Chapter 10: Connections

*The Standards for Language Learning in the 21st Century* (2006) sets the guidelines for foreign language teaching in the U.S. The third standard, Connections, represents a dramatic change in the objectives of language education. It holds that students should learn *content* through the language, and not just the language forms and vocabulary. For more about the standards, see Chapter 2: *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*.

It is broadly recognized that students learn best when they use their foreign language in a meaningful context to do something that has importance for them in the language. As they learn the language they will be able to access authentic material that would not be available to them if they did not have some knowledge of the language. Standards-based instruction encourages students to pursue their interests and gain knowledge not just *in* the foreign language, but *through* the foreign language.

The Connections Standard implies a multidisciplinary approach to learning, combining foreign language study with anything and everything else. To learn a foreign language, we must have content. We cannot demonstrate our skill with the foreign language without having something about which to talk or write. Content comes in whatever context one desires, preferably something in which one has an interest. The context can be connections to other courses in the students’ schedule, extra-curricular activities, or outside interests.
Standard 3.1. Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.

Standard 3.2. Learners access and evaluate information and diverse perspectives that are available through the language and its cultures. *


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# Teaching Connections

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Objectives and Assessment

How Connections Fits into the Curriculum

Connecting With Other Subjects

An important consideration in setting objectives for connections in foreign language classes is to find out what else the students are learning in school. Too often foreign language is isolated from the shared objectives of the school. It is seen as “different” from other subjects, without links and connections to Science, Math, Language Arts, and Social Studies. The Foreign Language teacher needs to reach out to other teachers and support them in their subject-specific standards-based objectives, and invite them to collaborate with him/her to support the learning of a foreign language.

Every subject has national standards. We will provide links to the latest standards in this chapter in the section on Activities, and in the Resources section. It is important for you to be familiar with the national and local standards and curricula in subjects other than Foreign Language so you can connect your students’ learning of the target language to their learning in other subjects.

Once you know the standards and curricula your students are studying in other subjects, there are three major ways to incorporate Connections to other disciplines into your learning objectives:

You can create whole units around themes that extend the study of a subject area such as English Language Arts, History, Social Studies, Science, or Math to the study of the target language world, such as:

- a unit on the geography of the target language world,
- units on various periods of history in the target language world,
- a unit on important historical figures in the target language world,
- a unit on important mathematicians, scientists and philosophers,
- a unit on the ecology of an area in the target language-speaking,
- a unit on the traditional art and/or music of the target language world, or
- a unit on travel literature.

You can provide students with the experience of using knowledge from other disciplines in the context of a task in the target language by:

- measuring ingredients for recipes for traditional target culture dishes in a food unit practicing the use of metrics in measurement,
• reading a map written in the target language,
• incorporating geography into a unit on food or travel,
• incorporating calculation in a unit on shopping (and paying),
• incorporating geometry in a lesson on architecture,
• incorporating the characteristics of fables or folk tales in English into a unit on target culture folk tales, or
• incorporating comparisons of writing and grammar conventions across English and the target language into any unit.

You can develop an activity where students access information or a perspective that is only available in the target language such as:
• show students maps of the world in the target language
• show students the front page of a current newspaper or some current news magazine covers (with pictures) to see what news is treated as most important.
• focus on the meaning of a common word in the target language which has no exact translation equivalent in English, or
• have students read or listen to a short opinion article or letter on a controversial subject in the target language.

A useful website on Content-Based Learning for foreign languages has been created by the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). The website includes theory, research, a lesson planning template, and excellent examples of lessons and units in the section on “Lesson Plans and Units.” (See Resources at the end of this chapter for links.)

A new approach to connecting language learning and learning from other disciplines is the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, which has been developed in the context of the European framework of language learning. In the CLIL approach, instruction is content-driven; subject content and language content are fused. For more about CLIL, see Resources at the end of this chapter.

**Learning Objectives**

Learning objectives drive all instruction. Content objectives, such as those described in the Standards, describe what students should know, and performance objectives describe how well students should be able to perform. The teacher identifies learning objectives for the course, thematic units, and lessons. Developing thematic units is an essential step in your instruction. For more on thematic units, go to Chapter 3: Planning Instruction.

In the case of foreign languages, we develop objectives based on the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (2006), which include making connections to other
bodies of knowledge. When we connect language learning to another body of knowledge, such as Math, Social Science, or Language Arts, we need to make sure our content objectives also address the standards of the other disciplines.

Once you have determined the learning objectives for a course, unit or lesson, including the connections objectives, you can develop your assessment. Along with your assessment, you can develop a way to grade or evaluate student performance on the assessment.

We will use an example unit on food for Grade 9 students of first year language to demonstrate how you can first plan objectives, then assessment, and then activities. Each activity also has an assessment.

**Content Objectives – WHAT students should learn**

Content objectives for connections to other disciplines are linked to the *enduring understandings* for the year and the unit. These are “big ideas,” often related to the culture of the language under study. The students explore them mostly in the target language. For more on enduring understandings, see Backwards Design in Chapter 3: Planning Instruction.

Standards-based content objectives are different from the traditional language learning objectives. They describe *functions*, what students can do with the language, rather than specific grammar points or vocabulary. The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (2006, in press) provide *sample progress indicators* for students for each standard, including Connections, at various levels of proficiency. The progress indicators are all functions, descriptions of what the students can do with the language. These can guide you in developing realistic objectives for your students. The progress indicators are provided for four levels of study, Grade 4, Grade 8, Grade 12, and Grade 16 (senior in college) on the assumption that the students have been studying the same target language since Grade 1. Since this is not usually the case, teachers can approximate what progress indicators are appropriate for their students by adjusting the years of study and then choosing functions that are appropriate (and of interest) to their students.

- Progress indicators for Grade 4 are appropriate for students who have studied the target language in grades K-4, 5-8, or 9-10.
- Progress indicators for Grade 8 are appropriate for students have studied the target language K-8, 7-12, or 9-12.
- Progress indicators for Grade 12 are appropriate primarily for students who have studied the same target language K-12.
- Progress indicators for Grade 16 are appropriate for advanced learners.

For more on Standards and some examples of sample progress indicators, go to Chapter 2: *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*.

Below are some sample Content Learning objectives for Connections for a first-year, 9th Grade class studying a unit on food. The objectives have been developed using the progress indicators for Grade 4 and Grade 8 students.
Sample Content Learning Objectives for Connections

Example Content Learning Objectives:
Grade 9
Year 1
Thematic Unit – Food

Enduring Understanding – There are similarities and differences in the everyday lives of people living in different cultures. There are similarities and differences between people of different cultures in the food they eat, and how it is prepared, served, and eaten.

Connections Objectives for Food Unit:

Students will be able to:
- recognize and calculate numbers in the target language for cooking and shopping,
- recognize, use, and discuss metric measurements in the target language to read recipes and make food, and
- identify and describe the major geographical characteristics of a country or region and relate that information to traditional foods.

Depending on what the students have already studied or what they are learning in other subjects, the objectives could be extended to connections to many disciplines including food and health, history of the region, climate and plants, economy and trade, effect of globalization, etc. These kinds of Connections objectives can be developed for any theme or topic.

Assessment

Teachers give students an assessment at the end of each thematic unit that measures students’ progress on all the goal areas of the Standards and on the three modes of communication together. This is a summative assessment. Usually it is an integrated performance assessment where the students demonstrate how well they can do what they have learned to do during the unit.

You cannot always include all your specific objectives for each goal area of the Standards in your summative assessment, but you can include formative assessment within the unit activities to help you evaluate how well the students are able to meet all objectives. Formative assessments are ongoing assessments that you use every day to check student progress and understanding such as observations, quizzes, checklists, or your review of homework. For more on assessment, go to Chapter 4: Assessment.

Sample summative, end of unit, performance assessment for progress for a Grade 9, Year 1 class studying a food unit. (We use the same summative assessment in the discussion of each of the standards.)
Sample Summative Assessment

Students will work in groups to prepare presentations on the traditional foods of different target language-speaking countries and how they are eaten.

1. Each group will research the traditional foods of one country or region. A teacher handout with a series of key questions (in the target language) will guide their research. Resources may include (all in the target language) recipes, menus, short descriptions of foods, videos, pictures, advertisements, interviews, going to a restaurant with food from the region, going to a target culture grocery store, cooking some dishes.

2. In the target language, students in each group will share their information and design a presentation for the class on the traditional foods of their region and how they are prepared and served. The teacher can encourage the students to be creative in developing presentations that will be of interest to the class. These could include skits, PowerPoint presentations, demonstrations of cooking and/or eating, videos, recipe books, etc.

3. Students give their presentations in the target language. Each student in each group participates. Presenters should be prepared to answer questions from other students after the presentation. Each student will listen and view the presentations of the others, take notes, and complete another handout that summarizes the content of all the presentations.

The Connections objectives should be addressed in the process of carrying out research on the region and its traditional foods, and in activities on reading recipes and cooking.

Performance Criteria –HOW WELL students should be able to do what they learn

Having clear criteria for what you expect students to be able to do and how well you expect them to do it is a huge asset in the language classroom. The ACTFL Performance Guidelines for Grades K-12 include expectations for the three modes of communication and for “Cultural Awareness,” but there are no criteria for how well students can incorporate Connections in language performance. There is no rubric for Connections in the ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment manual, but using the guidelines, along with progress indicators from the Standards, it is possible to develop a rubric that can help students (and the teacher) have concrete expectations for student performance in connecting the target language to other bodies of knowledge. In practice, on any specific activity that involves making Connections, you have a rubric for the communication mode used in the activity. In addition you can add some criteria that describe how well the students can use and expand their knowledge of this content when using the target language.
Sample Rubric for Connections Activity for Novice Learners for Food Unit in Grade 9.

This is part of a rubric for an activity that involves reading a recipe in the target language and then cooking the dish described. It evaluates progress on the specific objective “Recognize, use and discuss metric measurements in the target language to read recipes and prepare food.” The recipe includes quantities expressed in metrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations 3 points</th>
<th>Meets Expectations 2 points</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations 1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to use the target language vocabulary to refer to items and concepts learned in another subject</td>
<td>Students can read and produce with some fluency all vocabulary for number, quantity, and measurement in the target language.</td>
<td>Student is able to read and produce most of the vocabulary for number, quantity, and measurement in the target language.</td>
<td>Student has difficulty in reading and/or producing vocabulary for number, quantity, and measurement in the target language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to use the target language numbers and measurements</td>
<td>Student is consistently able to correctly use numbers and metric measurements written in the target language in recipes to prepare food. Student may also be able to manipulate measurements to change quantities.</td>
<td>Student is able to correctly use numbers and metric measurements written in the target language in recipes to prepare food most of the time.</td>
<td>Student has considerable difficulty in using numbers and metric measurements written in the target language in recipes to prepare food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to discuss topics addressed in other school subjects</td>
<td>Student is able to discuss the mathematical concepts in metric measurement in the target language and compare to U.S. measurements.</td>
<td>Student is able to discuss the mathematical concepts in metric measurement in the target language.</td>
<td>Student cannot discuss mathematical concepts in metric system of measurements of quantity in the target language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You should communicate these expectations to your students by giving them the rubric before they start activities. The rubrics should be part of the activity, not just brought out at the end. This is an opportunity for you to reinforce what the teachers are doing in other classes as well as extending the students’ skills to the target language.
**10: Teaching Connections**

**Materials**

Materials for teaching connections should be authentic, made for and by target language speakers, as much as possible. Your choice of materials will be determined by the topic, the background knowledge of your students, their proficiency in the target language, and the level of difficulty of the materials.

A challenge in teaching Connections is finding materials that are sophisticated enough to meet the intellectual and cognitive level of your students, and yet linguistically simple enough to be accessible to them.

**Items to consider when choosing materials:**

- Materials with lots of non-linguistic cues, graphs, maps, objects with writing on them, diagrams, provide students with context that helps them understand the meaning.
- Materials about topics that are already familiar to the students in content will be easier for them to comprehend. If students have learned the metric system in Math or Science, it will be much easier for them to learn how to manipulate measurements in the target language.
- Materials with a familiar format will be easier for students to comprehend. If students have studied the solar system in Science using a diagram or graphic of the sun and the planets, it will be much easier for them to extend and apply that learning in the target language if they see another similar graphic with target language text.

Materials for Connections can include many different kinds of things. Here are a few suggestions:

**Science:**

- Simple popular articles with lots of pictures on familiar topics
- Pictures, diagrams, graphs
- Videos/ TV programs of animals, earthquakes, the desert, etc.
- Science posters
- Posters of the animals and plants of different target language countries
- Realia related to specific scientific topics
Mathematics:
- Number posters
- Posters of metric measurement, tools for metric measurement
- Examples of math problems – from target language text – written with target language conventions
- Simple word problems
- Articles and posters about famous target culture mathematicians

Social Studies: - Geography:
- Map of the world in the target language
- Map of the target language world in the target language
- Maps of specific target language countries
- Simple articles with lots of pictures about different countries in the target language world
- Articles about geographical characteristics of the target language world, with charts and diagrams (rainfall, climate, etc.)
- Photographs and posters of the target language countries
- Videos of the different target language countries and important geographical features such as deserts, mountains, rivers, or lakes

History:
- Posters of famous target language historical figures
- Posters and pictures of famous historical monuments, sites, and artifacts
- Short articles about specific historical events, with pictures
- Historical maps
- Timelines
- Important quotations from historical figures

Many of these materials will be available on the Internet. However, the next time you go to a target language country, save some room in your suitcase to bring back some of the more locally available materials such as textbooks and classroom posters.
Activities

Most of the activities we describe in this guide are for a thematic unit on food, and designed for a first year language study, Grade 9 class of primarily non-heritage learners. We do this to illustrate that all the standards can be used to address a single topic, and to demonstrate that even first year learners can use the target language to do meaningful tasks with the language. The procedures in each activity can be adapted to any topic, and to any age or level of proficiency in the target language. In the activities we refer to materials, such as videos, that would meet the specific needs of the activity. In reality, the materials you can find, adapt, and create will largely determine the details of your activities. We know that finding just the right materials is a very hard task, and will take up a lot of your time. At the end of each chapter is a list of resources, and the final module provides a summary of resources and references.

Connections between the target language/culture and other bodies of knowledge are all embedded in communication activities: Students read/view/listen to texts about a subject (interpretive communication). They discuss, argue, share information, ask and answer questions about the subject (interpersonal communication). They write or speak about the subject (presentational communication).

We will describe some sample activities for connections to Math, Geography, and Language Arts. Each activity includes various modes of communication (interpreive, interpersonal, and presentational). For more detailed ideas about how to teach in the context of each of the modes, refer to the appropriate chapter where you will find guidelines and detailed descriptions of activities and assessments. See Appendix A for additional ideas.

Mathematics

Instruction in Mathematics is guided by the Principles and Standards for School Mathematics (2000), published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). A look at these standards gives you information about what the goals of the math curriculum are, and suggests where you might find connections to the themes and topics you are teaching in the target language. You can read the Executive Summary online; see Resources at the end of this chapter.

The Mathematics Standards include five Content Standards and five Process Standards.

The Content Standards are:

- Number and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis and Probability
The Process Standards are:
- Problem Solving – a goal, as well as a way, of learning math
- Reasoning and Proof – ways of developing and expressing insights
- Communication – sharing ideas, clarifying understanding
- Connections – between mathematical ideas and in different contexts
- Representations – different ways to represent mathematical ideas

Each of these goal areas can be addressed in the target language classroom. An important part of making the connection is teaching the students the academic language they need to think and talk about the mathematical concepts in the target language.

Following a Recipe – Using the Metric System

The following activity is designed for a 9th Grade, first year class that is studying a food unit toward the end of the academic year. The students are already familiar with number names and with some food vocabulary. They are studying and using the metric system in their Math and Science classes. The objective of this activity is for students to be able to understand and use the metric system of measurement for recipes in the target language. This includes an understanding of the vocabulary and abbreviations for measurements, and the language of simple mathematical calculations. For foods, these will include not only grams and kilograms, but also other types of conventional measure, such as the cup, the tablespoon, and the teaspoon. The activity addresses the Number and Operations, Measurement, and Problem Solving standards for Mathematics, cited above, as well as the Connections standard for Foreign Language.

Find some recipes for traditional target culture foods that can be at least partly made in the classroom, if they require cooking on the stove or in the oven, arrange to do the cooking yourself, or send partially prepared foods home with students to be cooked and brought back to school. Since the activity will focus on measuring ingredients, the more different ingredients that require measuring (liquids, solids, countable items, etc.), the better.

- Share the objectives of the activity, the rubric for the assessment, and the general plan with the students.
- Show the students measuring instruments – marked in the target language, if possible - such as measuring spoons, a measuring container for liquids, a scale. Demonstrate measuring using metric measurements with water and a dry, inexpensive material (maybe rice or flour) and name the basic measures (grams, kilograms, milligrams, milliliters, liters) and any other repeated relevant measuring terms. Students can copy the important vocabulary or you can give them a handout.
- Have the students work in small groups or pairs. They take turns with one person calling for a particular amount of liquid or dry ingredients and the others following his/her directions.
• Extend the measuring activity by asking students to double and halve ingredients. Introduce the vocabulary in the context of measuring, and have students practice.
• Show the students a cooking video and some recipes and help them identify the measuring terms and abbreviations.
• Divide the students into pairs. Give each a copy of a recipe (that has pictures of the final product or ingredients) that requires measuring. Review the ingredients and any other vocabulary necessary to follow the recipe; do not expect the students to memorize all the food words. Ask the students to take turns reading and following the directions, especially for measuring. As the pairs work together, monitor but do not direct or correct. Watch each student for long enough to use the rubric to determine if s/he knows the words for the measurement and if s/he can use them to measure correctly.
• Give group feedback and individual feedback privately. Cook the food and eat it with your students. You can send some home to parents and to other teachers and classes.

This kind of activity asks the students to use what they have learned in another class in the target language classroom. What you select depends on your topic and on what the students are currently studying or have studied in the past. It can be more or less elaborate, and can be adapted for any age or topic.

Mathematics can be included in many common foreign language themes. A thematic unit on weather can include charting temperatures and rainfall, either in the U.S. or for a target language country or city, and translating between Fahrenheit and Celsius. A unit on clothing can include transposing sizes from the U.S. system to that of a target language country. A unit on shopping can include a lot of calculation of costs, change, budgets.

**Social Studies**

Instruction in Social Studies is guided by the *National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* (2010) written by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). These standards are based on ten themes for Grades 1-12. The themes provide links to where content in the target language can connect with, and expand on, learning in Social Studies.

Ten Social Studies Themes
- Culture
- Time, Continuity, and Change – (History)
- People, Places, and Environments – (Geography)
- Individual Development and Identity – (Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology)
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions – (Politics, Civics)
- Power, Authority, and Governance – (Politics, Law, Government)
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption – (Economics)
- Science, Technology, and Society
- Global Connections – (Globalization, International Studies)
- Civic Ideals and Practices
Social Studies - History– Foods of Ancient Rome for students of Italian

Enduring Understanding: Students will understand that there are similarities and differences in the everyday lives of people from the same geographical place across time, including the foods they eat and how they prepare them.

Objective: Students will be able to identify some foods that were produced and eaten in ancient Rome and connect them to foods that are eaten in modern-day Italy.

Assessment: Students will sort the names of foods into those eaten in modern-day Italy only, ancient Rome only, and those that are included in the diets of both ancient Rome and modern Italy.

Students will have already studied food for several lessons and will know the names of some basic ingredients and be familiar with one or two Ancient Roman dishes.

1. Prepare your materials.
   - Locate some pictures of ancient Roman art depicting foods such as reliefs or wall paintings, mosaics, or pictures of actual foods.
   - Select the vocabulary you want the students to practice or learn from a list of foods cultivated and eaten in ancient Rome. You can find a list written for children in English at Historyonthenet.com: [http://www.historyonthenet.com/Romans/food.htm](http://www.historyonthenet.com/Romans/food.htm), or from Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Roman_cuisine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Roman_cuisine). You will probably want to focus on the words for foods for which you can find pictures.

2. Review some recipes of common present day Italian dishes to see what they are made from and which include ingredients that were used in ancient Roman cuisine. Then make copies for the students of some representative recipes.

3. Go over the objectives of the activity and the assessment rubric with the students.

4. Quickly review students’ existing knowledge of food and ingredients, and dishes from Roman and Italian cuisine. Then introduce new vocabulary words, including the names of the foods and ingredients the students will see in pictures from ancient Rome and modern Italy. You can introduce the vocabulary using realia (real foods and ingredients) and with simple pictures. You might want to give the students a vocabulary list or have them copy from the board.

5. Introduce the topic of ancient Rome and ask students to brainstorm what they know about it. You can do this with the aid of pictures of architectural landmarks, mosaics, statues, reliefs, etc. A picture of a timeline can help you indicate how old this civilization was. You can give them a word bank, a list of words in Italian related to ancient Rome (with
translations or picture clues). You will not expect the students to memorize these words, but this will help them brainstorm in Italian. Limit the discussion and if the students are very interested, you could write a unit on ancient Rome later.

6. Tell the students that they are now going to develop a list of foods the ancient Romans ate, by looking at pictures of art works from the time. Give them a handout with two columns. One marked (in Italian) “Foods of the Ancient Romans” the other, “Foods of Modern Italians.”

7. Show the students the pictures of foods from ancient Rome that you have compiled. Ask them to guess what the foods are from the pictures. They can use the vocabulary you introduced earlier in the lesson as well as what they already know. The foods are not always clear in the pictures (but they are often named in the captions) so you can help them. Ask the students to write the names of the food or ingredients on their lists in the column for foods of ancient Rome.

8. Divide students into groups. Give the groups recipes for traditional (but not ancient) Roman/Italian dishes (include the ones they have already studied). Ask them to work together, to write all the ingredients in the column, “Foods of Modern Italy,” of the handout.

9. Give each student a Venn diagram. This is a diagram with two overlapping circles. You can copy a template from the Internet for free (type in “Venn Diagram”). Ask the students to write (in Italian) “Ancient Roman Foods” in one circle, “Modern Italian Foods” in another, and “Both” at the top of the overlap of the two circles. Then ask them to fill in the ingredients that they find in both modern and ancient foods in the overlapping part of the circles, and the other foods in one circle or the other.

10. You can teach the students spoken and written sentence frameworks to describe their findings. “The ancient Romans ate xxx, xxx, etc… The modern Italians eat xxx, xxx, and xxx. Both ancient Roman and modern Italian diets include xxx, yyy, zzz. This is a good moment to review, or introduce, “same” and “different.” This will connect modern and ancient Rome and the study of World History and Italian.

11. The students can use your models to write sentences at the bottom of their handouts, and/or to make oral presentations to each other in groups. You can evaluate the presentations using a simple rubric.

12. At the end of the lesson collect the handouts and use these also for assessment.

13. Your students will find some overlap between what was eaten in ancient Rome and what is eaten now. You can help them discuss the possible reasons for these differences. This might require a short diversion into English.

14. Follow-up activities could include cooking and eating an ancient Roman dish — recipes are available on the Internet—; sharing these dishes with other classes, students and/or parents; and illustrating posters or billboards with the names and pictures of foods of ancient Rome. You may want to take the students to a museum to visit an ancient Rome exhibition, if there is one near you, or show a film in Italian on Ancient Rome. The topic is fascinating and great fun for teachers and students.
This activity can be adapted to any age or level of language proficiency. With more proficient students you can discuss in Italian how Ancient Roman cuisine was highly dependent on what the people could grow locally as well as through tribute, while in modern Italy there are lots of foods that have been introduced through extended trade and globalization. Also, this conversation will underscore the connection between the study of World History and a Foreign Language.

This activity is just one example of the many different ways in which you can expand your students’ knowledge of any subject through study of a foreign language. This lesson on Roman history could be extended to a unit or a theme for a whole year. Similarly, you can incorporate into your language instruction activities on geography, art, science, politics, globalization, ecology, and anything else that is important and of interest to your students.

**English Language Arts**

There are very important connections between what students study in English and what they learn in a foreign language. They bring a lot of what they know from English to their new language, and conversely, they can bring a lot of what they learn in the target language back to their study of English. Many teachers and administrators do not realize the positive impact learning a foreign language can have on performance in a first language. You can increase this impact by being aware of the *Standards for English Language Arts* (1998-2012) and of what your students are studying in English, by collaborating with the English teacher to align objectives when possible and support each other’s goals, and by explicitly encouraging students to transfer what they are learning across classroom subjects.

*The Standards for English Language Arts*, (1998-2012), were developed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA).

The twelve standards address the following twelve aspects of English Language Arts.

1. Reading extensively
2. Reading literature
3. Using comprehension strategies
4. Adjusting style to audience in presentational writing or speaking
5. Using writing strategies
6. Using knowledge of conventions such as spelling, grammar, genre in communication
7. Conducting research, inquiry
8. Using technology
9. Understanding and respect for diversity
10. Non-native speakers of English use their first language to develop competency in English
11. Participate in communities
12. Students use language to accomplish own goals
Many of these goal areas are very similar to the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (2006) and they can be easily aligned with the study of all foreign languages. One important contribution that foreign language study can have to the study of English Language Arts is learning how to use learning strategies for reading/listening/viewing comprehension. This connection is not just content, but also a skill. While a simple text in a target language will challenge first year students in Grade 9, a text at their instructional level, where they need to work to comprehend it, will challenge them in English. The same learning strategies are used for comprehension in both situations and the skill in using them can be transferred across languages. Studying a foreign language can give students who are reading below their grade level in English an opportunity to learn and use learning strategies in a new context where they have not experienced failure. If the student is encouraged to transfer these skills to English, the results can be positive in both languages.

**Reading an Informational Text**

This activity is designed for a first year, Grade 9, class of students studying a unit on target culture foods that is described above. They have already learned some vocabulary for foods, meals, and some ingredients. The students will read a short informational text on the traditional foods of various countries. The objective of this activity is that students will be able to read and comprehend the main idea and some details about the traditional foods of a particular target language country using the learning strategy “Making Inferences” to comprehend text. For more about teaching Interpretive Communication and more activities for reading, listening and viewing go to Chapter 7: Interpretive Communication. For more about Learning Strategies, go to Chapter 1: Essential Concepts, and see the section on Learning Strategies.

1. Find a text on the traditional foods of a target language country with as much context as possible, pictures, titles, picture captions, and graphics. Make sure there are some words the students already know. If the text doesn’t have visual context you can add it by finding pictures and graphics.

2. Write a handout that asks for the basic information you want your students to learn from the text: For example: What are three major traditional foods? What are the ingredients? When are they eaten? Share the objectives and your assessment with the students. Go over the handout with them.

3. Give the students the article. (For the following conversation about learning strategies, you will probably need to use English in Novice and Intermediate classes -Year 1 and 2, and possibly Year 3-, unless they already know the words for the different learning strategies in the target language.) Ask students what they can do when they see a text that is difficult to comprehend. As students give suggestions, write them down, ask if
others use the same strategies, and give the strategies a name if possible. For example, if a student says, “I think about what I already know about the topic,” you can explain that s/he is using the strategy “Using Background Knowledge” to help him/her comprehend; that this is a good strategy and can be used in any language.

4. Focus on student responses about inferencing strategies, making guesses from what is known about what is unknown. Name and define the strategy. Model using the strategy by doing a “think aloud.” Pretend you are reading the text and talk aloud as you make an inference or two about the meaning from clues such as a picture and some familiar words.

5. Ask the students to work in small groups or pairs to go through the article and use strategies to answer the questions in the handout. Give them a time limit. As the students work you can move from group to group, coaching, giving hints, and encouraging students to use inferencing. Observe how much the students can comprehend using strategic reading.

6. Bring the class together and review a few of the answers on the handouts. Ask the students who have the answers, how they figured them out. Then, if you think this information may help others, you can give the students the opportunity to continue to work on the reading a little longer. Bring the students together again. Continue to review the answers on the handouts and ask about the strategies that students used. Note any vocabulary or usage points that have emerged as important or difficult and note them for further work.

7. Ask students to correct their own handouts and to write a short note about whether they used the inferencing strategy and if it was helpful. Collect the papers. Remind the students that this strategy can be as useful in English as in the target language, but with more complicated material. You could ask them for an example of when they might use it in English.

8. Tell the English teacher, and any other content teachers, about your learning strategies instruction. Suggest they remind the students in their classes to use inferencing with difficult texts.

This activity addresses the English Language Arts Standard #1 about reading extensively, and Standard #3 about using learning strategies for comprehension, as well as the Interpretive Communication and Connections foreign language standards. This kind of activity can be used with any learning strategy or any similar skill that can be shared across disciplines.
Learning Strategies: What the Learner Does

Language learning strategies, such as those described above in the activity on reading an informational text, are the thoughts and actions of students that they use to improve their learning of a language. Teachers can help students to use effective learning strategies by instructing them in what learning strategies are, when they are appropriate, and how to use them. For more on teaching learning strategies see Chapter 1: Essential Concepts.

When making connections between the target language and culture and other bodies of knowledge, students need to use strategies that will help them transfer knowledge across disciplines. In addition they need strategies that will help them experience target culture perspectives through the language. In the example given above about reading a text, students are encouraged to transfer the learning strategies they use for reading in the target language to their reading in English. Transfer and Use Background Knowledge both help the student to apply what they already know to a new task, such as applying knowledge of the metric system to measuring quantities in the target language. Students can Make Inferences about new information in the target language or another subject, based on their knowledge obtained from some other subject area. To experience and understand target culture perspectives, students can use the strategy Personalize; they relate the target culture perspective to their own lives, knowledge, beliefs and experiences.

Transfer is a strategy where students apply what they know in one context or discipline to another context or discipline. This can include content or linguistic knowledge, or skill.

- **Use Background Knowledge** is a strategy where students use whatever they know to help them figure out meaning in a foreign language. This can be broader than transferring specific knowledge or skill.

- **Make Inferences** is a widely used strategy to make sense of texts, written or recorded, or situations. Students use what they know to make guesses about what they do not understand. Students can make inferences about language or information in the target language based on their background knowledge or their knowledge from a content area learned in English.

- **Personalize** is an important learning strategy that helps students understand the perspectives of other cultures. To use Personalize, a student needs to relate information about the target language perspective to his/her own life, experiences, beliefs and feelings. This leads to experiencing and understanding the target language point of view.
**Teaching Strategies: What the Teacher Does**

- Get involved with the other teachers of your students. Go to faculty meetings, grade meetings, foreign language meetings, and join any curricular teams you can to learn as much as possible about what your students are studying and learning.

- Be familiar with local and national standards for the subjects your students are taking. Read over the curricula for their other courses. Talk to the other teachers about their goals and concerns. Let them know about your course and your objectives.

- If your students are challenged in particular areas, such as reading, talk to the other teachers and see what you can do to reinforce efforts to improve their skills. Your instruction can be particularly helpful in introducing or reinforcing learning strategies for reading comprehension and writing, for grammar (see Chapter 11: Comparisons), and for planning strategies for research, writing, and presentational speaking.

- Include Connections objectives in your lesson objectives and assessment rubrics, and share objectives and assessments with the students, and other relevant teachers.

- Explicitly teach your students to transfer what they know across disciplines and languages and help them see they can do it.

- Design your instruction to help students personalize target culture perspectives. Learning to personalize is an important skill in and of itself. What they learn through experiencing a new perspective will stay with them longer than any specific vocabulary or cultural information.

Fig. 10-21-1 ©Ledzl1969
Resources, References, Images, and Credits

References:

   http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Can-Do_Statements.pdf

   http://www.actfl.org/global_statements


   http://www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages


Resources:


This manual explains how to carefully create summative performance assessments that connect each of the three modes. The publication includes examples from Novice through Advanced levels.
10: Teaching Connections


Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). *Creating Thematic Units.* Available at: [http://www.carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/CreateUnit/p_1.html](http://www.carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/CreateUnit/p_1.html)

They introduce the concept of backward design, demonstrate how to develop thematic units, which they call “assessment units,” and then give examples. The examples are of integrated performance activities that can be sued to frame a unit or lesson. There are example activities for a variety of languages.


They have developed on-line units and lessons for French, Spanish, Japanese and German that can be adapted to other languages. When you click on the link, it will take you to a dialog box. You can select the 8 best model units by putting a check in the box for “the 8 stellar units.” The templates for the unit and lesson plans are also useful.


The publication provides a template and several examples of units built around summative performance assessments in each of the three modes of communication (Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational). At the ACTFL publication website, several unit samples and the blank template may be downloaded: [http://www.actfl.org/publications/books-and-brochures/the-keys-planning-learning](http://www.actfl.org/publications/books-and-brochures/the-keys-planning-learning)


This is a learning strategies guide for the higher education level.


This takes a look at the various strategies children use to learn a foreign language in an immersion setting.


This site gives an introduction to the language teaching methods in use. Contains sections on the principles, practice, and examples of language teaching.

10: Teaching Connections

Includes resources on integrating strategy instruction into a language lesson. Learning strategies charts are available in multiple languages in the Appendices. Twenty learning strategies are highlighted.


The goal of the REALIA Project is to develop and implement a searchable digitized media database which will provide instructors of modern languages with teaching resources accessible via the Web. The project seeks to increase through collaboration the quantity of high-quality teaching and learning materials by providing a respected venue for media projects. Faculty review images.

**Images:**

10-1-1 Connections
10-4-1 School Subjects
10-4-2 Economy+Ecology+Daily Life = Environment
10-5-1 Newspaper
10-5-2 Learning Objectives Pyramid
10-7-1 Measuring Ingredients
10-7-2 Rubric
10-8-1 Recipe Book
10-8-2 Performance Star
10-10-1 Solar System
10-10-2 Reading Charts and Graphs
10-11-1 Kilometer Distance Sign
10-11-2 River Systems Map
10-11-3 Geography – Old Map of the World
10-12-1 Connections
10-12-2 Math Symbols
10-13-1 Mathematical Proof
10-13-2 Metric Measures
10-14-1 Social Studies
10-15-1 Roman Foods

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### 10: Teaching Connections

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Appendices

Appendix A: Connections Activities by Subject Area

Mathematics

- Calculate distances, weights and measurements using the metric system
- Work with exchange rates
- Figure the area of a living space (How does 200 square meters compare to 2,000 square feet?)
- Budget a grocery store trip
- Plan a balanced diet with appropriate calories, grams of fiber, etc.
- Create a wardrobe, using the sizing of a target language country

Science

- Ecology
- Wildlife in an area where the target language is spoken
- Distribution of wildlife, climate patterns, etc. across target language countries
- Geologic activity and geography and the impact on life styles and foods
- Water resources and how they are used
- Industrial impact upon environment (chemical effluents, etc.)

Language and Literature

- Grammar: What is it and how does it work. Make explicit connections andt comparisons between English and the target language.
- The history of the development of alphabets
- Literary forms in English and the target language - such as poetry, stories, folk tales, songs.
- Literary characters, themes, writing styles from the target language cultures and their impact on Western literature.
- Words from the target language that have been assimilated into English; words from English that are used in the target language.
### Appendix B: Sample Rubric for Connections Activity

**Sample Rubric for Connections Activity** for Novice Learners for food unit in Grade 9. This is part of a rubric for an activity that involves reading a recipe in the Target Language and then cooking the dish described. It evaluates progress on the specific objective “Recognize, use and discuss metric measurements in the Target Language to read recipes and prepare food.” The recipe includes quantities expressed in metrics.

<table>
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<th>Criterion</th>
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<th>Meets Expectations (2 points)</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations (1 point)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Able to use the Target Language vocabulary to refer to items and concepts learned in another subject</td>
<td>Students can read and produce with some fluency all vocabulary for number, quantity, and measurement in the Target Language.</td>
<td>Student is able to read and produce most of the vocabulary for number, quantity, and measurement in the Target Language.</td>
<td>Student has difficulty in reading and/or producing vocabulary for number, quantity, and measurement in the Target Language.</td>
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<td>Able to use the Target Language numbers and measurements</td>
<td>Student is consistently able to correctly use numbers and metric measurements written in the Target Language in recipes to prepare food. Student may also be able to manipulate measurements to change quantities.</td>
<td>Student is able to correctly use numbers and metric measurements written in the Target Language in recipes to prepare food most of the time.</td>
<td>Student has considerable difficulty in using numbers and metric measurements written in the Target Language in recipes to prepare food.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to discuss topics addressed in other school subjects</td>
<td>Student is able to discuss the mathematical concepts in metric measurement in the Target Language and compare to U.S. measurements.</td>
<td>Student is able to discuss the mathematical concepts in metric measurement in the Target Language.</td>
<td>Student cannot discuss mathematical concepts in metric system of measurements of quantity in the Target Language.</td>
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