



Pacific Northwest Council
for Languages

Lingo

Volume 5, Number 3
May 2005

Features



ADVOCATE

Death of a Dream	3
What you Gain for Pennies a Day	5



COMMUNICATE

Bilingual Education: Why the Big Fuss?	4
Infórmate con CNN	8
Announcements & Upcoming Events	9
STAMP Available to Wyoming Teachers	10
PNCFL Vice President Election	12



INSPIRE

Carrots & Second Language Motivation	1
Northwest Pride	6
Dialogue Journals	7

Second Language Motivation & Carrots

By Greg Hopper-Moore, PNCFL Executive Director

Her name was Louise. She was the type of student that every teacher dreams of having. In my French 2 classroom, she had the undisputed reputation of being the best at everything. Her study outside of the classroom expanded her vocabulary at such a rate that she was able to read adapted classics by the end of the first semester.

What made learning French so easy for Louise? As much as I would like to, I can't take credit for her aptitude. Certainly, her studies in Latin and Spanish facilitated her studies in French. Her parents' strong support and encouragement were an advantage not shared by some. It was clear to me, however, that the most important factor in her success was her own intrinsic motivation.

I suspect that many language teachers were like Louise as early language learners. Were you attracted to a second language because of its inherent structure, the beauty of the culture, or through a simple desire to learn more? For me, the puzzle of language structure was a challenge I met head on. I'm sure that I was a thorn in the side of my teachers as I strove to understand the reasons behind the intricacies of French grammar.

Though we share a common love of language learning, most of our students don't have this inner drive to learn languages. It can be very difficult for students to grasp the future benefits of studying a second language. Calls to language learning for the sake of adult employment opportunities or for the sake of brain plasticity in old age may hold little sway in the world of the adolescent.

I liken the situation to my 5-year-old son's distaste for carrots. Even though I have explained to him again and again the health benefits associated with



Greg's son, Evan, likes cake but not carrots.

continued on page 2...



Pacific Northwest Council for Languages
5290 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-5290

Return Service Requested

PRESORTED
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
US POSTAGE PAID
EUGENE OR
PERMIT NO. 609



PNCFL Vice President Election

Immediate Member Action

The PNCFL Executive Council hereby puts before the membership an election for the position of vice president/president-elect. Voting will be held by electronic ballot, and each member may cast one ***vote by sending an email to pncfl@uoregon.edu***. Members may vote for either the candidate below or another of their choosing. Before submitting the name of another candidate, please be sure he/she is willing to hold office. ***The deadline for casting votes is June 10.***



ROBERT L. DAVIS, Ph.D.

Nominated by the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching

Employment

University of Oregon, Dept. of Romance Languages

- Director of Romance Languages, 1991-present
- Associate Professor, 1997-present
- Assistant Professor, 1991-1997

Nomination Submitted by Dave Raffetto, COFLT President

Robert Davis is the unanimous choice of the Board of Directors of COFLT for the position of Vice President of PNCFL. He has a long and dedicated history with COFLT. Robert's tenure on the Board of Directors is marked by his regular and dynamic attendance, his thoughtful and thought-provoking discussion, and the commitment of his remarkable talents to the advancement of the profession. His activities foster the members' awareness of the Year of Languages and COFLT. He participates regularly at board meetings, insightfully unearthing the crux of the problem and generating simple solutions. He is a regular and requested presenter at conferences and workshops.

Our Mission

The Pacific Northwest Council for Languages unites, serves, and supports all world language educators in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.

Our Vision

PNCFL *advocates* for the value of world languages as a core curriculum and supports language policies that reflect this ideal. In order to foster professional growth among language educators, PNCFL *connects* them at regional and national levels. PNCFL *inspires* world language educators to improve instruction for all students through professional development and leadership opportunities.

continued from page 1...

the carrots on the plate in front of him, it doesn't make them any more palatable. Likewise, the future benefits of learning a second language may not make a 12-year-old passionate about language learning.

When I taught in an international school in the capital school in the capital city of Cameroon, every student was required to take French. More than just being a requirement, however, there was a practical reason for studying French. French was necessary to take a taxi, to bargain in the market place, and to make friends with neighbors. But that doesn't mean that studying a language in the States is devoid of practicality.

Many pedagogic practices attempt to create concrete motivations in the classroom.

• Games

This is the impetus behind our drive to incorporate games into our curriculum. In order to play Bingo, students need to internalize the vocabulary set in use, whether that be numbers or clothing items. We thus establish a practical need to understand the language.

• Culture

Another method in our arsenal is the integration of culture into the classroom. From viewing foreign films to having a visit from a foreign exchange student; from attending a host culture theatrical presentation to using the Internet as a source of inspiration and authentic material, these activities serve to practically demonstrate the value of learning a second language.



*Greg and one of his students
in Cameroon*

• Project-based learning

Project-based learning allows students to tailor an assignment to their particular interests. Teachers provide the structure of an assignment and set up the assessment framework so that students know what is expected of them. Rather than just teaching food vocabulary, we can challenge

students to produce a cooking show and videotape it at home. The grammatical concept of giving commands becomes much more meaningful when it is contextualized in a real-life situation.

Now... if only I could get my son to eat carrots! 🥕🥕🥕



The Death of a Dream

By Jo Sanders
AATG President



Jo is the president of the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG). To find out more about AATG, visit <http://www.aatg.org>.

As world language teachers struggle through each day, we think of countless ways to improve our language education programs. After thirty-two years of teaching at public high schools, I had the privilege of teaching for two and a half years at a school with a wonderful plan for world language education. This was a charter school with grades K-8 and was founded by a woman of great vision who believed that every child could learn multiple languages successfully without short-changing English. Her dream lasted only seven years but was a wonderful model, which I would like to pass on in the hope that somewhere, sometime, the model can be continued.

Every child in kindergarten received at least four hours of instruction per week in Spanish, German, and Norwegian, each by a native speaker. These morning activities consisted mostly of songs, games, counting, calendar work, simple reading, and math, all in the target language. English instruction was by a kindergarten specialist for the remainder of each day.


In first grade, each child chose one of those three languages to be his/her "major" language and this became the language of his/her semi-immersion program. Each immersion class met for 3 1/2 hours per day to teach such subjects as math, music, physical education, social studies, and basic literacy in the language. The other two languages be-

came the student's "minors," and each student received instruction in each of these languages from 3-8 hours per week, depending on the schedule. Thus, a Norwegian immersion student would have the morning with his Norwegian teacher and in the afternoons would have 3-5 hours of Spanish language and culture, 6-8 hours of German science, language, and culture per week, and the rest of the day with regular English classroom teachers.

How successful was the program? The school was one of great diversity; 47% of the students were minority students, and if charter schools qualified for federal assistance, our school would have been a Title I school. Nevertheless, the school met the standards of No Child Left Behind every year.

There were third grade students with a minor in German who were in my German science class who could – and did – read real children's novels in German! They were able to use authentic science materials, do research, write reports, and give them orally.

We had a multilingual science fair in which all students participated, and each explained his or her exhibit in one of the three languages they were studying, while some were able to do it in all three! We also put on medieval plays in all three languages to the delight of the parents and siblings of the students.

And how is the program doing now? The school was closed for financial and political reasons, but the dream lives on! 

LINGO

Volume 5, May 2005

**Pacific Northwest Council
for Languages**

5290 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403

Phone: 541-346-5699

Fax: 541-346-0322

Email: pncfl@uoregon.edu

Web site: <http://babel.uoregon.edu/pncfl>

EDITORIAL STAFF

Mandy Garman

Lingo Editor

Sarah Burtner

Contributing Editor

Lingo is published in January, May, and September at the University of Oregon. Submission deadlines are December 15 for the January issue, April 15 for the May issue, and August 15 for the September issue.

PNCFL welcomes short articles, descriptions of innovative courses, reviews of teaching materials, and other items of interest to members of the language teaching profession. Materials may be sent as email attachments to pncfl@uoregon.edu. To obtain advertising information, please contact Mandy Garman at pncfl@uoregon.edu or 541-346-5699.

Ideas and opinions expressed in Lingo are those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of the Council.

Layout design by EPIC-Ad Group



Why the Big Fuss about Bilingual Education?

By Curtis Haley
20Below News Team

Curtis Haley is a junior at Willamette High School in Eugene, Oregon.

Manzanas.

With that one word, a culture gap was bridged.

It was a typical weekday in Disneyland, the Happiest Place on Earth, and two Caucasian teenagers (a boy, a girl) were standing behind a crowd of Latino people with green Mickey Mouse silhouettes on the back of their T-shirts. Each group was conversing in a different language, each about different things, when the boy got an olfactory alert - a whiff of food.

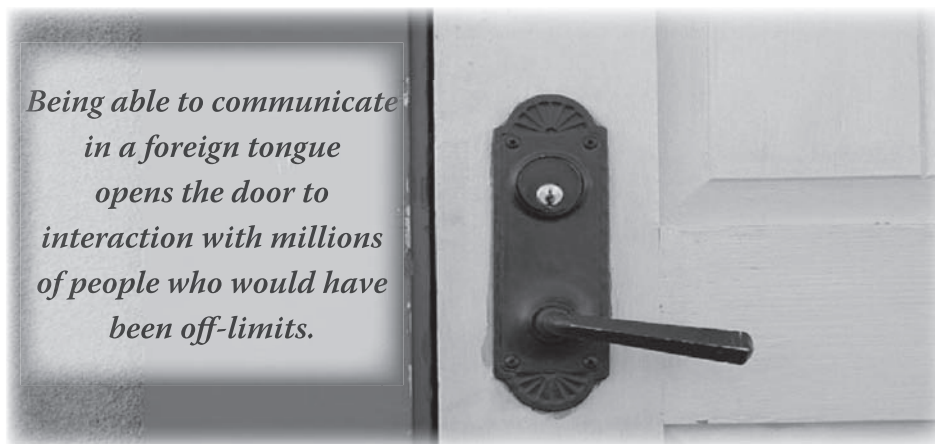
"Manzanas," the scrawny white boy said with a smile to his girlfriend. It is the Spanish word for apples, although in this case it happened to be just one apple, a big, luscious Granny Smith that one of the girls in the Mickey T-shirt was eating.

One of the mothers, who was from Mexico, turned from her group and smiled at the tall American. "¡Manzanas, si!" She asked the boy if he spoke Spanish, and there began a conversation that covered everything from food to travel to Pancho Lopez. This is one aim of bilingual education in America - to enable students to interact with those from other backgrounds, countries, and cultures.

Being able to communicate in a foreign tongue opens the door to interaction with literally millions of people who ordinarily would have been off-limits.

Moreover, the ability to speak more than one language has tangible benefits beyond just being able to talk to people in line at theme parks. Studies from around the world have shown that bilingual people perform better when distracted than those who speak English only.

Be honest with yourself: do you ever get distracted? Wouldn't you want yourself, or your children, to be able to focus better in the classroom, at school, or on the job? We could all use a little exercise in managing distractions.



Studies have also indicated that bilingual abilities may help slow down age-related decline in thinking processes and aid the ability to multi-task. Think about that the next time you're driving down Belt Line Road with a McGriddle in one hand, the other hand on the steering wheel, an important paper on your lap, and sweat running down your face.

And yet there is an amazing amount of opposition to teaching kids another language. Just short of "South Park" "They-took-our-jerbs" hysteria,

many feel like we lose a part of our heritage by learning part of someone else's. The most common rebuttal to the idea of teaching students Spanish or French is that, "They should learn to speak English."

Right on. I think that most people would agree that speaking English is a good skill to have in America. But why should that stop us from being able to converse with those who don't speak English?

Some say we shouldn't spend the time or money on implementing sec-

ond language programs. All sarcastic comments about why schools don't have money aside, isn't improved human interaction a little more important than, say, stoichiometry? We could be opening passageways into other cultures and breaking down barriers that still cause rifts in society - and it could start with something as simple as one, two, tres. 🍌🍌🍌

Reprinted with permission from the Eugene Register-Guard, April 11, 2005



PNCFL: What You Gain for Pennies a Day

By Barbara Rupert
2004-05 PNCFL President



Barb, the current PNCFL President, has also served as the president of the Washington Association of Language Teaching (WAFLT). Barb is the principal of Brookdale Elementary School in Tacoma, Washington.

I received an email from a member who had a valid question. She wanted to know, "What am I getting for my PNCFL dues?" This is a question that I want every member to be able to answer! PNCFL is working hard to provide valuable services to our profession. Our mission is to unite, serve, and support all world language educators in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. We endeavor to advocate for and inspire language educators to provide the best possible education for their students.

PNCFL wants its work to be valuable and meaningful to language educators in the region.

As professionals diligently working to meet the excessive daily demands we face in education today, most of us don't have the time, resources, or opportunity to advocate for our profession at the state and national levels. For less than a dollar a month (or less than 3 cents a day), in addition to Lingo and other professional correspondence we members receive, our tax-deductible PNCFL membership provides a voice for our region at the national level through ACTFL and JNCL-NCLIS.

PNCFL connects us with a personalized listserv so that members can be current on the latest in language learning developments in their targeted areas of interest. Through WILL, it provides opportunities

for new educators or educators who are from isolated areas to receive professional development on best practices of language education and to cultivate their leadership skills. We are planting seeds for the future!

PNCFL, proudly the oldest regional language association in the nation, provides the strength of a collective voice that I believe our region needs. All that is worth a few cents a day to me. I hope it is to you as well.

We are always happy to hear from our members. Please feel free to email or call with your comments and ideas! 📧📞

PNCFL strongly recommends the free email service called InterCom, which is available free of charge at <http://casls.uoregon.edu/intercom.php/>.

In Celebration of the Year of Languages

Oregon State Superintendent Susan Castillo joins the Governor of Oregon, Ted Kulongoski, in celebrating the Year of Languages. Kulongoski proclaimed January as the Month of Language Appreciation, and Castillo proclaimed 2005 as the year of foreign language emphasis for all K-12 schools in Oregon. On May 5, Tom Potter, mayor of Portland, proclaimed 2005 the Year of Languages in the city. This most recent event was accompanied by a second language pop quiz. This American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) activity raises awareness for language learning. For information on staging a pop quiz in your community, visit <http://www.yearoflanguages.org>.

tor and the U.S. House of Representatives, will be an event long remembered as the year that foreign language gained public awareness within the greater educational community and in society in general. 📸



L to R: David Raffetto, COFLT President; Greg Hopper-Moore, PNCFL Executive Director; Susan Castillo, Oregon State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Stephen Flesher, PNCFL Representative

PNCFL encourages its members to explore similar initiatives on a local, state, and regional level. The 2005 Year of Language initiative, now supported by the U.S. Sena-



Northwest Pride: A Brief History of PNCFL

By Ray Verzasconi

Ray Verzasconi served as PNCFL executive director for over twenty years, helping to support and shape the organization.

The Northwest has always been a home for pioneers. Early settlers left the familiar to venture to a new land of hope and promise. Some sought riches, some sought new landscape, some sought adventure, and some sought the alluring prospect of change. The adventurous individuals who settled the Northwest and those who have made the Northwest their home have continued to carry the pioneer spirit. The Northwest remains full of potential, achievement, and transformation – helping to lead the nation in foreign language study.

- Cooperation between Oregon and Washington dates back to 1948 when Howard Nostrand and David Dougherty first began to envision a con-

ference for K-16 language teachers. Nostrand and Dougherty were the two co-founders of PNCFL, the oldest non-language specific foreign language association in North America.

- PNCFL held its first conference at the University of Washington in 1950. In attendance was a visiting professor from Barnard College who, in 1951 and 1952, organized the Barnard College Foreign Language Conference. Out of this conference, the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages would emerge in 1953.

- Both Nostrand and Dougherty were instrumental in the founding of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL), as two of the first five ACTFL presidents came from Washington.

- The Montana Association of Language Teachers (MALT) was created

at the PNCFL conference in Missoula in 1954, making MALT one of the oldest state foreign language associations in the United States.

- Proficiency, national standards, the use of technology in language teaching, the importance of culture – all are hot topics widely discussed and debated today. These issues and many more were discussed in PNCFL's *Proceedings* over 50 years ago. At the time, PNCFL was only a 200-member organization; as a result, *Proceedings* were, unfortunately, not widely circulated.

The COFLT-WAFLT joint conference in Portland on October 8-9, 2004, marked the states' 14th joint meeting. While some states across the U.S. engage in joint projects, few – if any – language associations meet jointly.



Intensive Summer Workshop for Spanish Teachers

Marsillach Acting Academy, located in the heart of Old Madrid in El Barrio de las Letras, is pleased to announce its intensive summer workshop for teachers of Spanish. The Academy has experienced considerable success using acting techniques to bring life and immediacy into classrooms of students struggling with a new language. This experience has led the Academy to design a curriculum for English-speaking teachers of Spanish. Take on a role by Spain's most legendary playwright in a 3-week acting intensive workshop. Teacher/participants will perform with professional Spanish actors and receive 45 hours of classroom instruction, leading to a production of *Bodas de Sangre* by Federico Garcia Lorca. For more information on the Marsillach Acting Academy and its programs, visit their Web site at <http://www.marsillachactingacademy.com> or email tomford@marsillachactingacademy.com.



Dialogue Journals in ESL Classes

By Michelle McCoy

Michelle McCoy teaches ESOL at Taft Middle School in Lincoln City, Oregon. Michelle is a participant of the Western Initiative for Language Leadership (WILL), a two-year professional development program for rural world language teachers in the Pacific Northwest. The first year of WILL focuses on action research, and the second year cultivates leadership skills.

I'm a third-year ESOL teacher who first attended the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teachers (COFLT) statewide second language conference in 2001 as a preservice teacher. My memories from that conference include being very impressed by the level of knowledge the presenters had about their subjects and the poise with which they presented. I imagined myself being a presenter at COFLT in ten or fifteen years, when I assumed I'd finally know what I was doing or perhaps have something new and interesting to share with my colleagues.

That was the original plan in 2001, but then I got involved with the Western Initiative for Language Leadership (WILL) at the University of Oregon. In 2003, I was part of a group of rural language teachers from Pacific Northwest states who spent a week continuing our professional development as language teachers. We also spent time learning about action research since one of our tasks the following school year was to conduct an action research project at our school. WILL not only develops teacher strategies using current methodologies but also takes the leap from teacher to teacher-researcher.

I chose to conduct research on the use of dialogue journals to increase reading comprehension. During the 2003-04 school year, I had a class of eighteen ESOL students at varying stages of English acquisition and no curriculum that would work for the diverse group. My students were under the added pressure of being required to take standardized reading tests in English, even if they had only been in the United States for six months.

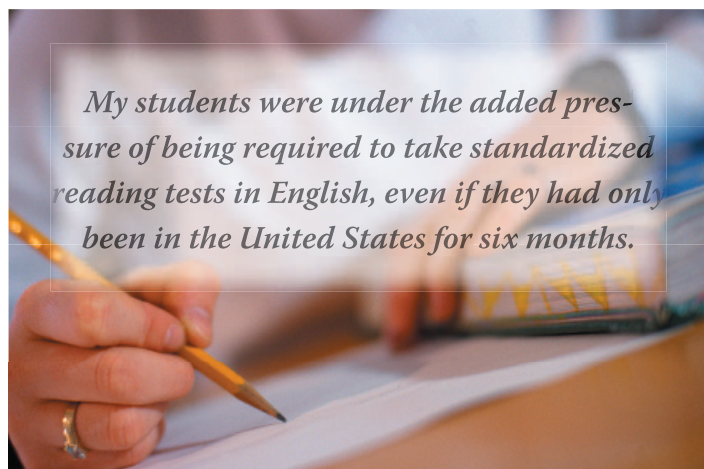
In a school with a growing ESOL population such as mine, the pressure of meeting AYP and NCLB standards are constant. Since dialogue journal writing is a proven methodology for improving students' reading comprehension levels, I decided to give it a try. Over the course of six months, my students used English to write in their journals approximately three times each week. Then, I would write back to them in proper English. No corrections or notations were made to their portion of the writing. My response held the grammatically correct form of an error they made in their writing. For example, many of my students thought "I going" used the past tense. They frequently wrote, "On Friday, I going to Newport with my mom." In my response, I might write back, "you went to Newport on Friday? So did I."

I thus corrected grammar without marking up the student's paper or reinforcing his or her error. When the student read the response, the correct English would go into his or her subconscious, and learning would eventually take place.

At the beginning of the year, many of the newer students were allowed to

write in Spanglish and use dictionaries to look up English words. By April, though, all the students were only writing in English, yet they were still allowed to use a dictionary. It was an amazing process to read the things they would write in April and compare the work to their November or December entries. The post-test results of my research project showed that all students had made gains in their comprehension abilities.

At the 2004 COFLT-WAFLT conference, I presented my research in the format of "Using Dialogue Journals with Advanced Language Learners," because the dialogue journal activity easily translates to any advanced second language classroom. I have also used dialogue journals in my "Spanish for Spanish Speakers" class. I am continuing to use the dialogue journals as the focus of my reading class this year as well, since the students experienced such great success last year. 🐸





Infórmate con CNN

By Keith Mason, Ph.D.
New Providence, NJ

Boston: Thomas/Heinle, 2003.
ISBN 0-8384-0681-5. Pp. viii + 86
Infórmate con CNN Video
ISBN 0-8384-0683-1

Infórmate con CNN is designed to build aural comprehension and oral communication skills in intermediate level students of Spanish. The program consists of a videotape and video manual. The videotape features 21 video clips from the news network CNN en español, most of which last only about two minutes. The topics of these clips are varied in terms of content, making them both interesting and informative.

The clips fall within seven thematic units that each contain between two and four video clips: *El español y su gente*, *Diversiones y tiempo libre*, *Relaciones personales*, *El mundo estudiantil y el profesional*, *Religión*, *Tradiciones y fiestas*, *El medio ambiente*, and *Ciencia, tecnología y salud*. Specific clips include *Conozcamos Calí*, *El arte urbano*, *El rey del mambo: Tito Puente*, *Matrimonios no convencionales*, *El islam entre los hispanos*, *Sin mi carro en Bogotá*, and 15 others. Although some of the clip topics are straightforward, others may be considered more controversial thus providing increased stimuli for class discussion. Examples of controversial topics include same-sex unions in Colombia and Mexican housewives on strike.

The manual that accompanies the video includes pedagogical activities for each video clip and features several subsections: *Vocabulario útil*, *Antes de ver*

(*Orientación al tema*), *En el programa de hoy* (a brief summary of the content of the video clips), *¿Qué dices ahora?*, *Después de ver*, including *¿Qué opinas tú?* and *Investiga y escribe*. Thus, the activities follow a sound progression from pre-listening to listening to post-listening. Culture is also represented in many of the video clips.



Culture is also represented in many of the video clips.

The two final video manual sections, *¿Qué opinas tú?* and *Investiga y escribe*, invite opportunities for speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, the *Infórmate* program can easily be supplemented with related readings or written assignments and projects as well as Internet activities. Indeed, the video clips can serve as a springboard for reinforcing all five skill areas.

The video manual also includes a written transcript of the content of each video clip and an answer key

for the video manual exercises that appear for each video clip.

Infórmate con CNN supports current thinking within second language acquisition, specifically the idea that authentic materials are pedagogically useful tools for the second language classroom. Because listening and speaking are essential skills, use of the *Infórmate* program can help foster these two skills as well as the skills of reading, writing, and cultural awareness.

Overall, *Infórmate con CNN* achieves its goals by providing a useful tool for fostering the important receptive skills of listening while encouraging practice of all five skills. Because listening can often become overshadowed by other content in the language curriculum, the *Infórmate* program provides a solid step toward stressing the importance of auditory skills. After all, the statistically most frequent skill area in real world language use is listening, occurring approximately 50 percent of the time.

In summary, instructors seeking a video/text combination that provides an interactive means of fostering aural and language skills in an interesting and authentic way will find *Infórmate* an ideal choice for their intermediate Spanish courses. 📺📖

Reprinted with permission from the
NECTFL Review, Number 56



Announcements & Upcoming Events

GLOBE & ACTFL Work Together to Promote Content-Based Language Study

The Year of Languages is a time to focus America's attention on the academic, social and economic benefits of studying other languages and cultures around the world. In line with this goal, GLOBE teachers have been actively working for years to promote foreign language integration, in addition to encouraging English Language Learners to participate and excel in content areas such as science, mathematics, technology, social studies and geography. An important milestone in this effort occurred when GLOBE signed a formal partnership with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in February 2005.

GLOBE provides a natural partnership for the content-based language classroom. The GLOBE program can bring virtually every classroom in a school together to work on a single project with other students and scientists on an international level. Although GLOBE's primary focus is science, it also provides students concentrating on learning a second language with authentic opportunities to communicate in the language they are studying. Science serves as a focal point around which oral language and literacy can develop.

For more information, visit the GLOBE Web site at <http://www.globe.gov/>.

Foreign Language Education & Technology Uniting the World



Brigham Young University
August 5-10, 2005
Provo, Utah

If your role as an instructor, administrator, technologist, vendor, or student includes the use of technology in some facet of language learning, then you should plan to attend the fifth conference on Foreign Language Education and Technology to be held in Provo, Utah, August 5-10, 2005. Here you will join hundreds of other colleagues from around the world to learn of the latest in language

technology theory and practice in the FLEAT tradition of cross-cultural sharing. While primarily an exchange between North American and Japanese practitioners, FLEAT 5 also welcomes others from all parts of the world to participate. Members of our affiliate organizations, CALICO, EuroCALL, CERCLES, TESOL, and ACTFL are especially welcome.

<http://fleat5.byu.edu>

For more information: cw136@byu.edu

Digital Media Archive: The Dynamics of Digital Media for Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

Language Acquisition Resource Center
San Diego State University
July 11 - July 15, 2005
San Diego, CA

The goal of the Digital Media Archive (DMA) Summer Institute is to enable foreign language faculty to create their own authentic digital materials and integrate them in world language and culture courses. Participants will first learn how to use the DMA to locate existing foreign language and cultural materials. They will explore how these materials can be used for teaching and learning foreign languages and then design and develop their own authentic foreign language materials and integrate them in a DMA module.

<http://larcnet.sdsu.edu/workshops.php>

For more information: nlrcsd@mail.sdsu.edu.



Foreign language education spells success.

Improve academic performance. Raise SAT scores. Create more opportunities for success in tomorrow's international economy. That's what learning another language can do for your child. So speak up for language education. Learn more at www.yearoflanguages.org.

**2005
THE YEAR OF
LANGUAGES**

www.yearoflanguages.org

Sponsored by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages



STAMP Available to Wyoming Teachers

By Kathy Vialpando
WFLTA President

The Wyoming State Department of Education has entered into a contract with EdGate World Language Center and its partners to offer many licensed tools to Wyoming teachers free of charge. One of these partners is Language Learning Solutions, based in Eugene, Oregon, which has developed proficiency-based tools, including CLASSPAK and STAMP.

CLASSPAK allows teachers to design reading lessons and quizzes based on authentic materials according to level, topic, and language function. STAMP is a test of reading and writing proficiency that assesses what a student can actually DO with the language.

Central High School in Cheyenne, Wyoming, realized that both CLASSPAK and STAMP are tools that could be used to not only document students' proficiency but also become a component in the school-wide literacy goal.

In fall 2005, I arranged for my classes to take STAMP. Before administering the assessment, I had students practice with quizzes I designed in CLASSPAK, which use similar questions and testing formats to familiarize them with the test and ease their anxiety.

STAMP begins with a reading portion that asks students to scan for gist or extract details. When the computer has determined the stu-


dent's reading proficiency (15-20 questions), it offers an equivalent writing prompt. The writing interface was very easy to use and included a keyboard on the screen with accented keys so that students didn't have to worry about specialized keyboard strokes.

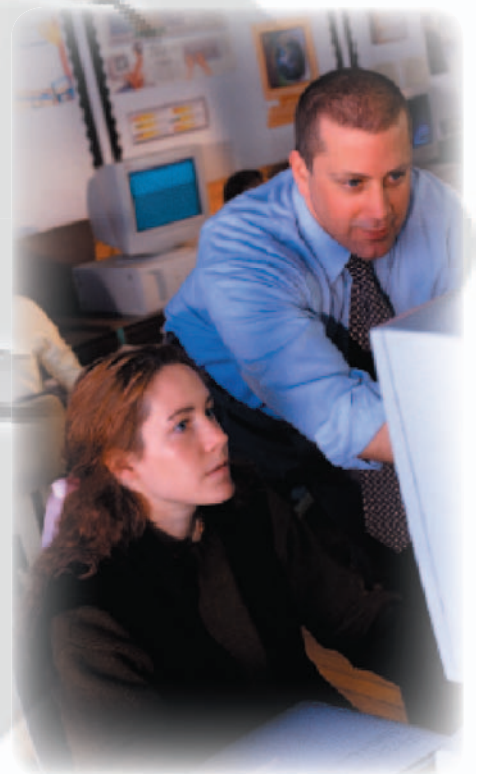
The students felt really positive about the test and their abilities.

The reading scores were available to me immediately. The writing samples were scored by two graders and took about a week before being posted online. The reports were easy to read and print and were very informative for students and their parents – telling exactly what the students can and cannot do, what topics they need to work on, and, most importantly, what it means to be a “novice-high” reader or writer. I plan to have the print-outs for each student available for parent-teacher conferences next year.

The students felt really positive about the test and their abilities. Interestingly, my AP class had a perfect bell curve on the reading! More than half of the students scored higher on the writing than on the reading – a trend that Language Learning Solutions has seen in STAMP results. This data is challenging the assumption that interpretive skills develop before

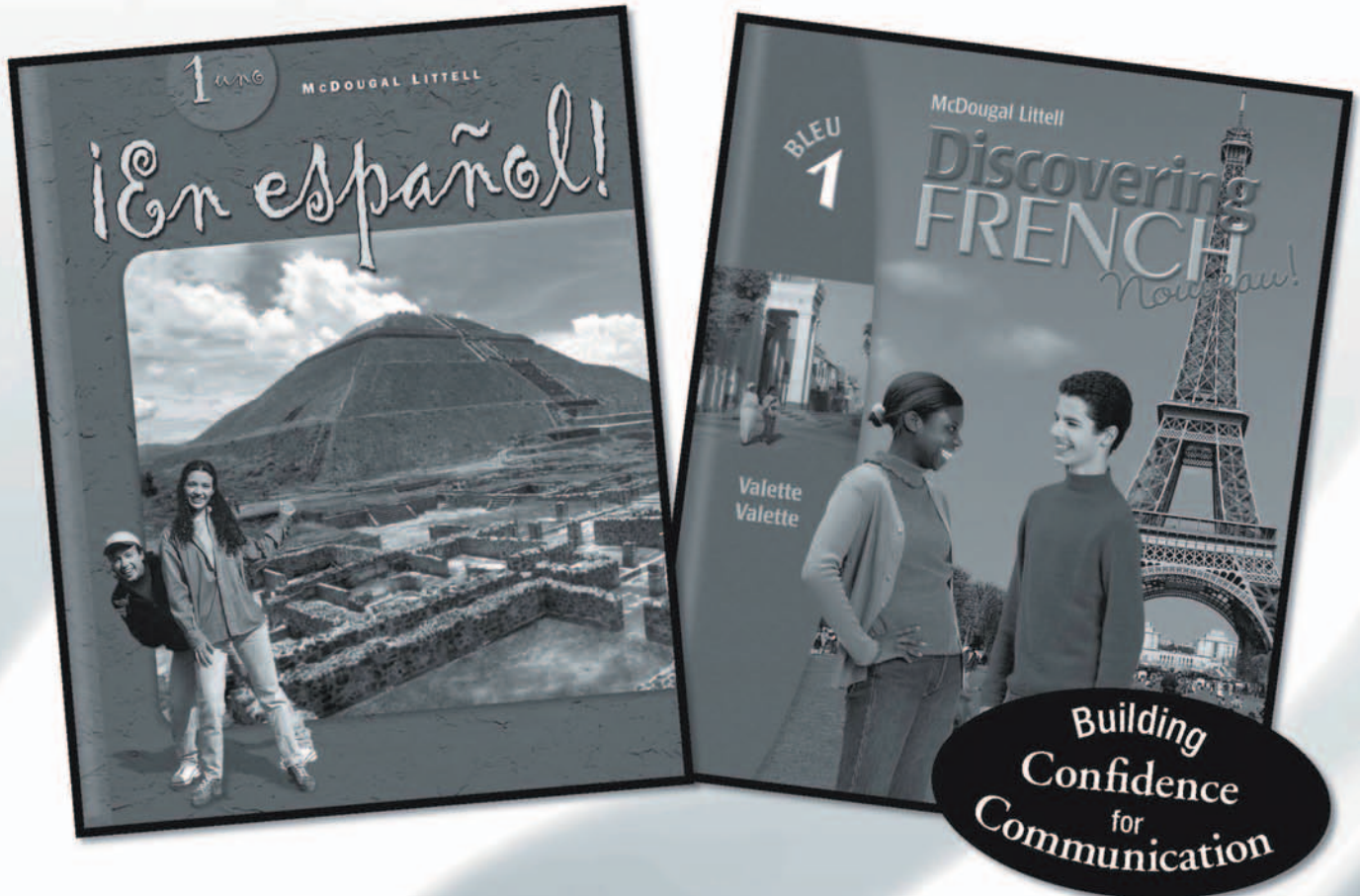
presentational skills.

I highly recommend these tools! For more information on Wyoming's contract with EdGate World Language Center, please visit <http://wyoming.edgate.org>. To learn more about CLASSPAK and STAMP, visit Language Learning Solutions at <http://www.onlinells.com>. 



CLASSPAK allows teachers to design reading lessons and quizzes based on authentic materials according to level, topic, and language function.

Celebrate the Year of Languages with McDougal Littell



Proven programs,
proven results for
ALL learners.



McDougal Littell
A DIVISION OF HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

800-323-5435
mcdougallittell.com

Paid Advertisement