of putting sentences and paragraphs together. It is important that the teacher set limits for the students, such as maximum number of words, sentences, or pages, double spacing, handwritten or typed, mandatory grammatical topics, deadline, etc. It is easier to write when given a structure and guidelines.

Writing in Action:

Students are to write the first draft of their paper at home and to bring it to class on the due date. They are told to consult a dictionary and other resource materials.

C. Revision: editing the rough draft and rewriting in class or at home

Teachers typically treat the first draft as the final product when they return the assignment with a grade and with all the corrections (usually grammar and spelling) on the paper. This micro correction system does not improve the writing skills in any way because as most teachers know, the students usually look at their grade only and never examine the corrections. By using a correction code to indicate the kind of mistakes and where they are, the assignment becomes a learning event for the students who are then told to rewrite the paper by correcting as many mistakes as they can. Telling the students that they can consult anyone but their teacher and any resource available to them will motivate and facilitate the rewriting stage and result in better learning. It is important that the students hand in both the original first draft and the revision. That will allow the teacher to see if any improvement has taken place.

Revision in Action:

The teacher collects the papers with the intention of returning them in a reasonably short time. Rather than making all the corrections for the students, the teacher gives his/her feedback by means of a correction code and tells the students to correct their own papers. This can be done in class or at home or a combination of both. By so doing, the teacher forces the students to take a second look at what they wrote and encourages them to use the resources available to them to make those corrections.

Sample correction code:

**Editing Guidelines**

Editing is a basic component of writing. The minimal acceptable requirement is for a written assignment to have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. To help you in the process of editing, please consult the following abbreviations:

S-V subject verb agreement
Cont contraction
GA gender agreement
ACC accent
E English
NA number agreement
WO word order
WC word choice
Conj conjunction
T tense
SP spelling
ART article
CL clarity
OM omission
R redundant
WI wrong idiom
IS incorrect structure
P punctuation

(adapted from George Morse)

French Editing Guidelines

Explications des symboles:

v vocabulaire; ce n’est pas le bon mot
tv temps du verbe
ort le mot est mal épelé
acc l’accord n’est pas juste: masculin, féminin, singulier, pluriel
a il faut mettre, enlever, ou changer l’accent
Implementing The Writing Process

It is important to review the correction code symbols with the students and to practice them in class.

D. Publication: submitting the final draft after a last proofreading to check for accuracy and fluency

Publication in Action:

In groups of two or three, the students read one another’s papers aloud and comment on the grammatical accuracy of the papers and make suggestions for corrections using a dictionary and other resource materials available to them. The end result of this exercise is to strive for quality and accuracy. Each student then rewrites the paper at home for a final submission. After the paper is returned to the students with a final grade, the teacher tells the students to keep their papers in their writing folder. After each month of writing, the students submit their best paper to be published in a monthly journal of student writing to be distributed to their classmates, to other L2 classes in the department, or to be shared with e-pal schools.

IV. Evaluation of writing

How teachers evaluate the writing production of students can have a make-or-break effect on students. At the very least, a paper covered with red comments and/or corrections and the grade it deserves will discourage even the very best of us. Teachers need to take heed of Krashen’s Principle of the Affective Filter (3): the more red marks on the paper, the greater the discouragement, the deeper the sense of failure the students feel, the less the motivation to attempt another writing task. When the work is judged only on its form, i.e., the accuracy of the grammar and the correct use of vocabulary, with very little attention paid to its content, its creativity, or its comprehensibility, the teacher is ignoring some very worthwhile criteria by which writing is judged outside of the classroom. Holmstad and Thorston state that although “the most helpful feedback tends to focus on content of the entire text rather than on minute linguistic details.” They warn that “techniques that focus on sentence-level correcting actually encourage the perception that grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure are the most important elements for good writing in the foreign language.” (1)

Rubrics that include both content and structure are a better way to improve writing skills because they evaluate the worth of the entire paper. According to Heidi Andrade “Rubrics have become popular with teachers as a means of communicating expectations for an assignment, providing focused feedback on works in progress, and grading final products. (It) is a document that articulates the expectations for an assignment by listing the criteria, or what counts, and describing levels of quality from excellent to poor.” (4)

The beauty of a rubric lies in the fact that it can be tailored to fit the work assigned and changed as the expectations increase throughout the year. Both teacher and students can have a hand in its creation. The following are examples of criteria that can be included in a writing rubric:

- **Content/ideas**: How well did the student address the topic of the assignment?
- **Organization/development**: How well did the student develop and present the topic?
- **Comprehensibility**: How well would an L2 native speaker understand what was written?
- **Vocabulary/word choice**: Was the vocabulary consistent with and appropriate to the level of the language class?
- **Grammar/structure**: How accurate was the use of grammar?
- **Sentence fluency**: How well did the sentences flow?
- **Requirements**: How well did the student meet the set requirements?

Holistic grading based on the rubric guarantees that no one area is more important than any other and is a better determinant of the overall worth of the project. It also recognizes the fact that the ability to express oneself logically and cogently is as important as accuracy. Teachers need to realize that it is not realistic to expect L2 learners to write with perfect grammatical accuracy when most of them cannot do that in English.

Sample evaluation rubric:

Rather than be all-inclusive, the writing rubric should reflect those areas that are important to the teacher for each particular assignment. It should include the criteria, a brief description, and a numerical value. The rubric listed at the end of this article and adapted from the Hartford CT Public Schools (5) is a good example of a simple rubric that is easy to apply to a writing task. It evaluates the writer’s ability to communicate his/her thoughts completely, clearly, and accurately in the following areas: reason for writing, focus, idea development, supporting details, appropriate vocabulary, organization, grammar, and requirements. It also assigns a point value and a grade equivalency.
V. Conclusion

If students are to improve their writing skills in L2 they need to write often and get immediate feedback about their weaknesses and suggestions for improvement. Teachers also need to control the length of creative writing assignments and apply the Writing Process principles to them. The use of a rubric will render a more reliable evaluation of their ability to write. Finally, publishing student writing for all to read is a great motivator to encourage more writing on the part of the students.

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 is currently associated with the National Capital Language Resource Center as the author of the Sound Bites for Better Teaching column.

References

4. Andrade, Heidi. “What is a rubric?” [link]
5. Writing Rubric. [link]
6. Spanish Writing Rubrics. [link]
7. World Languages Department. Standard Rubrics for Writing. [link]

| Purpose (why) | 3 | full and complete ability to communicate a clear purpose |
| | 2 | some ability to communicate a clear purpose |
| | 1 | unable to communicate a clear purpose |
| | 3 | a clear focus is evident |
| | 2 | some focus is evident |
| | 1 | lacks focus |
| Content (what) | 3 | main idea is thoroughly developed |
| | 2 | main idea is evident |
| | 1 | main idea is unclear |
| | 3 | in depth use of supporting details |
| | 2 | some supporting details |
| | 1 | few supporting details |
| | 3 | extensive use of appropriate vocabulary |
| | 2 | acceptable use of appropriate vocabulary |
| | 1 | limited use of appropriate vocabulary |
| Structure (how) | 3 | effective organization of paragraphing and sentence structure |
| | 2 | average organization of paragraphing and sentence structure |
| | 1 | little organization of paragraphing and sentence structure |
| | 3 | effective use of grammar |
| | 2 | some grammatical errors |
| | 1 | numerous grammatical errors |
| Requirements | 3 | meets all requirements |
| | 2 | meets most requirements |
| | 1 | meets few requirements |
| Total | 24-23 = A  20-19 = B+  16-15 = B-  12-11 = C  8 = D |
| Grade equivalent | 22-21 = A-  18-17 = B  14-13 = C+  10-9 = C- |
Great to talk to you all again in 2013!! Happy New Year! I am happy to see that you are all wired in one way or another to technology! Simply reading this newsletter and this column is proof enough! ☺

Of course that with the new CCSS, the mastery of 21st century technology becomes more and more a required skill in any classroom not only for students but for teachers too! This should not be hard to achieve at all though because, due to the nature of our discipline, creativity, innovation and inspiration are at work at all times in our profession. To me it is very clear that we, foreign language teachers, are indeed forward thinkers in many aspects of the planning, teaching and assessing the four literacy skills as outlined in the new CCSS: reading, speaking, listening and writing.

I just realized this recently when I attended the Technology Academy in Connecticut sponsored by CT COLT. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that right across the south border of Massachusetts, our colleagues in Connecticut are using new and exciting approaches to teach these same four fundamental skills in foreign language via a multitude of technology platforms. I am anxiously planning to try a few in my own classroom very soon! Here are a few highlights:

**Using Technology to Bring Native Voices to the Classroom**

This workshop focused on the use of podcasts (either amateur recordings or podcasts taken from the website of authentic newspapers around the world, French, Spanish etc.) and authentic music taken from Pandora, Spotify, etc. In general, it was refreshing to learn how web-based technology can be used to bring native speakers into your classrooms for free. The variety of information presented, the incredible array of accents, dialects and specific cultural practices that can be found on these websites was indeed incredible! Try these new resources that are beautifully presented in dynamic and authentic snapshots taken from around the virtual world. This is an excellent approach to choose authentic sources and differentiate lessons appropriately for students of different levels and needs.

**Schoology in World Languages**

Some of you probably have heard of or even currently use Schoology. To me it was fairly new and it was great to hear and see how I could use it in my foreign language class. Schoology is a great free online course management system. Aside from posting homework reminders and other class announcements, teachers can provide easy links to relevant web sites, upload files for student reference, create online quizzes and tests, embed YouTube videos, and more. While it is in many ways similar to Moodle and Edmodo, Schoology in fact is more at an intermediate level between Edmodo and Moodle. Edmodo is more of a social networking platform with some assignment/quiz options included. It is particularly suited to primary/elementary schools and for light duty in secondary classes. At the other end of the spectrum, Moodle is a full-featured Learning Management System that is suited to secondary or tertiary institutions where there is sufficient technical support available. Of course, the best way to decide the most suitable option for you or your school is to give each platform a try. All are free, or offer a free component for educational use.

**Creating Video “Shots” for the Language Classroom**

This was a great workshop that taught participants how to use stills of film, video and/or YouTube. Although the concept is fairly simple and many of you probably have seen it, it is an extremely powerful teaching tool! These pictures can be used in various ways in the classroom to teach from beginning students to the most advanced AP classes. “Still” pictures can be used in PowerPoints® or any other instructional format to deliver a short lecture or to give students a visual prompt for a narrative or interpersonal speaking performance activity. Here are some tips on how to do it:

**Instructions: How to print a still from a video**

1. As you watch the video and find the scene you want to have a shot of: HIT PAUSE to stop the video
2. press PRNT SCRNR (sys rq) on the keyboard and control C
3. Open a PowerPoint® and new slide - hit control V to paste the picture onto the slide.

*The picture will be very large.

Continue these steps:

**CROPPING**

4. Put mouse on picture and drag so you can see the corner. Put mouse on white circle and move toward the center of picture. Do this a few times until the picture fits the screen.
5. Be sure to click on picture so you have the circles. Then go to VIEW and TOOLBAR. Scroll down in TOOLBAR and select PICTURE. Another bar will appear. CLICK on the cropping symbols. They will go around the picture. Click on the black line in the middle of each side. Pull in until the picture is cropped. You can do this again if you need to fix the crop.

**NOTE:** The size of the pictures is large. In order to reduce the size of your PowerPoint® file, click on the picture and go to FORMAT PICTURE. At the bottom of the box there is a button COMPRESS. Click ALL PICTURES IN DOCUMENT and then APPLY. This will reduce the size so you can send and open easily.

**Screencast-O-Matic**

Perhaps one of the most intriguing presentations was Screencast-O-Matic. This is an ingenious, ad hoc movie maker that allows students or teachers to record a voice (through a computer microphone and...
**A Virtual Conference?**

Have you ever followed a conference virtually? Well, that is exactly what I did one weekend in March. One Saturday, I just happened to check my Twitter account and noticed that there were several tweets going by with the hashtag #ascd13. This reminded me that the ASCD 2013 Conference was in full swing while I was working at my computer.

The ASCD is the professional organization formerly known as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. The Conference was being held in Chicago and included workshops by some of the top professionals in the country such as Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Grant Wiggins, Jay McTighe, and Robert Marzano; and Second General Session speaker Maya Angelou, who addressed the entire audience.

I began following the hashtag and discovered that participants in various sessions were tweeting ideas and exact quotes from the presenters. I also noted that some were even including links to the presenter’s wiki or to the presenter’s online slide presentation. Following these links allowed me to see some of the materials that were being presented.

Was it as good as being present? Probably not. But it was far better than missing out entirely. The tweets alone provided a great deal of food for thought. I found myself “favoriting” some of those that made me reflect on my own practice and the vision of my own school system. I felt that these tweets would be a great discussion point for upcoming department and leadership meetings.

I’m sure I would have enjoyed the conference in person and I know it would have been a phenomenal learning experience, but since this was not possible I certainly benefitted from it by my virtual participation. It also made me realize that someday the ASCD Conference will be one I will attend.

Below are just some of the tweets that I favorited for future discussion and reflection.

-[“You are going to need this next year’ is not always the best reason to teach something.”](#)

-[“Reflective practice. It’s all about getting better.”](#)

-[“Where are the kids now? Where do they need to be? What are we going to do instructionally to get them there?”](#)

-“Tomlinson: “to create rigor, and content relevant, have to have a relationship with the kid.”

-[“The job of a teacher when not teaching is learning. Always learning. Modeling learning. Sharing learning.”](#)

-[“Every day and class, students should be able to identify the purpose of learning not just repeat objective.” –Fisher](#)

-[“You shouldn’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw something back.” Maya Angelou](#)

And finally this one which sums up this article -

-[“Social networking platforms enable each of us to make meaningful connections that reach far beyond our schools.”](#)

Being a part of the #ascd13 conference virtually through Twitter allowed me to make some powerful connections way beyond my school, my state and my own conference experience. I encourage others to become involved in social networking as it is another great resource for professional connections and growth. Submitted by Ronie Webster

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**Adina’s Tech (cont.)**

webcam) and any computer screen activity that takes place during the recording for the purpose of demonstrating a process, making a presentation or simply creating screen shots. These movies can be then published/uploaded anywhere on Vimeo, Google Drive, YouTube, etc.

**Tech Tools for Differentiation in World Language**

If you like to play games in your classroom, then, there is no better way to engage students in various language learning competitions. They can be done via a multitude of online instructional formats. These formats can support differentiated instruction in World Language classes by accommodating many learning styles and levels. And the key to this is [http://www.superteachertools.com](http://www.superteachertools.com). Here you can find jeopardy games, board games, name generator, group makes, etc. It is a perfect teaching tool in any foreign language classroom that has a SmartBoard!!

This is all for this spring edition of the newsletter and as always I am open for suggestions, ideas and mostly new technology! Please send me your comments, suggestions, questions to [aalexand@baypath.edu](mailto:aalexand@baypath.edu).
MaFLA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Awarded for exceptional and meritorious service to the foreign language profession in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the MaFLA Distinguished Service Award acknowledges individuals who have, through their dedication and commitment to the field of foreign language education, made a significant contribution to the profession. Nominees may be proposed by MaFLA members. Nominations MUST be accompanied by a written testimonial that establishes a clear rationale for the choice of the candidate, and an outline of outstanding achievements in the areas of community service and teaching activities with students and/or other teachers. Distinguished Service Award recipients must be members of MaFLA.

Nomination Form for Distinguished Service Award

Name of Nominee:____________________________________________ Email: _____________________
Home Address: ______________________________________________________________________
School: ____________________________________________________________________________
School Address: _____________________________________________________________________
Phone - Home: (____)____________________ School: (____)________________________________
Your Name: __________________________________________________ Email: _____________________
Your Address: ______________________________________________________________________

Rationale and Achievements: (Submit on a separate sheet of paper)

Mail to: Jane Rizzitano jinetica@hotmail.com
6 Wood Street
Upton, MA 01568
DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS: June 1, 2013

25 YRS OF SERVICE/RETIRING FL TEACHER AWARD

MaFLA would like to honor retiring foreign language teachers and those with 25 years of service in the foreign language teaching profession. Awards will be made at the Annual Meeting to be held in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, on October 19, 2013. If you are presently a member of MaFLA in either category, kindly provide the information requested below and return the form by September 15, 2013, to the Awards Committee Chairperson listed below. You will be MaFLA’s guest at the luncheon on Saturday, October 19, for the award presentation.

Application/Nomination Form

Please check one: ☐ 25 yrs. of service ☐ Retiring from teaching foreign languages
Name: _________________________________________ Present Position:_________________________
Home Address: ______________________________________________________________________
Phone/Home: (____)_______________________ Phone/School:(____)_____________________________
School Name: _____________________________________________________ Years of Service:_________
School Address: ______________________________________________________________________
Languages Taught:________________________________________ Email:_____________________
Nominator (if different): __________________________________________ Email:_____________________
Address: __________________________________________________ Phone/Home:(____)_____________

Mail to: Jane Rizzitano jinetica@hotmail.com
6 Wood Street
Upton, MA 01568
DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS/NOMINATIONS: September 15, 2013
The MaFLA Board of Directors has established an awards program for students of foreign languages in public and private schools in Massachusetts. Awards categories are:

1. One award for excellence for each language per school. This certificate is conferred upon the student who has demonstrated excellence (highest achievement) in the most advanced course of each language taught in each school.
2. ONE award per high school to a student who has distinguished him/herself for leadership in foreign language activities.

Any public or private school in Massachusetts wishing to recognize academic excellence and leadership in foreign language activities by awarding the MaFLA award certificates should complete the form provided and return it to the address on the form. Individual certificates, signed by a member of the Board of Directors of MaFLA, will be sent for presentation to students. Each school is eligible to make one award for excellence in each language taught (no ties, please). Each high school is eligible to make one award per school for leadership (no ties, please) in foreign language activities.

The Board of Directors has established the following criteria which each award recipient's school must meet:

a. Nominees must be public or private school students in Massachusetts.

b. Recipients of the Award for Excellence must be enrolled in the most advanced course offered in their school of the language for which they have been selected to receive the award.

c. Recipients of the Award for Leadership for foreign language activities may be enrolled in any high school foreign language course but must demonstrate leadership in foreign language activities. No more than one award per high school per year will be granted for leadership.

d. Recipients are to be selected by the foreign language faculty of their respective schools. Criteria for determining highest achievement shall be determined by the local school's foreign language department.

e. Schools participating in the awards program must have at least one current MaFLA member on their foreign language staffs. Application for awards must be made through this member.

f. The deadline for request for 2011-2012 certificates is May 15, 2013.

*************** MaFLA STUDENT AWARD FORM ***************

As a current member of MaFLA and the person representing my school's foreign language department, I nominate the students named below for MaFLA awards. I certify that the criteria outlined by the MaFLA Board of Directors have been met by the nominees and by their school.

MUST BE TYPED! (or submit online via mafla.org)

I. Awards for Excellence:

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<tr>
<th>Student(s) Nominated</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Course(s)</th>
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II. Award for Leadership (High School):

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<th>Student Nominated</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Course(s)</th>
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Nominator’s Name:_________________________ Membership Expires: ___________________

School:_________________________ Phone: ___________________

School Address:______________________________________________

Email:________________________________ Signature: ___________________

Mail to: Brenda Cook, 60 Miller Street, Middleborough, MA 02346

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF NOMINATIONS: May 15, 2012
NOMINATION FORM
MaFLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Name of person submitting the nomination: _____________________________________________

NOTE: If you would like to serve on the Board of Directors, please use this form to nominate yourself.

Name: ________________________________________Position: _____________________________
Home Address: _____________________City: ________________________State: ______Zip:______
School Address: ________________________________________________________________
Languages Taught: _____________________________________  Email:________________________
Teaching Experience (grades, levels) : ____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Other Experience: ____________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
I believe that this person/I can contribute to MaFLA in the following ways:
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
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___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

Your Name: ________________________________Your Signature: ____________________________
Home Address: _____________________City: ________________________State: ______Zip:______
School: _________________________________________________________
Phone: (____)__________________________ Email:  _______________________________

Persons elected to the Board of Directors of MaFLA serve without compensation for a period of four years, and must be willing to participate actively in the business of the Association. The Board usually meets six times per year and conducts much of its business through committees such as Communications, Professional Development, Membership and Marketing, Advocacy, and Needs and Policies.

Please attach a CV or Resume to this completed form and mail or email to:

Jane Rizzitano  jinetica@hotmail.com
6 Wood Street
Upton, MA 01568

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS: June 1, 2013
Supporting Our Newest Recruits

Do you have a former student who is pursuing a career as a language teacher? Would you be willing to help him or her get a good start in the profession?

With all the financial challenges faced by new and aspiring teachers - paying for college, finding a place to live, reliable transportation, and GETTING A MASTER'S DEGREE - while earning an entry level salary, joining a professional organization is not high on the budgetary priority list.

You can help by sponsoring your student (or new teacher) and gift him/her a MaFLA membership. Student memberships are only $15.00/year and a New Teacher (first year of teaching only) is just $25.00.

Ronie Webster shared her experience.

This fall I purchased a MaFLA membership for Timothy Chavez, one of my former students, who is in his sophomore year at Worcester State University majoring in Spanish and Education. I am so proud of the commitment and growth I have seen in Timothy and I want him to begin to experience the great resources and collegiality that we have here at MaFLA. I believe that he represents the future for foreign language education in the state of Massachusetts. I know that he will benefit greatly from this gift of MaFLA membership that I have provided for him. In fact, he has already stated that he will “be an active attendee at our 2013 Fall Conference.”

If you want to invest in our future by gifting a MaFLA membership, contact membership@mafla.org or check our website for more information concerning a promotion that allows YOU to benefit from your generosity.