

An Alphabet of Activities for Foreign Language Week

Theme for the 2009 Foreign Language Week:
"Many Hands, Many Voices, One World"
March 3-8, 2009

- **Acting:** have your students create skits or short plays and put on for the whole school, younger students, parents' night.
- **Be prepared!** Plan ahead, enlist your colleagues, administrators, parents, the community!
- **Clothing themes:** designate a flag color for the day – all students who wear that color get (your imagination here...) Have a fashion show in the target language for other classes including ethnic costumes.
- **Cuisine!** If possible, work with your school cafeteria staff. Translate the menu of the day into the targeted languages of your school. Cooking lessons, cooking contests, recipe exchanges, create a cookbook (great for fundraising or gifts.)
- **Daily announcements** in the target language get everyone's attention!
- **Essay, Poster, Trivia, Questions** contests in your class or involve the whole school.
- **Fiesta – Fête – Festa – Fun!** Time to plan a theme event for your class: an authentic birthday party, authentic holiday / celebration. Create invitations in the target language, invite the administration, parents, community members. Serve authentic cuisine, play music, have students demonstrate an authentic game or present a skit, play, puppet show.



- **Food Sales:** churros y chocolate, croissants, quesadillas, international types of candy, etc. Irresistible!
- **Game day:** (afternoon, evening) Scrabble, Jeopardy, Battleship, Mille Bornes or any authentic game native to the country and in the language! Snacks, prizes entice and draw crowds!
- **Honor Societies** – for languages. This is a great time for the inductions, ceremonies, celebrations, etc.
- **Invite guest speakers** from your community, parent organizations to talk about the customs, traditions, perspectives, and practices of their country.
- **Jokes, riddles, tongue twisters** in the target language to warm up the class!
- **Karaoke** in the target language! Need I say more? 😊
- **Label everything** in sight in your school in your targeted languages – from the Principal's Office to the gym to the lockers to the doors! Nothing like **immersion** to spread the word!
- **Movie afternoon!** Show a foreign movie (prior approved, of course) to students; serve popcorn, fruit, or traditional snacks.
- **Music** can be used in so many ways – rhyme and rhythm in any language are infectious and a great way to learn vocabulary, new structures, etc.
- **Name that tune!** Can they identify the language, lyrics, national anthem? Put your students and school to the test! Play the music between classes while they are passing, in the morning, during lunch. Have your students teach the lyrics to another class.



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- **N**ewsletters / newspapers – this is a great time to publish!
- **O**ut to lunch (or dinner) Take your students to that favorite ethnic restaurant.
- **P**oetry in Motion! Have your students create the diamond poems, cinquain, terquain, anything to show their creativity in expression. Display around the school.
- **P**ublicize your activities! Use the school newsletter / newspaper / daily bulletin and then go to a larger audience with your community publications.
- **P**uppet Shows are a **P**ositive way to entertain and have children learn while entertaining!
- **Q**uestions of the day on the target countries – announce, post, reward! Test their global education / geography knowledge!
- **R**ead books in the target language, about the target country; enlist the librarian to display and encourage reading stories from other cultures. . .
- **S**cavenger Hunts are intriguing; naturally keep it in the target language. For a change have the Spanish students do the French Scavenger Hunt and vice-versa. Mix it up!
- **S**hare the wealth! Students can talk about their backgrounds – bring in food tastings, artifacts, traditional dress, etc. Have them interview the other teachers (target language of course), parents, peers. . .
- **T**each it in the target language to a target audience! Have the upper level students work with the elementary students. Have one language group teach some catchy phrases to another. . .
- **U**nderstand that you are making a huge impact on your community, your school, your colleagues and your students. Don't underestimate the power of advocacy!
- **V**irtual Tours of cities, landmarks, museums – have students work together and create webquests for other students with guiding questions and clues.
- **W**ww. create a webpage for your class activities/ blog/
- **eX**change – (OK...so I cheated a bit here!!) ideas with your colleagues; keep a file for future Foreign Language Weeks.
- **Y**es – it's doable. Whether you do one thing for the week or one a day, you are communicating the importance not only of learning a language but **USING** the language in so many creative ways.
- **Z**ero in on your and your students' creativity. Brainstorm together with your colleagues.



Good Luck and Happy Celebrations. Your students' voices – the "many voices" are your rewards! Thank you for all you do to promote Foreign Language Learning not only during this week of celebration, but all year!

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Send me notices of your activities and we'll publish some in the next newsletter!

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