Last year’s Back to School issue was full of anticipation for the celebration of MaFLA’s 50th anniversary. It was a wonderful event at our new location in Springfield. Now, we are excited to be kicking off our next 50 years! While the focus of last year was looking back and celebrating where we’ve come from, this year we look to the future and to our ongoing work as language professionals.

Join us October 25 through 27 at the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel. A special group rate is available for accommodations by visiting this link: LODGING. Our Springfield venue is beautiful, comfortable, and has everything you’ll need for a weekend full of learning and fun. Extend your stay and visit the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Basketball Hall of Fame, or try your luck at the new casino, MGM Springfield. This year we are pleased to offer four 6-hour workshops, three 4-hour workshops, eleven 3-hour workshops and more than one hundred and twenty 75-minute sessions. There is something for everyone!

This year’s theme centers around how learning a new language expands our minds, our hearts, and our worlds. The arts have a special place in this year’s conference as well. Art, in its many forms, has a unique way of opening our eyes to the world. We are thrilled to welcome representatives from Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts this year for two 3-hour workshops on how to incorporate art into world language classes. Latin dance will be featured in a Spanish strand session offered by Abelardo Almazan-Vazquez, “Total Spanish Immersion Through Latin Dance.” Film is the focus in two of our 3-hour workshops this year. In the Spanish strand, Kara Jacobs and Arianne Dowd offer “The Power of Triple Input for Film.” In the French strand, director Mariette Monpierre offers “Guadeloupe et Identité à travers l’art d’une cinéaste.” Of course, poetry will be a special feature of this year’s conference as we welcome Keynote Speaker, Richard Blanco. Additionally, our own Beckie Rankin will offer a session in the French strand, Poésie Engagée - Est-ce que vous en êtes passionnés?

This past year MaFLA has offered great PD events such as the Summer Institute, the Proficiency Academy, Diversity Day, and the CORE Practices Seminars. If you weren’t able to attend, don’t despair! Many of the same talented presenters will be at the Fall Conference. For example, Greg Duncan and Greta Lundgaard led our Proficiency Academy in July and we are very fortunate to have them join us at the Fall Conference. Greg is offering a 6-hour and a 3-hour workshop and Greta will present two 3-hour workshops. Many of us know and appreciate Greg’s expertise in proficiency-based instruction. I attended sessions with Greta for the first time at the Proficiency Academy this summer and I came away with so much, including a new respect and understanding for how to be a reflective practitioner, and the
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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

New Teacher Memberships (first year in the profession) $25.00

**Retired memberships:** $25.00 per year

**Student memberships:** $15.00 per year

For more info and/or a membership application packet, contact:
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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. 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:**
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Email: ronie@mafla.org  
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Wilbraham, MA 01095-1439  
Tel: 413-596-9284

Taking advantage of your MaFLA membership this year, you have enjoyed outstanding professional development events: the Core Practices Seminars, Diversity Day, Proficiency Academy, the Summer Institute, and the Jubilee Conference! Listen to our members who tell us “This PD! I love the presenters and meeting other teachers with the same interests. We have formed a group to continue our learning!” (Summer Institute participant). Come experience the learning, the camaraderie, and the sheer fun of being a MaFLA member!
roles of grammar and vocabulary in our classes. Two of my favorite Greta quotes from the Proficiency Academy are: “Teaching is the ultimate interpersonal experience. We’re going to make mistakes. Forgive yourself, don’t excuse yourself” and “It’s not about how many words you know. It’s about what happens when you encounter words you don’t know.”

NEW this year: The Exhibit Hall will also feature a book-signing event with two nationally known author-educators on Friday!!

- Laura Terrill will be signing copies of her must-have The Keys to Planning for Learning, co-written with Donna Clementi. We will have some of these books available for sale in the Exhibit Hall for the book-signing event. Even better, bring your own copy for Laura to sign! Don't have your own copy yet? Laura's book is available at www.ACTFL.org in the Publications section. There is plenty of time for you to order a copy.

- Our Keynote Speaker, poet Richard Blanco, will also be signing copies of his books. We will have a limited amount of Richard's books available for sale in the Exhibit Hall. Skip the line and bring your own copy of one of Richard's books to the conference! If you can't attend the book signing, Richard will also be available during a Question & Answer session Friday morning for you to ask him any questions you might have and to sign your book. Perhaps you want to know his thoughts on the best way to teach poetry? You are welcome to send your questions for Richard ahead of time to jeannemafla@gmail.com.

Among all the wonderful learning opportunities will be plenty of chances for fun. Enjoy a weekend being surrounded by other educators who also love to learn, share, and grow. Catch up with old friends and make some new ones during the Members’ Reception, win great raffle prizes, and loosen up at Zumba.

Remember, attending the conference will not only benefit you, it will benefit your colleagues, your school and most importantly, your students. Online registration is available at www.mafla.org. Please send any questions or comments to conference2018@mafla.org. We look forward to seeing you in October!

Jeanne O'Hearn
2018 Conference Chair
PROFICIENCY is the goal

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Welcome back. I hope you had a restful and rewarding summer respite and are gearing up for Fall. Most of us are already back in our classrooms, enthusiastic and eager to put into practice all of the new skills and information we learned during the summer.

Many of us attended classes, many of us grew through reading publications and many of us attended professional development programs. Now it is time to put that learning into our daily lessons.

Soon Fall will be upon us and that brings crisp air, scarves, cozy sweaters, falling leaves and conference season. Many of us look forward to our annual participation in the MaFLA Fall Conference which this year promises to be another outstanding professional development opportunity. Our lead article gives you some of the important information about the conference.

I am looking forward to hearing from our Keynote Speaker, Richard Blanco and plan to arrive at the conference with a few of his books for him to sign.

I also am excited to be back again in Springfield, at the Sheraton Monarch Place. The hotel is a perfect venue and there are so many things to do in Springfield, which is changing each year. I strongly recommend making it a weekend and taking advantage of what the city has to offer.

Last spring, I took some friends from Mexico to the Basketball Hall of Fame and the Dr. Seuss Museum. They truly enjoyed the Hall of Fame and went home with numerous purchases from the store (basketballs, jerseys, calendars, etc.). I was a bit hesitant about taking two adults, who might have no idea who Dr. Seuss was, to the Dr. Seuss museum. But I think because I wanted to go and everyone who was exiting the museum was so animated, I decided to just take the plunge. To my surprise my guests were familiar with his books and we had a wonderful time. An unexpected bonus - everything was explained in English and in Spanish so we all left with a much better understanding of the author and his works.

The MGM Casino is another good reason to spend some time outside of the Conference venue. It opened a couple of weeks ago and is proving to be very popular. It’s a short walk from the Conference hotel so parking is not an issue. It’s worth a visit if only to take in the unique décor – not at all what you might expect. I suggest you take advantage of the special Conference lodging rates (which can be extended through Saturday night) and stay for the weekend!

Our featured educator in this issue is Julie Fouhy, an elementary French teacher who is embracing proficiency-based teaching. Be sure to read about all of the exciting activities going on in her classroom.

This issue of the newsletter features one of the salient themes of our 2018 MaFLA Conference – incorporating the fine arts into our classes. You will find four outstanding articles on this theme with tons of ideas from Beckie Rankin, Susan Ridker, Leela M Bakshi, and Marcel LaVergne. I know I have already made a promise to myself to incorporate more of the fine arts into all the levels that I teach.

We also have an article about an action research project on supporting student interpersonal speaking. Check out Jessica Silva Manzo’s Hablamos . . . on page 20.

Advocacy has also been a top topic in this issue. Be sure to read the MaFLA Advocacy Update: To Thrive In A Global Society, We Need World Languages, Not Coding. We all need to be informed of this and be prepared should this become a question or an issue in our districts. Our members have also been very active, writing editorials and blog posts about the importance of learning languages. Also check out the very latest on the Seal of Biliteracy as our State’s Seal policy takes shape with help from the Language Opportunity Coalition. I hope that these writings inspire you to become more of an advocate for foreign languages.

Enjoy this issue and share it with colleagues who might not be members. Show them the winning posters from our annual contest, the picture of the over 130 MaFLA members who spent four days at the MaFLA Proficiency Academy, or the article and photos from our very successful Summer Institute.

These will give them a great idea of how they will benefit from membership. You also might want to encourage new teachers to become members of MaFLA, attend the conference and other PD activities, and connect with colleagues through the association.

I hope to see you all at the 2018 Fall Conference. Let’s make it one of the best attended in years. We can all learn together and from each other. I am looking forward to seeing you!

The deadline for our End of Year issue is November 5. Our theme is Always expanding our repertoires! PD and its impact!

We want to hear from you! How has PD expanded your teaching repertoire? How has it impacted your skills, your knowledge and your classroom? Tell us your personal stories!
MaFLA’s Educator In The Spotlight
An interview with Julie Fouhy, Elementary French Teacher

MaFLA’s second featured educator, Julie Fouhy, teaches grades K1-5 at the Thomas Edison K-8 School in Brighton, MA. She has taught K-12 French for 30 years in both private and public schools. She holds degrees from Holy Cross, Boston College, and Simmons College and lives in Brookline with her husband.

MAFLA: Tell us a little about yourself.

Julie: Growing up in a military family, we moved around the country a lot. In all the schools I attended, I found that French was the only course that was consistent from state to state and it was always my favorite subject. I chose to major in French at Holy Cross and Boston College because I was absolutely obsessed with French from a very young age. I loved the literature, the culture, the art - everything! My Junior Year Abroad Program was a full year of immersion study at the University of Montpellier in France. At BC, I taught undergraduate French as a teaching fellow while working towards an MA and discovered my calling. I began teaching at private schools, eventually moving to public schools after completing an MAT at Simmons College.

I joined Boston Public Schools and began teaching at the Richard J. Murphy K-8 in Dorchester where I taught French grades K-5, then switched to Excel High School in South Boston teaching French 1 and 2. At Excel I had some of the same students that I had taught at the Murphy. So I was able to see kids that I taught in elementary graduate from high school which was pretty cool. Last year I switched back to elementary school teaching grades K1 - 5 at the Thomas Edison K-8 in Brighton.

MAFLA: You’ve taught a wide range of students and levels. What teaching skills do you find work with all the grades that you teach?

Julie: I find that elementary students are fine with the use of the target language. At MaFLA’s Core Practices PD in March I learned that young kids understand roughly 40% of what you say in their native language so it is easy to use the target language at this age. At the Edison, all students have an opportunity to take a foreign language in the K-1 classes. We also have SLIFE classes (students with limited or interrupted formal education), a student population where over 60 different native languages are spoken (which is typical in Boston Public Schools), students with emotional impairment, students with disabilities, and many non-English speaking students. But you know what? All these students respond to a world language class. I value the home languages of my students making sure to incorporate a little bit of their native languages of Urdu, Bengali, Hind, Mandarin etc. City kids are exposed to all these different languages and they know that all languages are valid. We looked at data in class today about the languages spoken in our school and how they reflect the world. Language diversity is so important and we very much value the fact that we have all these languages in Boston Public Schools.

MAFLA: Yes, valuing students’ native language and culture is so important. I love that you try to incorporate the cultural aspects of your students into the world language class.

Julie: It is important to value our students’ heritage while at the same time teaching them a new language. If I can teach them French in a way that includes their country of origin, then it solidifies our relationship and shows kids that bilingualism and biliteracy are to be seen as an asset.

MAFLA: Moving to another topic, I’d like to ask, since the proficiency movement is so new, how do you think language teaching will evolve over the next few decades?

Julie: All the new teachers coming into the profession are being trained this way so proficiency-based teaching is becoming the norm. I think that for teachers who have been teaching awhile, making the shift to proficiency is taking a bit longer. There is a similar dynamic going on in the teaching of math. The move towards proficiency-based instruction is moving forward, but at varying rates among teachers. As an older person trying to make the shift, I can tell you that it is very challenging. But you can see it in the students - proficiency-based teaching keeps students engaged and enhances their language skills so much. I am making the shift and getting better at it year by year.
An interview with Julie Fouhy, Elementary French Teacher

MaFLA: So then what would be your advice to another teacher making the transition to proficiency-based teaching?

Julie: You can't throw out all the tried and true. Keep your toolbox. Take one step at a time; follow what's out there right now. Generous teachers put their stuff online and I've learned so much from looking at their work. I'm not there yet in terms of offering my ideas, but I am so grateful that others are.

MaFLA: What are some of the fun things you like to do in class? How have they affected your teaching and students' learning?

Julie: We throw around a lot of stuffed animals to practice spontaneous speaking. We dance and stretch almost daily: I find crazy short dance videos (see wixx.ca) for brain breaks. They are in French with a Canadian accent which is great.

We have routines built into the class, but we do a lot of movement too. I use music and motion in every class. Funny videos are great when you can find them. I go between routines so that they feel safe and then try to do activities that surprise them. After seeing a great session on interactive notebooks at the fall MaFLA conference, we've been using this technique in some of my 4th and 5th grade classes.

I also do a lot of celebrations of birthdays, name days, la Galette des Rois, la Chandelier, anything that is something to celebrate and that gives the students a way to relate to the lesson on a personal level. We make crêpes at least once a year in every class.

MaFLA: That's an amazing technique that we could all adopt. What else do you do to motivate students?

Julie: I'm incorporating more art into my classroom making historical and cultural connections with the kids. In the high school, we made papier mâché in the classroom to celebrate Mardi Gras. We take field trips to the Museum of Fine Arts and the Gardner Museum. Incorporating authentic texts from a wide range of sources, notably the French Cultural Center, is really motivating! A generous gift of books provided by the French Consulate allowed me to set up a French library for my students to browse. I can't anticipate what they are going to love but they run to the baskets of books and quietly read and share with each other their favorites. It is fantastic! We also do a letter a day with the young children, and they have to find the letters in the books. They also look for animals that we are studying. I will choose a read aloud book and then I will see them going back to that book and reading it aloud to themselves. Having French books in my classroom has been absolutely transforming.

MaFLA: Is there anything else you would like to share?

Julie: I'd like to stress the importance of cross disciplinary collaboration. (if colleagues are willing!) It is extremely helpful when you are a sole language practitioner in an elementary school. Our music teacher has gone out of her way to add French songs to her curriculum so we research them together and co-teach them. Three classes sang a song in French at the Winter Choral Assembly. My new French art unit dovetails with the social studies curriculum on the American Revolution. The art teacher helped prepare the students for the museum trip and is adding units on Van Gogh, Matisse and Picasso, with more to come! Students share French ballet terms they are learning in dance class as well. We have a great collaborative team.

MaFLA: Outside of the classroom, what activities do you pursue that inform your teaching? Hobbies?

Julie: I am on the educator advisory board of the Museum of Fine Arts which helps me to connect with colleagues from all over New England. I am on the board of the Boston Strasbourg Sister City Association (BSSCA) and led the Boston-Strasbourg high school homestay exchanges both here and in France. I travel to francophone countries whenever possible, most recently to Morocco with French friends I met through BSSCA.

I also participate in our elementary PLC (professional learning community) which connects me to other world language elementary teachers across the district. I love OWL, NELL and most recently Project Zero out of HSE. I go to every MaFLA event that is offered; I find that The French Cultural Center is also a great resource - I get a lot of books from there.

MaFLA: You have been an active member of MaFLA; how has your membership inspired your teaching?

Julie: I learn SO MUCH every time I go - the PDs are really well organized. I subscribe to the blogs of experienced and imaginative practitioners like Josh Cabral, Lisa Shepard (Madame's Musings) and Rebecca Blouwolff (mmeblouwolff.weebly.com). I very much appreciate the generosity and sharing that everyone does. I used to only go to the fall conference every other year but now I find I need some fresh ideas in the fall and I am committed to going every year. I encourage other people to join - especially teachers who are the only world language teacher in their building which unfortunately is becoming more and more the norm. It's a great way to collaborate with other teachers.

MaFLA: Thank you, Julie.

Interviewed by Julie Caldarone, MaFLA Membership and Marketing Committee

Do you know a MaFLA member who is innovative, enthusiastic, dedicated, proficient, and who deserves some recognition? Please recommend him or her for this column. Contact Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin at madelyngonnnerman@gmail.com
Portrait Personification: Going Beyond The Traditional Art Unit

by Beckie Bray Rankin

Teaching for proficiency means preparing students for the globalized world in which they live by providing a pathway filled with real-life tasks and ludic activities that build real-life skills. My sophomore class curriculum (French IIH, intermediate mid-high) is a survey of French history and happiness, so I try to integrate students into the time period whenever possible through the application of yesteryear’s themes to today’s world or through simulating events. For example, we become a town during the unit on the French Revolution in which everyone chooses a character and we decide why our community should (or should not) join forces with the rebels. Our post-Revolution unit dives into the explosion of art around 1900 on the topic Comment se représente-t-on? and students hope to “live” another story.

This Essential Question is inspired from the idea that artists represent the world in which they live, so I activate the students’ creativity using a performance-based assessment personifying a masterpiece: the artwork representing itself. This process takes the social-emotional skill of perspective-taking to a new level as students research the artist and work of art to hypothesize how that chef d’oeuvre would speak about itself, its biography, and its raison d’être. In an effort to explore how our choices (actions and words) represent who we are, the students made goals around these Can Do Statements for the unit:

- I can identify the effect of absence, presence, exclusion, and irony
- I can describe and support my opinion about how I represent myself
- I can deliver a presentation about “my life” and purpose/role from the perspective of a French work of art

Our typical first day of the unit includes agreeing on goals and our Academic Conversation for the time period during which students focus on how they imagine different people would have found happiness. Once students hear about the personification project, they are excited to get their hands into the structures and vocabulary necessary to do research on their artwork. In the most recent unit I taught this year, we began by watching a short clip on the overview of 19th century art. In a think-pair-share, students compared and contrasted the various art movements of the time period, for example impressionism, neoclassicism, and romanticism. Equipped with options and a creative project rubric, students selected a piece of francophone art (music, sculpture, painting, garden, etc.) and “claimed it” by putting a photo on our shared presentation for class the next day. The most popular artists include Monet, Millet, Manet, and Van Gogh. The flexibility and choice empowered students to look more deeply into pieces of art that intrigued them rather than just choose one that easily fit the bill, though “Starry Starry Night” shows up in every class! Their presentational Can-Do statements were: “I can recount important life experiences” and “I can present a historically accurate analysis of my chosen artwork.” The students primarily worked on the project at home, watching selected videos and reading selected articles as they analyzed the biography and purpose of their chosen piece.

Rubric - presentational speaking (developed from Adair-Hauck, Glisan, and Troyan’s IPA Presentational Rubric)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Working to Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>My content includes my biography and that of my artist, an analysis of my importance, and other important details specific to me.</td>
<td>My content includes my biography and/or that of my artist, my importance, and another important detail specific to me.</td>
<td>My content is vague, unclear, or incorrect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Function &amp; Text Type</td>
<td>I easily handle personifying a piece of art while using complex French - in particular, negation.</td>
<td>I can keep it together when referring to a piece of art as myself using standard French - including some negation.</td>
<td>I can mostly keep it together when personifying a piece of art using standard French - in particular, negation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Type &amp; Impact</td>
<td>I clearly organize my presentation to be rich in detail, engaging, and educative.</td>
<td>I can organize my presentation to share pertinent details.</td>
<td>I can organize my presentation to explain most salient information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensibility</td>
<td>I am readily understood by a native speaker.</td>
<td>I can be understood by a native speaker.</td>
<td>I can communicate my main idea to a native speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Control</td>
<td>I am precise and diverse in my language.</td>
<td>I pay attention to language.</td>
<td>I make continued mistakes on learned language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Over the next four days through fashion, paintings, music, poetry, and vignettes, we explored presence and absence in art, likes and dislikes of the time period, and perspective-taking. These experiences allowed students to practice presentational and interpersonal skills in class while they employed interpretive skills at home in research. Our communicative activities created learning pathways both in terms of language skills and cultural knowledge. For example, we read an excerpt about les salons des refusés, piecing together the irony of being labeled as "rejected" based on contemporary standards, only to be accepted into a new type of salon for exactly these types of paintings. In our discussions of Rimbaud’s "Dormeur du val", we talked about what the careful word choice (for example the specific flowers, the ironic double use of the word "trou", the metaphoric imagery) and also what was omitted, most specifically the life-state of le jeune soldat. In analyzing different visual representations of Rimbaud's poem, students hypothesize what could and could not be in the image to give it the same feel as the poem. We took Rimbaud’s perspective to explore his anti-militaristic sentiment cached in the poem and related all that back to our theme of representation. The various authentic resources we used were a contextualized springboard to discuss negation, which I incorporated later into their presentation feedback.

The day before their presentational summative performance assessment, we engaged in a TALK (Clementi & Terrill’s Target language use, Accuracy, Listening and responding, Kindness in conversation) where students discussed in a structured way how teens today represent themselves. We debated tough questions, such as "does your interior need to match the exterior?" and "does what is in your life define your life?". This interpersonal evaluation is an easy way to provide feedback via the TALK rubric that I use while walking around to the various groups in the room.

Finally, it was presentation day. Since the performance-based task was to impersonate the artwork they selected, many chose to “level up” by dressing up as the personnage portrayed [see photo of sophomore Marc C below], humming the music, or wearing a mobile hat with "Starry Starry Night" celestial beings circling above. Each student shared their life story (who created them, when, where they have moved and why) and then why they are important. Within their analysis, students were able to bring in the cultural knowledge from the interpretive and interpersonal activities on history and art. One piece of the rubric hit the presentational norm of “keeping it together”, which for some students was more challenging than others. A few students had trouble shifting perspectives to talk about “my creator” and the museums “I have lived in” while other students took the impersonation piece too far and were unable to deliver the appropriate content. Motivated students were able to adapt their presentation to bring across the feeling of the piece of art, for example one student impersonated a painting of Napoleon and thus took on his hubris, and another student danced around the class using a high, airy voice as she hypothesized why Degas created her. Each presentation was unique and engaging; students were motivated to learn about the importance of the art and what it represented.

My students may never again be asked to personify a piece of art, and yet they walked away with valuable skills such as taking different perspectives and identifying how people employ different mediums and media to present themselves in different ways. These are the types of life skills that prepare students for a globalized world in which they will need to communicate with people who represent themselves in various and valuable ways.}

Beckie Bray Rankin
Lexington High School
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This is a reprint of an article first published in the September Issue of the AATF National Bulletin.

“A broad education in the arts helps give children a better understanding of their world...We need students who are culturally literate as well as math and science literate.”

–Paul Ostergard, Vice President, Citicorp
The “Fine Art” Of Using Fine Art To Bring Culture To The Classroom

By Susan Ridker

One of the “godparents” of this type of work, Elliot Eisner, described 10 lessons that a student can learn from engagement with the arts:

1. The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships.
2. The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution.
3. The arts celebrate multiple perspectives.
4. The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity.
5. The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know.
6. The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects.
7. The arts teach students to think through and within a material.
8. The arts help children learn to say what cannot be said.
9. The arts enable us to have experience we can have from no other source and through such experience to discover the range and variety of what we are capable of feeling.
10. The arts’ position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults believe is important.

Who can argue with the importance of the academic and “whole-child” lessons stated above? Any one of those lessons would be reason enough to support the introduction of fine art into the curriculum. And those lessons are merely the happy by-product of the primary benefit of exposing world language students to the fine art of their target culture(s): cultural literacy.

Cultural literacy has been on our professional radar since approximately 1999, when the “Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century” (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project) identified culture as having a “vital and intimidating elites, we can enrich our students’ proficiency in both the target language and culture, as well as provide them with the 21st century skills they will need to become good global citizens.

This summer, I went to la Dordogne in France and was awed by the prehistoric cave drawings in the Grott de Roussignac. The guide told us that no one knows whether the artists were observing a religious or spiritual practice, communicating with other people, recording memories of where they had lived before, or creating something beautiful out of nothing. Interestingly, for almost the same amount of time, scholars have been arguing in favor of incorporating fine arts in education. According to one author’s paraphrasing of Plato, “[i]t is the arts that possess the two elements—seeing and hearing—with which the soul can come into contact with the world. It is through these two elements that the soul acquires knowledge and becomes familiar with beauty.”

More recently, with the benefit of modern technology, we have been able to obtain large amounts of data to show that, in fact, there is a powerful causal link between exposure to art and improved academic performance and other, “whole-child” benefits. Since the seminal 1999 publication of the influential book, Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning, researchers have found that exposure to art helps students to increase academic achievement, improve motivation, develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and enhance social competencies such as communication and collaboration.
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By Susan Ridker

eral, but also help us to envision using fine art, in particular, by giving us an invaluable road map to guide students’ inquiry about the relationship of products and practices to perspectives through the use of authentic images.15

Glisan and Donato use the acronym of “IMAGE” to represent the four steps of their model, which can be used at multiple proficiency levels, including Novice High. Step 1 involves the portrayal of authentic Image(s) of a cultural product or practice for students to Make detailed observations in order to “have a clear understanding of the practice or product they observe.”16 Step 2 requires that the teacher give the students additional information in the target language through a short article or infographic so that the students can Analyze the information as a springboard to generate hypotheses about cultural perspectives.17 Students then Generate their hypotheses in Step 3, and Explore perspectives and reflect further in Step 4.18 This last step is designed so that learning is extended beyond the classroom.19 Students think about what they would still like to know, conduct corresponding cultural investigations, and then present their findings to the class in the target language.20 The combination of these steps can lead students to think critically, reflect on cultural perspectives, and share their opinions in the target language.21

Using works of the target culture’s fine art as the images in Glisan and Donato’s “IMAGE” model is a wonderful way to double down on cultural instruction. For example, a unit on French fashion trends over time may explore other cultures’ influence on French fashion by presenting the images of Monet’s painting, “La Japonaise,” below.22 Imagine the opportunities for students to explore the French craze for Japanese arts,23 and even reflect on how the painting expresses Monet’s view of this trend. A unit on the French attitudes toward democracy, including an investigation of why the French are always “on strike,” would be well served by using, as its hook, the image below: Eugène Delacroix’s “La Liberté guidant le peuple.” The allegorical figure of Liberty in this painting, surrounded soldiers of every age and class, signifies that everyone can be a revolutionary.24 What a rich authentic resource to use for comparing and contrasting cultural perspectives, especially considering that the Statue of Liberty was designed (albeit by a Frenchman) for Americans in counterpoint to Delacroix’s revolutionary figure who walked on corpses.25

One final example to convince you to use fine art in your classroom is Jean Béraud’s, “Paris: rue du Havre,” (next page) Whether you are focusing on shopping habits or city life, this tableau of the “cathédrale du commerce,” as described by Emile Zola,26 today attracts over 7 million visitors to the department store, “Le Printemps,” which you can see in the background.27

A true “arts integrationist” might caution us against using art in the curriculum solely as an aid to learning something else (e.g. cultural perspectives) for fear that the art would be reduced to being merely a “handmaiden” in the service of another objective, and would lose its validity as a discipline in and of itself.28 My colleague, Rebecca Blouwolff, and I addressed this issue directly by creating a unit for our 7th grade Novice High students that focused on French Impressionism itself. Essential questions for this unit included, “How can I reflect critically on the role of art in culture?”, “How can I distinguish one artistic movement from another?”, and “What is the role of artist in society?”

Our “can-do’s” required that our students show us that they could use the target language to identify key features of Impressionism, distinguish impressionism from a few preceding artistic movements, present key autobiographical information about at least one Impressionist artist and three artworks by that artist, and read and understand key dates and historical facts about Impressionism.29
Every unit needs a “hook,” and I chose an audio excerpt from France Inter’s 2000 ans d’Histoire (2,000 Years of History) that portrayed French citizens’ infuriated reaction to the unveiling of the first Impressionist exhibition in Paris. My students were taken aback that artwork that seems so benign today would have provoked the outcry, “This is some sad shit!” in 1874. Needless to say, they were hooked! (…and somehow they already knew the definition of the swear word…)

Over the course of the unit, our students viewed PowerPoints, read brief articles, took guided notes, and conducted research online in Encyclopédie Larousse. They discussed their favorite paintings with a partner, describing the style and subject matter, and justifying their opinions with specific comments. For fun, they played Impressionism bingo, and even used their own artistic skills to make portraits of each other. The only aspect of this unit conducted in English in the classroom was a “Brain Pop” on Impressionism, and a questionnaire at the end of the unit.

The “pièce de résistance” was our capstone field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts. It was important to us that the students see their particular artist’s work in person, in order to experience first-hand the visible brushstrokes for which Impressionists are known, and to notice the size, scale and three-dimensionality of the paintings. We also wanted to draw the students’ attention to how the frames enhanced the paintings, and to how the curators chose to place the paintings vis-à-vis other paintings in a gallery.

Although the tour we took, “Three Centuries of French Art,” was in English, we made sure to do plenty of other activities in French. Two weeks before the date of the field trip, Rebecca and I did some reconnaissance of the Art of Africa gallery and the Art of the Americas wing in order to find sculptures and paintings that connected to France or francophone countries, either by artist or subject matter. We created a scavenger hunt, a questionnaire for reflection, and a drawing activity. Adapting an exercise I had learned from MFA educators, I also asked the students to place color-coded cards with emoticons in front of various artworks, indicating which piece made them laugh, which painting made them question, which object they would want to place in their bedroom, and which artwork they would want to hang in their French classroom. I probably could have predicted that Gustave Caillebotte’s “Homme au Bain” made most of them giggle a little, while Degas’ Little 14 Year-Old Dancer was the sculpture that most of them wanted to display at school.

Rebecca and I sometimes joke that while I envision students on the field trip gazing at the art respectfully with their hands clasped carefully behind their backs, she worries that they will be ducking out to go smoke cigarettes in the bathroom. As a matter of fact, the truth is somewhere in between, but leaning heavily toward the respectful gaze. Upon our return to Wellesley, the students filled out anonymous questionnaires in English, which yielded the following, representative comments:

“…This trip was like a fantasy for me….after examining impressionist paintings and other styles, art began to look so important in French culture. Since this trip, I can’t stop thinking about it…”

“My personal favorites were the ones produced with dots, where you had to step back to see the bigger picture. Sometimes you have to do that in life.”

“The trip showed me a lot of things about art that I have passed over many times at this museum because I normally just go their (sic) with my family and look but this time I actually learned things about the painting…I
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helped me understand the artwork more, how the artists created it, and the history behind the artwork which makes me want to go back again.”

“Seeing the real things also made me realize how different French culture is.”

“I learned a lot more about Impressionist style and form. I also learned how to identify meaning in a painting, and how to notice abstract clues to the real meaning.”

“Seeing the Impressionist paintings up close made me think a lot about how art played a role in the paintings. It was interesting to see so many similar-style paintings put together, because it made me see all the similarities in the art.”

“I could see the connection between fine art and French culture because the visit really put into perspective all the different types of paintings and the abundance; just a fraction.”

I am not an art historian, and you do not have to be one either to take advantage of the “abundance” of fine art to introduce culture into your classroom! As a start, you can take a look at the following resources, which address how to embed culture in day to day teaching:

- Glisan, E., and Donato, R., Enacting the Work of Language Instruction: High Leverage Teaching Practices (ACTFL 2017)
- http://learn.ncartmuseum.org/art-integration-guide/ (this site gives instruction on guided inquiry to develop visual literacy)

Sources

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5 President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, “Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America’s Future Through Creative Schools” Washington D.C., May 2011, p.16
7 President’s Committee, (2011) pp. 15-16
10 Id. p. 118.
12 Cutshall, “More than a Decade of Language Instruction,” The Language Educator, p. 32(April 2012).
13 Id. p. 33.
14 Id.
15 Glisan and Donato, p. 115.
16 Id p. 126.
17 Id. p. 127.
18 Id. p. 128.
19 Id.
20 Id.
21 Id. p. 129.
22 www.mfa.org/collections/conservation/conservation-in-action/la-japonaise
23 Id.
26 www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/Education/learning-resources/teaching-packets/pdfs/picturing_france.pdf
29 Lisa Shepard has posted her excellent unit on Impressionism for Intermediate Low learners at http://madameshepard.com/?p=1389, and we used her Guided Note activity in our unit.
Reflections on music in the classroom to grow student engagement, motivation and proficiency

For those of you who are old enough to have caught my Gloria Estefan reference from 1987, BRAVO for a lifetime of service to youngsters! If you didn’t quite recognize the title or artist, please research one of the first women to cross over and bring Latin music to English-Speaking listeners with a barrage of hits, hard work, determination and Grammy Awards. If you are able to find tickets, *On Your Feet - The Musical*, *the Story of Emilio and Gloria Estefan* will make a fabulous event for you and your language teacher colleagues.

I remember coveting that record (yes, record!) and the feeling it gave me, along with a strong desire to head to Miami to dance and sample Cuban-American culture. I followed this album with one by the ubiquitous Carlos Santana but then had a hard time finding more music of the same genre. A trip to San Diego inspired a drive to Tijuana and a rather large purchase of records and tapes of traditional Mexican music along with one by the group Mana, a rock band from Jalisco. I was amazed and overjoyed to learn that such a thing existed and that the dry and twangy cassette recordings accompanying my textbooks were not my only source of music for the classroom. I saved money for music and books on every international trip I’ve ever taken. I once even spent 40 minutes with a mom and her 12 year old running through Lido Musique on Les Champs-Elysées purchasing up every album the child suggested.

While I remain grateful for those experiences, as I enter my 26th year teaching, I find my searches more internet-based though they remain incredibly rich in depth and breadth. I have found overwhelming evidence that my passion for music is now one of my biggest assets in fostering student engagement, motivation, culture and proficiency! It is no longer an “extra” that is saved for a fun Friday afternoon of enrichment. At this summer’s MAFLA Proficiency Academy, featured presenter Greg Duncan reminded us of R.C. Gardner in Glisan and Shrum’s Teacher’s Handbook, that “Motivation is THE most influential factor in learning a new language.”

Music has been instrumental (pun, most definitely intended) in bringing joy, lightness and excitement to my classroom. The students are excited to arrive to class on “Música Miércoles”, my sneaky way of combining a “bell-ringer” activity, with movement and a “brain-break” for students arriving from their other classes. My sixth grade Spanish students became obsessed with the “Just Dance” versions of some popular Latin hits of the past year such as *La Bicicleta* by Shakira and Carlos Vives. We push the desks aside and follow well-rehearsed shadows of trendy dancers teaching us the latest moves. After viewing the Bicicleta video, I recall quite vividly a student exclaiming, “I want to go to Colombia! It looks like so much fun!” We spent time talking about different places to visit in Colombia, what we would like to do there with family and friends, and exploring the philanthropic endeavors of Vives and Shakira. A comical off-shoot of these seemingly sidebar conversations, in the target language, became the game “Quién es más viejo?” The students were hardly able to contain themselves when they learned that these icons of pop culture were indeed OLDER than their parents!

Many language educators have heard of the new phenomena of creating a “March Madness” type of elimination-based contest using songs instead of NCAA Basketball teams. Some have tried several versions of the bracket-busting activity that seems quite popular with our students. For my first year of my individual version, I created brackets with painter’s tape on my white board and sent a series of Google Forms voting links to my students (adding to my goal of incorporating more technology to my teacher toolbox) each night. This spring, I joined hundreds of teachers around the world in a forum created by Señor Ashby of greater than 25,000 students voting for winners. Exposing students to so many different songs, artists, stories and videos has given them the opportunity to listen to Spanish speakers from around the world and observe cultures that would remain

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“Fine Art” (conc.)

- The Education Department at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts recommends the following resources to search for artwork you can use in the classroom:
  - [www.artsandculture.google.com](http://www.artsandculture.google.com)
  - [www.mfa.org](http://www.mfa.org)
  - [www.metmuseum.org/toah/](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/) (this is the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Heilbrunn timeline of art history—very helpful!)
  - [www.dp.la](http://www.dp.la) (this is the Digital Public Library of America—it contains 22,361,822 images, texts and sounds from across the United States)
  - [www.art21.org](http://www.art21.org) (this is a collection of contemporary art by diverse artists of different nationalities who are living in the United States).

Cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead once stated, “As the traveler who has once been from home is wiser than he who has never left his own doorstep, so a knowledge of another culture should sharpen our ability to scrutinize more steadily, to appreciate more lovingly, our own.” Here’s hoping that your use of fine art in the classroom will help your students begin to examine the perspective of their target culture, as well as discover their own.

*Susan Ridker is an ATW and French Teacher at Wellesley Middle School.*

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The Rhythm Is Gonna Get You . . . And Them!

by Leela M. Bakshi

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2018 MaFLA Newsletter
lifeless in a textbook photo. I was providing input, keeping myself and my students in the target language and moving culture to the front seat on this road trip to proficiency. My morning classes rushed to log in and be first to vote for their favorite songs while the afternoon classes tried desperately to sway the vote of participants near and far to fall in favor of their favorite songs. The school was abuzz with activity and conversation outside of the classroom and there was a healthy competitive feeling among the different grades. Eighth grade couldn’t believe that seventh grade would vote *Yo Voy Ganao* by *Systema Solar* to move on leaving *Mi Gente* by *J. Balvin* in the dust. I couldn’t believe that I was witnessing *Krashen’s theories* being proven with street dancing and *Latin Grammy* nominees.

Recently, a former eighth grade Spanish student shared with me that she had an incredible moment on a trip to Italy to celebrate her grandparents 50th wedding anniversary. Throughout the family dinner and celebration, a DJ played songs and asked for the crowd to request favorites or join in to sing a tune. All of a sudden, she heard the winning song from our March Madness 2017 *Sofía* by *Spaniard Álvaro Soler* and decided to jump on stage! Her whole extended family was in awe that she sang the whole song, word for word, in Spanish with near-native accuracy. After viewing the video her family took, I asked her what she told them after she finished with cheers and applause. Her response was brilliant in the way only a fourteen year old can sum up our most thoughtfully planned and executed pedagogical aspirations, “It was just a fun, extra thing we did in Spanish class last year.” Indeed.

Along with the above embedded links, the following resources and educators are quite helpful as I continue to bring music into my classroom on our Path to Proficiency.

I have followed [Sharon Birch](http://artsforliteracy.org/our-classrooms/doherty-middle-school-8a/) for years. Sharon has an incredible ear for music and has created a database of thousands of songs with linguistic features and focus. Kara Jacobs’ blog [CEAUTHRES], *Comprehending and Extending Authentic Resources*, is incredibly rich with information. Kara shares many lessons including one I adore using “Soy Yo” by Bomba Estereo. Author and Educator [Kristy Placido](http://artsforliteracy.org/our-classrooms/doherty-middle-school-8a/) has a wealth of information on using music as a ”hook” for culture. Martina Bex continues to be a leader in the field with tips for colleagues in her blog, [The Comprehensible Classroom](http://artsforliteracy.org/our-classrooms/doherty-middle-school-8a/).

Leela Bakshi has been a Spanish, French and Latin teacher in the Andover Public Schools since 1992. Recently she was a participating teacher in the New England Arts for Literacy federal grant (http://artsforliteracy.org/our-classrooms/doherty-middle-school-8a/).

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**The Rhythm Is Gonna Get You . . . And Them!**

by Leela M. Bakshi

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[Finally.](http://artsforliteracy.org/our-classrooms/doherty-middle-school-8a/)
Integrating The Fine And Applied Arts Into The L2 Curriculum

by Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

Integrating the Fine and Applied Arts into the L2 curriculum runs counter to the emphasis put on STEM in today’s educational philosophy. Research on the brain suggests that the best educational system is one that develops both the left (STEM) and the right (Fine Arts) brain. The former focuses on logic and the latter on creativity. According to tradition, Fine Arts include painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry and Applied Arts include theatre and dance.

This article will list some of the activities that I have developed over the years as a high school teacher of French with emphasis on music, drama, art, and poetry.

Music

Experts say that exposure to music makes changes in the way your brain works: it opens up new patterns of thinking, and even improves cognitive functions that are non-music related. (1)

In fact, music is a key element of the Suggestopedia method of teaching L2 developed by the psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov. (2)

American covers of French songs

When introducing the music of the target culture, in this case French, the L2 teacher might show that there are American songs that were originally written/or sung by French singers such as:

- Elvis Presley’s What now my love and Gilbert Bécaud’s Et maintenant
- Dean Martin’s The River Seine and Jacqueline François’s La Seine
- Andy Williams’s Under Paris Skies and Edith Piaf’s Sous Le Ciel De Paris

After playing both versions of the song, students will compare and contrast the lyrics of both versions and explain the differences and similarities. Students will pick which version they prefer and explain why. Are there cultural reasons for the different interpretations? Hopefully, the teachers will not use music simply to illustrate vocabulary and grammar.

Also compare La Seine to Old Man River. How are the images of the Seine and of the Mississippi River different? How is Paris pictured in song compared to New York City or Chicago? This activity was explained in my article “Communities: Lifelong Learning.” The MaFLA Newsletter, End of Year Edition. 2017. Pp. 19-21

French music courses

In the 70’s when semester courses were the rage in some districts, I taught a course entitled French Music wherein the curriculum consisted in listening to and analyzing French songs. The repertoire consisted in Charles Aznavour, Guy Béart, George Brassens, Edith Piaf, Charles Trenet, Yves Montand, Mireille Mathieu, and Gilbert Bécaud. At first, the students were not very enthusiastic about my choice of music, but with time they learned to appreciate the genius of those artists. We discovered and discussed common themes within the songs pertaining to culture, relationships, love, sadness, and happiness. The students discussed and wrote about the similarities and the differences between the various artists. Best of all, they enjoyed singing the songs which many of them learned by heart by the end of the semester.

In another school, as part of my course on la Francophonie, I included the music and the poetry of Zachary Richard, the world renowned Cajun singer. The students soon realized that his French was different than that spoken in France. Both a lyricist and a poet, he is proud of his heritage and of his language. On the subject of the inferiority of the Cajun language, Richard states “Je suis peut-être l’exemple le plus flagrant de ce dilemme, mais il est partagé, plus ou moins, par tous les auteurs francophones d’Amérique. Il n’y a pas de bonne réponse à la question de la pureté de la langue, et il n’y a certainement pas de solution facile.” However he emphasizes that “Chaque auteur doit respecter les influences qui lui sont particulières et essayer de les accorder avec la compréhension francophone internationale d’une façon originale.” (3) Once again, the students came to appreciate the music and enjoyed listening to and singing the songs.

Language lab

Before language labs had computers at each station, every morning before homeroom, we piped music into the hallway of the foreign language department. French, Spanish and German music greeted the students as they entered the department. It set the appropriate mood for the day and also caused some consternation if perhaps a day or so were skipped. Some students asked where they could buy some of the songs for their own personal collection.

Drama

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme

After reading and discussing Molière’s Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, my French 5AP class as part of the final exam rewrote a condensed version of the play in modern French and performed it in our high school auditorium for other French students and guests. Everyone had a role to play in its production: choosing which scenes to include, which modern music to play on the
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by Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

piano, guitar, and drums, which costumes to wear, etc. The project took about 10 class days and two days of rehearsal in the auditorium. Because plays are meant to be seen performed on a stage and not just read in a book, the students had a better appreciation of the comic genius of Molière.

This activity was described in my article “Motivating Students in the L2 Classroom.” The MaFLA Newsletter, End of Year Edition. 2015. Pp. 25-27.

Le Petit Prince and the planetarium

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 socio-logical 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. This activity was described in my article “Motivating Students in the L2 Classroom.” The MaFLA Newsletter, End of Year Edition. 2015. Pp. 25-27.

Boston Museum of Fine Arts

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. The name 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 the other students’ presentations 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.

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 Im-
pressionism. 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 into intrinsic. This activity was described in my article "Motivating Students in the L2 Classroom." The MaFLA Newsletter. End of Year Edition. 2015. Pp. 25-27.

Mural painting contest

In cooperation with the art department, I organized a mural painting contest to decorate the walls of the foreign language department at Needham High School. The winners in each language, French, Spanish, German, and Latin would be given a portion of the wall which extended the whole length of the floor on which to paint their mural. Each mural would represent the culture of the language without being stereotypical. The best mural in each language was chosen by the vote of the foreign language and art teachers. The signed murals remained in place until the renovation of the high school a few years later.

Le Petit Prince

During the study of Le Petit Prince, I asked my students to reproduce St. Exupéry’s drawings in the book onto the four windows at the top of the wall separating the classroom from the corridor. After we had finished the book, at times during the rest of the year, I would ask my students to look at the drawings and retell the story as a form of review. It provided them with a good visual aid. This activity was described in my article “Motivating Students in the L2 Classroom.” The MaFLA Newsletter. End of Year Edition. 2015. Pp. 25-27.

Les Fabliaux du Moyen Age

Les Fabliaux are short satirical stories, sometimes in rhyme, written to make the reader laugh and often ending with a moral. After reading a story, I asked my students to draw a comic strip on an overhead master (before PowerPoint!) depicting the major points of the story. They would then project their strip and retell the story to the class. Although everyone read the same story, the comic strips were all different reflecting the students’ creativity.

Proverbs

The following activities involving proverbs can generate enjoyment and enrichment to students:

a. Students research popular American proverbs and their French equivalents.

b. They explain the differences between them.

c. They write short stories in which the proverbs serve as a moral to the story.

d. They illustrate the proverbs visually by a personal drawing or by copying a photo from a magazine or the internet.

Every cloud has a silver lining        Après la pluie le beau temps.


Poetry

As a frequent contributor to the National Capital Language Resource Center’s Culture Club and its French Book Review Editor, I organized the Poetry Room and encouraged the readers to submit cinquains that their students wrote. I suggested that the project be presented as a competition and that the 5 best poems be submitted. To get started, the teacher could show the students how easy and fun it is to write a cinquain by creating one as a whole class project. Then each student could compose one as a class or homework assignment to be posted on the classroom bulletin board. If the students write one cinquain per month, the one that they like the best could be included into an end-of-the-year publication that each student would receive. One middle school teacher posted her students’ cinquains in the corridor outside of her classroom much to the students’ delight.

A Cinquain is a five-line poem not necessarily rhymed.

The first line is a noun which is the title of the poem.
The second line contains two adjectives that describe that noun.
The third line has three verbs that tell the reader more about the subject of the poem.
The fourth line is a sentence that captures the essence of the title.
The fifth line is one word that is a synonym of or a word associated with the title.
Illustrations add a visual effect to the words of the poem.

Snow
Lovely white
Falling dancing drifting
It covers everything it touches
Blanket

La Neige
Belle Blanche
Tomber danser embellir
Elle couvre tout ce qu’elle touche
Flocons


Conclusion

The more students are actively involved in the learning process, the better the learning. By incorporating the Fine Arts into the curriculum, the L2 teacher opens up the neural pathways to the right brain. By including music, drama, art, and poetry, the teacher appeals to the development of the student’s creative and imaginative skills and assures long-term retention of the material.

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 associated with the National Capital Language Resource Center as the author of the Sound Bites for Better Teaching column and is a frequent contributor to the MaFLA Newsletter.
Supporting Student Interpersonal Interaction and Motivation Through Information Gap Activities

INTRO: My name is Jessica Silva Manzo and I have been teaching Spanish at Peabody Veterans Memorial High School for the past five years. As a student in the Master in the Arts of Teaching (MAT) Spanish program at Salem State University, I conducted an action research project this spring as part of my course work for the professional secondary licensure track. I had been frustrated and bored teaching in my upper levels. My students were not speaking in the target language, their confidence was down and I was ready to take this challenge on and make it my mission to change this. I could improve my experience in the classroom as well as that of my students. I wanted my students to feel motivated and interested in the class and I wanted my students to enjoy using the language in order to better communicate with one another and with myself. I wanted to change the focus from written grammar to a more modern approach with a focus on proficiency development and communication.

Project: Specifically as a starting point, I was interested in engaging my students in activities that got them talking and creating with the language. As part of my research, I learned about “information gap activities” which are activities structured to push students to interact to find the “gap” of information that each one of them has. These activities push them to communicate with one another in Spanish, discovering the missing information that their partner had. These types of activities are just what my students needed. They are student centered, and allow for each student to communicate in the target language in a creative and open ended way. Not only were these activities student centered, but the students were for once communicating with a purpose in a real life setting. They were acquiring, clarifying, and requesting information. Sure, they struggled to get through some of the activities, but I was so proud of them, as they kept using the target language. I can honestly say, that these IGA finally motivated my students to speak in class.

I began my project right after midterms in January of 2018 and continued for eight weeks until about March 19. I used a variety of “information gap speaking activities” as part of daily warm-ups in class. As additional components of the project, students completed an initial and a final survey so that I could collect data and better understand what they like about the class and school, and gauge their reactions to the proficiency movement. Students also completed a weekly survey about their least favorite and most favorite activities that we completed over the course of the week.

Results: I was so happy with the results of my action research. Even though it was too short a time frame to see much improvement on individual proficiency, there were many benefits to incorporating the information gap activities in my lessons. Students enjoyed the new routine of coming into the class, ready to find the missing information. When I first began my action research project, I was unaware that these IGA as a 15 minute warm-ups were not realistic. I quickly learned that these types of activities, were not best as warm-ups, but as a very large part of the lesson. These activities can take a whole class; you need time to introduce the activity, activate background knowledge, complete the activity, and share your results. A lot more complex than I was expecting, but that is what learning is all about.

I also was able to evaluate my students’ progress by collecting data on their speaking levels. As I looked back at all my data, I found that a majority of my level III honors stu-

Quantity of Spanish used/ understood.

by Jessica Silva Manzo (inspired by Enrique Iglesias)
Finally, at the end of my project, the final survey was given out. Students were asked fifteen questions. Out of those fifteen, three were heavily focused on proficiency and speaking in the classroom.

As wary as my students are about jumping on the proficiency movement they are ready, we can see that in question number 11. Twenty students out of twenty six, agreed that speaking in the target language should be a main focus. However, they need guidance in understanding how evaluations in speaking and proficiency are done. They are so concerned with their grades, that they are afraid of making mistakes, resulting in them lacking confidence in their speaking abilities.

Conclusions: This was the first of any proficiency research in my department, and I was able to capture some great data to better improve our teaching and programming. My level three students were very honest and they truly participated, even with their lack of vocabulary in Spanish. Students who normally do not participate were participating and motivated. I enjoyed hearing their comments throughout these activities. A few quotes from students' that I wrote down were... “These activities I think helped me on my pronunciation.” “It actually made us practice speaking” and “I am starting to feel more comfortable with speaking.” I believed this was due to the fact that my lessons were now more student centered and they were interpersonally working with one another, on real life authentic activities.

I am very excited to begin revamping my own classroom and motivating my department to join in the proficiency movement. I am ready to transform my classroom from a grammar-focused environment to a more proficiency-focused classroom. However, my job is not done with just that, I want to better myself professionally. I can not wait to attend the MAFLA conference this fall. As I mentioned beforehand, my students were honest in their final survey, they want to be able to speak the language, but are lacking the confidence. I plan to make it my mission to learn the best possible teaching strategies to help them gain the confidence they need. I want them to realize that speaking is not supposed to be 100% correct at all times.

We say arts education is good for general education, but that’s not the point. The arts are what great nations are remembered for. They are a mirror.

—Damian Woetzel

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or collaboration ideas!
jismanzo23@gmail.com or manzoj@peabody.k12.ma.us

A special thank you to my professor Dr. Nicole Sherf for being such an amazing mentor, friend, and role model. Thank you for being so supportive throughout my undergraduate and graduate career!
MaFLA Advocacy Update: To Thrive In A Global Society, We Need World Languages, Not Coding

by Dr. Edward M. Zarrow, MaFLA Advocacy Chair

About two years ago, when I first heard that Jeremy Ring, a Florida State Senator and former Yahoo executive had introduced legislation that would consider coding to be a world language, I immediately asked my own children about their thoughts. I shared Ring’s quote with my then seven-year-old daughter, a girl who has been logging me out of my Google account since she was five: “If you can have computer language skills, you can communicate with people all over the world.” She looked at me in disbelief. “That’s crazy, who can talk to me in code?” she asked. “If I live in Florida, I don’t need to know code, I need another language, it’s called Spanish.”

I have always recognized and respected the place that technology and computer science has in 21st century education. I took a class in Electrical Engineering as an undergraduate at Yale in 1996 so that I could learn how to create a rudimentary website and publish it using code. Every year, I thoroughly enjoy helping both my son and daughter instruct Elsa on how to carve icy designs or my son command zombies and BB-8 at hourofcode.org. Technology is no longer merely a tool for education—for better or for worse, it is part of our educational culture. But to suggest that coding and computer programming ought to fulfill the world language requirement in Florida (or anywhere else for that matter), is wrong-headed, irresponsible, and completely misses the point of why the study of world languages is a critical part of a 21st century education.

While attempts like the one in Florida to promote coding classes at the expense of studying world languages were limited in scope and relatively sporadic, it now appears that we must face this threat head on at the national level. Teachers of world languages and members of the language industry as a whole are now closely monitoring the High School CODES Act, legislation proposed by the U.S. House of Representatives which would establish a competitive grant enabling local educational agencies (LEAs) to introduce “programs that allow high school students to take a coding class in place of a mathematics, science, or foreign language class in order to fulfill a graduation requirement.”

As has been previously published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), “the study of computer coding does not allow students to gain the intercultural skills, insight, and perspectives to know how, when, and why to express what to whom.” By classifying computer coding as a foreign language credit, this program—and others like it—encroach on the limited resources normally allocated to foreign language departments which already suffer from a major teacher shortage.

Legislation like the CODES Act demonstrates a willful failure to recognize the reasons we teach and learn language apart from meaningful communication. The study of languages engenders a respect for diversity, ethnicity, and race and provides students with a means to develop intercultural competency, the cultural knowledge gained as a result of learning languages that widens our global perspectives in order to foster a respect for and eradicate a fear of what we do not understand about other people and to go beyond a shallow understanding of a multi-cultural and multi-lingual world. The key to this is language learning, and it will not come accidentally to students who (for whatever reason) are pushed exclusively to learn coding instead.

It is important to note that senior members of CODE.org agree that coding does not allow for meaningful communication among people and therefore, by extension, is not a world language. Cameron Wilson, vice president of government affairs at CODE.org, has stated that “… a computer language is really only used to communicate to a computer on how to execute codes on a machine (Christian Science Monitor 2/5/16).” Moreover, Amy Hirotaka, the state policy and advocacy manager for CODE.org, wrote in a blog post entitled “Computer Programming is not a Foreign Language,” states unequivocally that programming languages, “… aren’t natural languages … a typical computing language has a vocabulary of about 100 words, and the real work is learning how to put these words together to build a complex program.” Indeed, computer literacy is essential for success, and the ability to code is a 21st century skill, but coding itself is not a world language. Bilingualism, biliteracy, and their byproducts are 21st century skills, too.

Two of the most challenging problems that we as world language teachers face today is that most legislators (and indeed, most constituents) more probably than not had an underwhelming experience in their own language classroom. In addition, students today grossly underestimate the time that it takes to be proficient in a second language, especially if they begin studying that language for the first time in high school. Over the past decade, the way in which languages are taught in the United States has been radically transformed—we know now better than ever how to get students of all backgrounds to gain proficiency—and early access to world languages has served to close the achievement gap in some districts (The Solutions Journal, March, 2013). In addition, the practice of excluding students with disabilities from language classrooms on the basis that they are incapable will soon be a thing of the past (Foreign Language Annals, 48.1). To suggest that students who struggle with language learning would be better off studying programming does everyone a disservice. First, it suggests that mastery of actual computer coding languages like Python and C++ comes quickly, which it does not. It takes a great deal of practice like anything else. And second, giving the option for struggling students to opt out of language is to set low standards and low expectations of out students—among the most deleterious actions that educators at any level can take.

What still frustrates me most about our struggle to sustain and grow language programming across Massachusetts and beyond in the face of this legislation is the fact that students want more opportunities to learn world languages and yet districts are hesitant to offer them in the face of overwhelming need. Moreover, we know
As we prepare our students for college and career readiness, the importance of language arts and the study of world languages should not be underestimated. Today’s focus on STEM subjects is laudable, but the push towards educating students for these fields should not come at the expense of world language classes. Indeed the ability to speak another language is desirable in all STEM related fields.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences states in its 2017 Commission on Language Learning that America’s lack of world language skills “constitutes a national emergency.” Only one in five adults in America speaks another language whereas the majority of adults in Europe are bilingual if not multilingual. “The wide disparity between the European or Chinese approach to languages and the U.S. approach suggests that we, as a nation, are lagging in the development of a critical 21st century skill,” the report said, “and that we risk being left out of any conversation that does not take place in English.”

Evidence now exists that districts driven by a vision of multilingualism and global competency are making great strides in closing the achievement gap – or perhaps the more aptly named “opportunity gap” – faced by so many students living in poverty. If we want to address the opportunity gap, we need more languages in schools, not less.

Every year hundreds of students study and prepare for the Independent School Entrance Exam. The exam requires students to demonstrate knowledge of a broad vocabulary largely derived from classical roots. With two-thirds of the words now used in English derived from classical languages, we should not limit the study of Latin and Ancient Greek in our schools. Indeed, many English Language Learners would benefit from the study of Latin because of its potential to assist in the acquisition of English Language Arts skills.

Language teaching has come a long way since the majority of those working in education or making decisions about educational policy attended world language classes themselves. In the past, learning a language meant poring over vocabulary lists of unconnected words, conjugating verbs, or memorizing answers to questions someone was unlikely to be asked in the first place. We can’t tell you how many times we’ve heard someone say, “I spent four years studying a foreign language, I can’t speak a word of it now.” Those days will soon be gone.

For students today, learning a language is the principle window through which they explore world cultures. Bilingualism, biliteracy, and their byproducts are essential for the college- and career-ready 21st century graduate in Massachusetts and beyond. The new law addressing bilingual education signed by Governor Baker this past November recognizes this fundamental change.

If we continue to allow the majority of our nation’s students to exit 12th grade with an English-only curriculum, we cannot say that we are making global readiness a commitment and a priority for all learners. Indeed, Boston Public School students deserve a high-quality, well-rounded, global education – one that leads with languages. America’s future success in a world economy and the role of our students as partners in a global society are tied to language learning.

Julie A. Caldarone, Michael J. Maguire and Edward M. Zarrow are the Director of World Languages for the Boston Public Schools and serves as a Director on the Board of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. Michael J. Maguire teaches Latin at Boston Latin Academy and leads international trips within the BPS. Edward M. Zarrow is the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2016 National Language Teacher of the Year. The ideas expressed here are their own.

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**World Languages, Not Coding (conc.)**

that we are facing a critical gap in language learning, and on the national level, despite the fact that support for language education tends to be non-partisan, change is happening too slowly. Linguistic and cultural proficiency in more than one world language is essential for all students in the Commonwealth in order to be successful in a global society.
This is a great country in many ways. We are a first-world nation with a high standard of living. And yet in general we are not a globally minded people.

On the whole, as individuals, the majority of us don’t seem to pay much attention to foreign news and affairs, we don’t actively value the cultures and viewpoints of other nations, and we don’t put a lot of resources into teaching and learning about other nationalities.

Learning foreign languages is at the heart of international communication and understanding, and yet an astonishing number of Americans don’t do much about it in our own lives, for our own communities, or even think much about its importance. The sad truth is that despite the increasing need for improved international communication at this time of swift global change, here in the U.S., we just don’t seem to value foreign language learning much, especially when compared to the rest of the world.

Where’s the proof? Consider that the majority of U.S. school systems only begin to teach foreign languages in middle school at about age 12, a time when our brains are already less receptive to learning a new language. Compare that to European children, many of whom start learning foreign languages as early as age 3.

A 2006 study by the European Commission found that not only is the U.S. largely monolingual, but our rate of self-reported bilingualism (15 to 20 percent) is much lower than that of Europe (56 percent). No wonder we have trouble communicating linguistically and culturally with the rest of the world.

And here’s something else you might not have considered: It’s much easier for children to learn a language at an early age compared with later in life. As a foreign language teacher I have taught Spanish to all levels from infants to adults for over 23 years. My elementary school students learn the language quicker, with less pronounced accents, and, importantly, are far more interested in learning than older students or even adults. They learn the very same skills taught in high school, but they have an easier time making progress.

Conversely, I consistently find that high school students tend to struggle more to get the same concepts, and have much more difficulty in working around their American accents. It’s no secret that American high schoolers all too often graduate without actually being able to speak a foreign language very well, even many of those who have studied a language throughout high school. Think of how babies learn without even trying. Language learning just comes more naturally the younger we are.

I’m writing to point out something important, something that affects our children, our town, our whole country, now and in the future: It’s time we catch up to the rest of the world. As parents and as a nation we need to start focusing much more on teaching our children to speak at least one foreign language, and to do this we need to begin teaching languages at a much younger age than most of our school systems currently attempt to do.

The benefits of children learning languages in their early years are too many to count. Here are a few:

1. Mental flexibility and creativity/higher order thinking skills.
2. Higher scores on standardized tests (including in reading and mathematics).
3. Increased employment opportunities both locally and abroad, and with higher salaries.
4. Improved ability to meet foreigners and communicate.
5. Increased understanding of the U.S. and its evolving place in this world of many nations.
6. Improved cultural appreciation of other countries including customs, religions, foods, etc.
7. Better appreciation of our own neighbors who live here in the U.S. but came from foreign cultures.
8. Improved U.S. competitiveness in global markets.

For now, the U.S. has a foreign language learning apathy problem. Until our attitude toward learning languages changes, U.S. corporations will continue to have trouble finding American multilingual speakers to place in good jobs and our country will continue to lag behind other nations in the global economy in ways that will affect all of us personally.

If we want the best futures for our children, if we want to prepare them to be more competitive in job markets and to live with a broader outlook that will benefit them in countless ways, we need to get serious about joining in the ongoing conversations with the rest of the world.

Because those conversations will go on with or without us, and increasingly, many will not be in English.

Karen Marie Sasky Hughes of Wayland, MBA, M.Ed., is an educator and presenter with over 20 years of experience teaching and promoting language learning at all levels from infants to adults. She has taught privately and in public schools (elementary, middle school and high school), and is a Spanish teacher at Lincoln Elementary School in Lincoln and Hanscom Primary School at Hanscom Air Force in Bedford. Her website is TeachLanguagesYounger.org.
As I explained in the Spring Newsletter, the Seal of Biliteracy is now law in Massachusetts! The Language Opportunity Coalition (LOC) has been working this spring with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to get the DESE regulations for the Seal approved by the Board of Education (BOE). Additionally, myself with MABE’s Phyllis Hardy and MaFLA’s Kimberly Talbot have been contracted by DESE to write the Seal of Biliteracy guidance document based on our work with the Pilot. After five years of collaborating on its passage and three years of coordinating and overseeing a comprehensive Seal Pilot, MaFLA, MABE and MATSOL under the umbrella of the LOC have successfully advocated for this official program to reward students of world language, dual language and English language learning programs for functional biliteracy through the Seal. The LOC Pilot will continue through this school year and DESE will take over administration of the Seal in the fall of 2018.

Many of you responded to the LOC’s request to make comments on the proposed regulations which basically are DESE’s translation of the LOOK bill and will be what districts will have to follow. At the last minute before passing, the “functional level of biliteracy” wording in the Seal of Biliteracy component of the LOOK bill was changed to “high level of biliteracy.” This pushed DESE to seek higher documented levels of English and the partner language than had been determined by the Seal Workgroup. DESE was also not in agreement that the Seal needed a multi-tiered award structure as had been developed through the pilot.

The Steering Committee of the LOC, myself with MABE’s Phyllis Hardy and MATSOL’s Helen Solorzono, were invited to a number of meetings to discuss the comments that we had submitted and to come to a compromise. Because of this productive interaction and the high number of comments submitted, DESE agreed to lower the level of MCAS to the Proficient level, include other measures of English proficiency for English learners and use an award structure that includes at least one other tier. The regulations were passed on June 26th with the Steering Committee of the LOC in attendance to read comments to the BOE. They were ultimately passed with the caveat that Commissioner Jeffrey Riley will set the tiers and the corresponding proficiency levels by the end of the summer.

The LOC has launched a new campaign to get strong participants over the last three years to ask their superintendents to write to the Commissioner to push to retain the three-tiered award structure starting with our Silver Seal which is linked with Intermediate-Mid in the partner language according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. This is the level that has been selected nationally as the minimum standard for the Seal. We feel strongly that it represents a high level of achievement for world language students, some of whom have a maximum of six years of possible programming in their district, and many of whom do not even have that. The fact of the matter is that only 26% of students K-12 are involved in world language programming. Intermediate-Mid is a rigorous level of proficiency and makes the Seal attainable by more students, thus encouraging further study of language by more students.

The other two levels of the Workgroup’s tiered structure are the Gold Seal (tied to the Intermediate High level of proficiency) and the Platinum Seal (tied to the Advanced Low level of proficiency). We do not know if the “Silver” level will be retained and we do not know if the “Silver,” “Gold” and “Platinum” nomenclature will be preserved either.

TO FIND OUT MORE OR TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SEAL IN YOUR DISTRICT:

- Look at the resources at www.languageopportunity.org
- Download the Seal Toolkit as a resource until the DESE Guidance Document is published on their Website in the fall.
- Join the Seal Workgroup Google Group on the Pilot Page link
Seal Update: In The Long Haul, Advocacy Works!

by Nicole Sherf, Salem State University

The LOOK Act and regulations have inspired more districts to join our Seal Workgroup Pilot every week! More than 110 districts of all types (world language, dual language, immersion and English language learning), levels (elementary, middle, high school and university) and languages (Spanish, French, Latin, Italian, Mandarin, Portuguese, German, Arabic, American Sign Language, Japanese, Cantonese, Korean, Vietnamese and Russian). Our hope is that in the near future, the Seal will spread to every district in the state. We decided in our last monthly meetings of the Seal Workgroup to keep up the Google Group and to keep the resources that we have created posted. This will allow for continued collaboration between the districts who have been piloting the Seal and those who are just starting the process. With about a quarter of the districts in MA in some way involved in the process, we should be able to attain our goal of spreading the amazing benefits of participation in the Seal of Biliteracy to all districts in no time!

On Non-Profit Awareness Day on June 4th, 2018, the Language Opportunity Coalition was honored at the Massachusetts State House with the Non-Profit Network Excellence Award in Advocacy for our efforts in getting the law passed and creating a strong pilot that resulted in thousands of Seal awards across the state at all levels and languages and in all language learning program types. It is an honor to be recognized for all the hard work and determination to bring this transformational Seal of Biliteracy program to fruition for the students of Massachusetts.

Seal Of Biliteracy Strengthens Relationship Between ELE And World Language Programs

ELE – English Language Education focus of senior projects

Furthermore, the benefits of this project were two-fold. On one hand, the seniors helped the EL students socially and academically, and on the other, they immersed themselves in the challenges that the EL population face daily. They “walked a mile” alongside EL students. Many of these seniors were able to reflect on how this experience relates to their plans for the future. They all agreed that the project was a great lesson on empathy and they were proud to give back to their school community.

Submitted by Maria da Graca Leal-Dudley, Tewksbury Memorial High School.

Channys Almonte, Cassia Fontes, Julia Hartnett, Mrs. Hodgson – ELE supervisor, and Jason Benitez

At Tewksbury Memorial High School six Spanish students participated in a service project to support EL (English Learner) students in the elementary and middle schools. They were able to tutor the EL students on content, help with organization skills and/or use the students’ first language to communicate with them. They also provided social and emotional support to students from kindergarten to 8th grade who could have different cultural understanding of the educational system.
UMass Dartmouth Chancellor Professor Emeritus Awarded Highest French Honor

Press Release – May 25, 2018

From: UMassD PublicAffairs <publicaffairs@umassd.edu>

Dr. Mel B. Yoken received the French Legion of Honor award for his lifetime work in French language and literature.

On May 21, 2018, UMass Dartmouth Chancellor Professor Emeritus Dr. Mel B. Yoken was presented France’s highest honor for his career studying French language and literature. Dr. Yoken received the French Legion of Honor award from Consul General of France Valery Freland on behalf of French President Emmanuel Macron at the Résidence de France in Cambridge.

“This award brings me even closer to France,” Dr. Yoken said “This country has given me so much. I met my wife of 42 years at an American Association of French Teachers conference and have met people and made friends all over the world due to my connection to the French language.”

The Legion of Honor award was created by Napoleon in 1802.

Dr. Yoken retired from teaching French language and literature at UMass Dartmouth, but is still actively helping students studying French and is the director of the Boivin Center of French Language and Literature as well as the current program chair and former president of The Claire T. Carney Library Associates. “I’ll be doing this forever,” he said.

Dr. Yoken began his career in teaching in 1966 at UMass Dartmouth, then called Southeastern Massachusetts Technological Institute, and has been with the institution for 52 years. Yoken states that he has directly taught and interacted with over 16,000 students at UMass Dartmouth and many still contact him decades after they graduate.

The French Legion of Honor is awarded to select individuals who have made an impact on France and French culture. During the Consul General’s speech, he extolled Yoken’s devotion to teaching the French language, culture, and literature, as well as his work in exchange programs, his prolific career as a writer dealing with French subjects, and his tremendous support and promotion of the French language.

Dr. Yoken is an honorary lifelong member of the Academy of American Poets and the American Association of French Teachers. His voluminous archive of letters with French luminaries and others are featured at Brown University. Yoken has previously been honored by the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association, the American Association of Teachers of French, and the New York State Language Association.

(L to R): Consul General of France Valery Freland, Dr. Mel B. Yoken exhibiting the French Legion of Honor Medal, and his wife Cindy Yoken.

Next summer plan to put yourself in this picture. You’ll be glad you did!

Save the dates – July 22-25, 2019 – and watch the MaFLA Website for latest information.
Brockton District Launches Amitié - French Dual Language Program

Amitié through friendship

Congratulations to the Brockton, MA School District for launching the French dual-language program with the most beautiful name in the world, Amitié - Friendship! On Tuesday, Amitié was officially launched at a ceremony featuring a speech by the French Consulate’s Cultural Attaché Latifa Bentiri and other special guests. While at some schools French Dual Language programs can cost up to $40,000 annually per student, Brockton will offer this program to its community for free in order to make foreign language instruction accessible for all. Let’s fight monolingualism, “the illiteracy of 21 century” as Gregg Roberts says, and allow the French language to grow a strong bond of friendship between Brockton and the world at large.

Amitié means French instruction accessible for all

With French, Brockton achieves the goal of Global Study School

Amitié will play a central role in Brockton’s Global Study School, which also features instruction in Spanish and Portuguese. The three bilingual education programs will be housed together in the Manthala George, Jr. Elementary School. This initiative demonstrates Brockton Public Schools’ dedication to preparing their students for lifelong learning and citizenship on the global stage.

The cultural attaché, Mrs Latifa Bentiri, greeted the attendees yesterday.

She said: “I am sure that Amitié will be another success story, along with the Milton and Holliston programs that started with a few kids but serve today more than 2,000 students. Future generations, the community of Brockton, parents, and children will all be very grateful to you for this invaluable opportunity to learn the French language. The French Consulate will always be there to make Amitié — our friendship — everlasting”

Special thanks to all Amitié supporters and friends

A very warm merci to Superintendent Kathleen A. Smith, Principal Natalie Pohl, World Languages Director Kellie Jones, Program coordinator Vula Roumis, Gregg Roberts of the American Councils for International Education, and the parents and community members of Brockton for all of their efforts in helping to make Amitié possible. Thanks to all community supporters for their help: Education First, S.P.A.C.E, MABE, MATSOL, Chartwells, etc.
Dear MaFLA Colleagues:

The 2018 Poster Contest was once again an exciting activity for 32 MaFLA members from 20 schools across the Commonwealth. This year’s competition attracted 80 individual interpretations of the 2018 theme “Learn a New Language: Expand Your Mind, Expand Your Heart, Expand Your World.” Foreign language students in grades one through twelve represented this theme in many creative ways and the artistic talent demonstrated was exceptional. Once again the impact and value of foreign languages in the lives of our students were represented enthusiastically with teacher support and encouragement from our members. Divisional winners as well as their teachers, principals and superintendents have been notified of the contest results. Certificates, awards, and acknowledgements have been sent to all participants. Judging of the entries took place in Hampden, MA. Many thanks to our poster contest judges Mary Ellen Robinson, Yvonne Fariño, Nancy Willoughby and Trish Dean for taking on this challenging task.

We thank all the students and teachers who participated and we are pleased to announce that the following students were selected as this year’s winners:

**Middle School Winner**  
Bori Kim, grade 7  
Wood Hill Middle School  
Teacher: Zoe Cabaret-Salameh

**Elementary**  
Aarushi Deswal, grade 5  
Field Elementary School  
Teacher: Danuta Bujak-Czubarow

**Honorable Mention**

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<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Teacher Name</th>
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<td>Jonas Ahlgren</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Nashoba Brooks School</td>
<td>Amy Riddle</td>
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<td>Lilly Woodman</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Nashoba Brooks School</td>
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<td>Saba Haider</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Field Elementary School</td>
<td>Danuta Bujak-Czubarow</td>
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<td>Aarav Mehta</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
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<td>Zoe Mumford</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Grafton Middle School</td>
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<td>Wilmington High School</td>
<td>Carlos Luis Brown</td>
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**Poster of the Year**

Meghan Racie, grade 11,  
Acton-Boxborough Regional High School  
Teacher: Suzanne Hogarty

Thank you very much for your enthusiastic participation in the 2018 Poster Contest! It will be exciting to see the display of posters from our divisional winners and honorable mentions at MaFLA’s Annual Conference at the Springfield Sheraton in October!

Sincerely,  
Teresa Benedetti, Poster Contest Chair
MaFLA’s Summer Institute Soars!
By Joyce Beckwith, Director of MaFLA Summer Institute

Over 80 participants attended MaFLA’s Summer Institute the weekend of August 17-19, 2018, which was held at the new Science & Technology Center on the campus of Lasell College in Newton. Three language strands were represented, French, Spanish, and Latin and on Sunday a special “Inclusive Practices” was also held. Sessions began on Friday morning with orientation activities conducted by the Co-Coordinators of the Spanish strand, Helena Alfonzo (Newton South HS) and Nilza González-Pedemonete (Tufts University), and French strand Coordinator Dominique Trotin (Holliston HS). Friday afternoon presenters in Spanish were Luis Paredes (Bridgewater State University), who spoke on Tools to Teach Afro-Latin American Literature & Culture, and Aslin Perdomo (Brandeis Univ.) who discussed Immigration and Social Justice in Hispanoamerican Cinema. French presenters were Houda Hamie (Durfee HS/Fall River) who spoke on The Role of Women in the Maghreb Society, and Louissa Abdeghany (Babson College) whose topic was Intercultural Communication: Understanding Islam & Muslim Traditions.

On Saturday morning, Kristen Russett (Marblehead Middle School) began the French strand with a session on classroom games entitled Faites Vos Jeux! She was followed by Regina Symonds (Triton HS) who presented on Interactive Activities which Motivate, Engage and Give Responsibility to Students. Beckie Rankin (Lexington HS) presented the afternoon session on...
Slam Poetry. Spanish Co-Coordinator Nilza González-Pedemonte started the Saturday morning Spanish strand with a session on Rhythms in the Hispanic Culture and had all the participants up and dancing! She was followed by Christina Toro (Arlington HS) who discussed Confronting the Stereotypes of Colombia with Other Stereotypes. Wendy Cahill (Concord-Carlisle HS) began the afternoon with a session on Authentic Materials & Classroom Games. Both the French and Spanish strands attended a session on “The Importance of DATA for World Language Teachers,” given by Kim Talbot (Melrose HS), followed by the traditional Pedagogical Exchanges (Swap Shops).

Charlotte Gifford (Greenfield Community College) began the French Strand on Sunday morning with a session on Promoting Proficiency with Infographics. She was followed by Jeanne Douillard, a published author, who spoke on the subject of her latest book: The Silent Presence: The French In New England. Luis Pare-des returned on Sunday morning to give a session on “Culture in the Classroom: Films, TV Soap Operas, Music and Dances from Latin America.” He was followed by Co-Coordinator Helena Alfonzo who presented an emotional session on what is happening socially and economically in her native country of Venezuela.

Thank you to the French and Spanish Coordinators and Presenters who contributed to making this weekend so successful. Over 20 attendees signed up for graduate credits which were offered by Westfield State University with additional written work. Al Año Próximo! À L’Année Prochaine!

Synopsis of Latin Strand at the Summer Institute: One Participant’s Perspective

Madelyn:
Your work shepherding and steering all of the presentations, creating many of them (!), providing and guiding time for reflection and inroads for discussion, made the parts a meaningful whole. Thank you for all of your help and synthesis.

Sherwin Little:
Sherwin's first presentation, on what the Proficiency Standards look like in Latin, allowed me to breathe deeply again. Describing the standards and indicators as descriptive, not prescriptive, and stressing that our focus lies primarily with the Interpretive Mode, gave me reassurance that I could wrap my head around the changes and continue to create a curriculum that embraced what was new while reaffirming the best parts of what my students find meaningful in their pursuit of Latin and Classical Humanities. I liked his stress upon the fact that these standards were content- and methodology-free. I could relate to the discussion of getting the students to approach reading through what I call their role as audience — what does the author want them to understand? Author's purpose and the role of the audience as co-author will continue to be one of my principal themes and approaches to literature.

Sherwin's presentation on assessment gave me a lot to chew on and work with. His way of breaking down the categories into Achievement, Performance, and Proficiency provided me with a new way of approaching my gradebook, one in addition to the modes of Proficiency. I appreciated how he stressed that the first two categories are constant and ongoing, but the assessment for proficiency needed to be attached to purpose, and though there...
should be frequent check-ins, formal assessment for Proficiency would be annual or semi-annual.

I have always believed that a teacher should find ways to allow students to show what they know, and not what they don’t, so we are in total agreement there.

I plan to adopt ALIRA moving forward, but only for 8th, 10th, and as an assessment for the Seal of Biliteracy for juniors and seniors. I like its approach, and I wish they would come up with a version that was not an assessment but a teaching and learning tool, for use at home and in the classroom.

The session on Latin and Special Education sang to me. I have made it my mission to make Latin accessible to any student who wants to take it, and I work closely with our talented Special Ed. staff to find ways to reach all learners. It remains a work in progress; there will always be new paths to try. It ensures that I am never bored.

Sally Hatcher:

Piggy-backing on the last paragraph. I applaud Sally for doing this work even though she teaches at a school that serves almost entirely highly capable students. Her love of what she does, as well as her expertise, were reflected in her approach to the course she took and her presentation. I liked her focus on relevance and transfer, knowledge that is flexible and durable. What could be more flexible and durable than Latin?

Providing students with choice, putting the tools in their hands, focusing on cognition and motivation — the whole presentation made my heart sing. I originally created my Catullus project as the capstone to a course I took on differentiation. I’ve been reworking and refining it ever since, but differentiation provided its genesis.

Joe Davenport:

This presentation was incredibly useful. His honesty and perspective as he faced the challenges posed by overly ambitious targets were clear and poignant. I took extensive notes on his strategies for reading, and was so glad that so many participants shared theirs as well. I have already started to use them in just the first few days of class with my eighth grade. The sheltered reading, reading aloud, asking for main points — they have all been useful. Again, I found this "mosaic" approach reaffirming. This session sparked so much collegial conversation. (I am wondering if Matthew Holms might be nurtured as a future presenter?)

Klara Sands:

This session made me think hard about what I could take into my own classroom. My students tend to love a slower, more reflective and cogitational approach to learning. The fast-paced circle activities are why many of them chose not to take French or Spanish. Still, many would find the Project Lapis a lot of fun, so I might try to form a club or something with it. I have a lot of theater and tech. crew kids, so the role-playing will appeal to them. I am determined to provide my students will more opportunities to practice oral Latin, and have begun in sixth grade with conversation breaks, during that 10-minute down-time in the middle of class. Each conversation has a theme and its own set of vocabulary. On Tuesday, for instance, they will be speaking about what they like to do. We went over some vocab slides that I made and then posted to their Google classroom, and they know they are to be prepared to offer their preferred activities and ask their classmates what they like to do. They have already learned to introduce themselves and say where they live, including the natural setting.

Maureen Haviland:

“Adapt the task, not the text.” Maureen gave an honest and engaging presentation. I thought her idea of “greying out” non-essential parts of a text was masterful. I think this approach could be used in conjunction with Joe’s ideas of sheltered readings. I would probably insist on the full reading as a final step, but maybe not with every selection I use. Her thoughts about teaching the subjunctive before the future resonated with me. It is certainly more useful, and I will think about it. I teach my students early on to express purpose with ad + the gerundive, because it is so easy, and students want to know why they can’t use the infinitive for purpose. I need to think about what use of the subjunctive would be my entry point. They already know that Iterumne dicas? means “Would you say that again?” so maybe start with the deliberative/potential and conditions. Food for thought. I loved the discussion on thematic units.

Overall:

This has been the most immediately useful, practical, and enjoyable professional development I have ever attended. What a great opportunity to get to know and learn from so many colleagues with shared interests and a passion for teaching the Classics. I am so happy to have met everyone and look forward to more shared experiences.

Mille gratias tibi et omnibus!

Submitted by Léonie Glen, Curriculum Leader of the World Language Department, Dover-Sherborn Middle School.