

# **In-service training modules on:**

**Module 1: Standards-based Education**

**Module 2: Performance-based Assessment**

## **In-service training modules on:**

- Module 1: Standards-based Education**
- Module 2: Performance-based Assessment**

### **Prepared by:**

- Lahcen Aberwil, Guelmim Smara Academy**
- Lhoussain Bouchouat, Sous Massa Daraa Academy**
- Mohammed Hassim, Zagora Delegation**
- Tayed Idihya, Tiznit Delegation**
- Miloud Najrane, Inzegane Ait Melloul Delegation**
- Abdellatif Zoubair, Agadir Idaoutanan Delegation**

# **Module 1: Standards-based Education**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>p. 4</b>
<b>Module One: Standards-based Education</b>	<b>p. 6</b>
<b>Standard-based Education: Background</b>	<b>p. 7</b>
<b>Worksheets for the Video on the 5 Cs</b>	<b>p. 9</b>
<b>Standards-based textbook evaluation</b>	<b>p. 12</b>
<b>Standards-based Instruction: Key Principles</b>	<b>p. 13</b>
<b>Designing standards-based activities using learning scenarios</b>	<b>p. 15</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>P .17</b>

# Introduction

## A. Rationale

Standards-based Education (hereafter SBE) has recently been adopted in our EFL teaching context. This has given rise to a multitude of different attitudes among classroom practitioners ranging from total acceptance through uncertainty about rationale and terminology to utter rejection. These two latter attitudes most probably result from lack of understanding of the philosophy behind SBI. Despite the numerous in-service training sessions organized by supervisors, there is still a great deal of confusion amongst teachers as to the rationale behind SBI, its basic principles and most importantly the underlying methodological implications. The following questions might to a great extent reflect the queries of a great number of teachers:

- How novel is Standards-based Education?
- How could standards be incorporated in our classroom context?
- What's the difference between an objective, a competency and a standard?
- What's a benchmark?
- How can we design tests following the standards-based model?

The present teacher training modules have been designed to provide answers to some of the above questions.

## B. Goals of the modules

Apart from them being a contribution in the nationwide project of in-service training to update teachers' knowledge and skills regarding the recent innovations, the present modules essentially aim at:

- Clarifying standards-based key concepts and terminology.
- Enabling teachers to identify standards in the textbooks and to incorporate them in their everyday teaching practice.
- Getting teachers to try alternative forms of assessment to be in line with the recent trends in language teaching methodology.
- Making teachers view language learning as being more than just the acquisition of the linguistic system (learning about the target culture, connecting to other disciplines and using English outside the classroom and for personal enjoyment and enrichment).

## C. Content of the modules

This teacher training document features two modules: Standards-based instruction and performance-based assessment. The first module on Standards-based Education comprises these topics and issues:

1. Background to Standards-based instruction  
this segment essentially deals with the philosophy behind SBI, the structure of the standards and the description of the five goal areas.
2. Exploring the 5 Cs  
The activities in this part revolve around video material describing in a lot of detail the 5Cs (communication, cultures, comparisons, connections and communities)
3. Exploring standards in the textbook  
This section aims at linking theory to practice by enabling teachers to identify standards targeted in the textbooks.
4. Designing standards-based activities using learning scenarios  
This part will enable teachers to design and develop their own classroom activities that are standards based.

The second module on performance-based assessment comprises the following parts:

- Reviewing the basics of testing
- Defining performance-based assessment and its related terminology
- Exploring alternative test types.

**Module One :**  
**Standards-based Education**

# Standard-based Education: Background

## Task sheet

Go through the Standards document (*Standards for Foreign language Learning: Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*) and answer the following questions:

1. Determine the three main assumptions that underlie the philosophy behind standards (page 7).
2. What ten words sum up the ‘secret’ for effective communication? (Introduction, pages 11-13)
3. How are the standards organized? (pp. 23-26)
4. Define each goal area. (page 9)
5. How are the goal areas related? (pp. 23-26)
6. Identify the three main communication modes (page 33) and explain how culture fits in within the framework.
7. Explain how the three components of culture relate to each other and what effects would that have on language teaching. (pp. 43-48)
8. How can the foreign language learning experience reinforce students’ knowledge of other disciplines? (pp. 49-52)
9. Provide instances from Progress Indicators to show how comparing language systems and cultures can help learners develop better insights into the nature of their own language and culture. (pp. 53-57)
10. How is language made meaningful in the world beyond the classroom? (pp. 59-63)

## Worksheets for the Video on the 5 Cs

The video is downloaded from [www.learner.org](http://www.learner.org). The whole video is 58:28 minutes long. It is divided into ten parts. Each part is accompanied by tasks in the worksheets below. The ten parts are as follows:

1. 5Cs\_Introduction.asf : 03 :51 mins
2. 5Cs\_Communication\_Intro.asf : 01 :03 mins
3. Communication\_Interpersonal.asf : 08 :25 mins
4. Communication\_Interpretive.asf : 06 :10 mins
5. Communication\_Presentational.asf : 05 :31 mins
6. 5Cs\_Cultures.asf : 07 :49 mins
7. 5Cs\_Connections.asf: 08:15 mins
8. 5Cs\_Comparisons.asf: 08:22 mins
9. 5Cs\_Communities.asf: 07:36 mins
10. 5Cs\_Conclusion.asf: 02:37 mins
11. 5Cs\_WholeVideo.asf: 58:28 mins

### Part 1 and Part 10

**Part 1 and part 10 can be presented successively:**

1. 5Cs\_Introduction.asf : 03 :51 mins
10. 5Cs\_Conclusion.asf: 02:37 mins

#### Part 1

##### **A. Previewing activity**

Teachers work in groups and discuss the following question:

- What have standard-based education (SBE) and the 5 Cs brought to English language teaching and learning? What is special/new about it?
- Teachers in the different groups share their idea.

##### **B. While viewing activity**

- Teachers view **part 1** where different teachers and specialists talk about SBE and the 5Cs and compare with their ideas.

#### Part 10

**A. Previewing activity: Teachers discuss the following question in groups:**

- Are the 5Cs equally important? How are they related to each other?

##### **B. While viewing activity**

- Teachers view **part 10** and then discuss and compare with their ideas.

##### **D. Post viewing activity**

Teachers answer the following question individually, then share their ideas with the whole group:  
According to you what are the 3 major important things about SBE and the 5Cs?

## Part 2. 5Cs\_Communication\_Intro.asf : 01 :03 mins

Teachers view the introduction to ‘Communication’ and answer the following questions:

- How important is communication in language teaching and learning?
- What are the major modes of communication?

## Part 3. Communication\_Interpersonal.asf : 08 :25 mins

### A. Previewing activity

Teachers work in groups and discuss the following question:

- What is interpersonal communication?

### B. While viewing activity

Teachers view part 3 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following questions:

- How do learners develop the communicative competence?
- What types of activities help in that?

## Part 4. Communication\_Interpretive.asf : 06 :10 mins

### A. Previewing activity

Teachers work in groups and discuss the following question:

- What is interpretive communication?

### B. While viewing activity

Teachers view part 4 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following questions:

- What is important about interpretive communication?
- What activities/materials are given in the video as ways of developing this mode of communication?

### C. Post viewing activity

Teachers answer the following question in small groups, then share with the whole group:

- What are other activities do you suggest to develop interpretive communication?

## Part 5. Communication\_Presentational.asf : 05 :31 mins

**A. Previewing activity:** Teachers work in groups and discuss the following question:

- What does presentational communication stand for? And how important is it?

### B. While viewing activity

Teachers view part 5 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following questions:

- What is important about presentational communication?
- What activities/materials are given in the video as ways of developing this mode of communication?

### **C. Post viewing activity**

Teachers answer the following question in small groups, then share with the whole group:

- What can you add to the previous list of activities that help develop presentational communication?

## **Part 6. 5Cs\_Cultures.asf : 07 :49 mins**

### **A. Previewing activity:**

Teachers work in groups and discuss the following questions:

- What is the role of culture in language teaching and learning?
- How can we integrate culture in the language classroom?
- How is culture related to the other 4 Cs?

### **B. While viewing activity**

Teachers view part 6 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following questions:

- What are the 3 different aspects of culture?
- What is culture with a big C and culture with a small C?

### **C. Post viewing activity**

Teachers answer the following question in small groups, then share with the whole group:

- How is culture presented in the Moroccan textbooks?

## **Part 7. 5Cs\_Connections.asf: 08:15 mins**

### **A. Previewing activity:**

Teachers work in groups, read the following quote from the video about ‘Connections’ and discuss it through the following question:

- What practical benefits does ‘Connections’ bring to the classroom?

*“The connection goal creates a link between other academic disciplines and the foreign language classroom. Making interdisciplinary connections in the foreign language helps students gain new meaning and practical applications to their learning.”*

### **B. While viewing activity**

Teachers view part 7 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following question:

- What examples of activities are given to develop ‘Connections’?

### **C. Post viewing activity**

Teachers answer the following question in small groups, then share with the whole group:

- What other activities can you think of to develop ‘Connections’?

## **Part 8. 5Cs\_Comparisons.asf: 08:22 mins**

### **A. Previewing activity:**

Teachers work in groups, read the following quote from the video about ‘Comparisons’ and discuss it through the following question:

- How important is that to foreign language teaching and learning?

*“The comparisons goal develops a deeper insight and reflection into the nature of language and culture as students compare and contrast the similarities and differences of other cultures to their own.”*

### **B. While viewing activity**

Teachers view part 8 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following question:

- What are the main benefits shown in the video of ‘Comparisons’ in foreign language teaching and learning?

### **C. Post viewing activity**

Teachers answer the following question in small groups, then share with the whole group:

- What type of activities can be useful to integrate comparisons in foreign language teaching and learning?

## **Part 9. 5Cs\_Communities.asf: 07:36 mins**

### **A. Previewing activity**

Teachers work in groups, read the following quote from the video about ‘Communities’ and discuss it through the following question:

- How can we integrate ‘Communities’ in foreign language teaching and learning?

*“The communities goal encourages students to take the language outside of the classroom and to use it more in everyday life. This enriches the language learning experience and promotes a sense of lifelong learning.”*

### **B. While viewing activity**

Teachers view part 9 and compare with their ideas. At the same time, they answer the following question:

- What activities are shown in the video of integrating ‘Communities’ in foreign language teaching and learning?

### **C. Post viewing activity**

Teachers answer the following question in small groups, then share with the whole group:

- What activities of the previously mentioned ones do you think are most useful and practical in the Moroccan context?

## **Tasksheet: Standards-Based Textbook Evaluation Guide**

**Task :** Browse through the textbooks ‘ Gateway to English 2’ and ‘ Ticket 2 English’ and ‘ Insights Into English ‘ and comment on the activities suggested using the following guiding checklist.

### **GENERAL**

\*Have all the 5 Cs been addressed?

### **1. COMMUNICATION**

\* Do students have opportunities for face to face interaction, interpreting written and spoken messages and making written and spoken presentations?

### **2. CULTURES**

\*Are the students asked to identify, analyse or discuss perspectives, practices or products of the foreign language country?

### **3. CONNECTIONS**

\*Do the students have opportunities to discuss or discover more about concepts and topics learned in other subject areas ( science, history, geography, . . . )

\*Are students given the opportunities to participate in projects in which they acquire information through technology, personal interviews, print or visual media, or print references (dictionaries, encyclopedias )?

### **4. COMPARISONS**

\*Do students have opportunities to analyse the similarities and differences between their own language and the foreign language?

\*Are similarities and differences presented between the cultures of speakers of the foreign language and the students’ own culture?

### **5. COMMUNITIES**

\*Are students asked to communicate with speakers of the foreign language outside their own classroom ( conversation, writing, . . . )

\*Are students encouraged or given opportunities to use the foreign language for leisure activities ( media, sports, games, music, reading, . . . )?

## **Handout 1: Standards-based Instruction : Key principles and pedagogical implications**

- Language is used for communication in real-life situations (what the students do with the language).
- Cultural understanding is an important component of foreign language instruction.
- Foreign language instruction must be connected with other subject areas in the curriculum.
- Standards-based instruction (SBI) applies language skills to the world beyond the classroom.
- SBI assists students in making meaningful comparisons among patterns of language systems and cultures.
- SBI integrate content with language learning (the foreign language is used to acquire new knowledge).
- Learners should take responsibility for their own learning.
- Instruction is developed around stated objectives that can be observed (performance-based).
- In addition to the elements of the language system and culture, students should be given opportunities to explore, develop and use communication strategies, critical thinking skills and learning strategies.
- Formative assessment should be adopted to check students' progress.
- Learning is measured according to how well the learner performs in relation to standards (criterion referenced).
- Learning is generally task-based.

## **Handout 2: STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **Communicate in Languages Other Than English**

- **Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions
- **Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics
- **Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

### **CULTURES**

#### **Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures**

- **Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied
- **Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

### **CONNECTIONS**

#### **Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information**

- **Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language
- **Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

### **COMPARISONS**

#### **Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture**

- **Standard 4.1:** Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own
- **Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

### **COMMUNITIES**

#### **Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World**

- **Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting
- **Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3392>

## Learning Scenario Template

Intended Level:

Theme:

Title of the scenario:

Scenario overview (brief summary of the scope of the scenario):

Steps for planning and implementation (a description of the activities in the scenario):

List of standards targeted:

Curriculum weave:

Extension activities (offer several optional activities for extending the scenario):

# Designing standards-based activities using learning scenarios

## Task Sheet

### A. What are learning scenarios? Basic features

Task: In pairs/ groups go through the following statements and extract the most salient features of learning scenarios.

- “Learning scenarios are lengthy thematic units or research projects that represent an integrated approach to teaching languages.”
- “ Learning scenarios are examples of classroom activities that reflect standard-based reform strategies..... the activities are meant to be multistage, interdisciplinary projects to be worked on by students during extended blocks of time.”
- “Curriculum and assessment have been refocused away from learning about language and toward learning to use language in culturally appropriate ways. Learning scenarios are a direct reflection of this change in focus.”
- “They (learning scenarios) consist of student-centered activities designed to support language development as students explore culturally relevant themes using authentic, contextualized target language texts, audio/video, theatre and other media.”

### B. Learning scenario format

Task: in pairs/ groups, read through the sample scenario and list the major components.

### C. Merits of learning scenarios

Task: in pairs/groups list some of the pedagogical merits of learning scenarios.

### D. How to develop a learning scenario?

Task: in pairs discuss the steps required for developing a learning scenario. Share your findings with the other groups.

### E. Standards in the scenarios

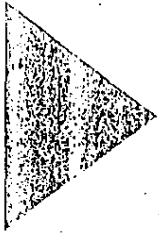
Task: in pairs/ groups read through the suggested sample learning scenario and identify the standards targeted using the checklist provided. Compare with the other groups.

### F. Designing learning scenarios

Task: In groups select a theme and design a learning scenario using the suggested template. Share your products in plenary.

# Appendices





# Statement of Philosophy

*The following statement was developed by the K-12 Student Standards Task Force as it began work on developing national standards in foreign language learning. From this philosophy, the goals for foreign language education were derived, and all the work in standards setting relates to these concepts.*

Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English-speaking backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language.

Supporting this vision are three assumptions about language and culture, learners of language and culture, and language and culture education:

*Competence in more than one language and culture enables people to*

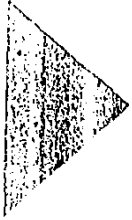
- ↳ communicate with other people in other cultures in a variety of settings,
- ↳ look beyond their customary borders,
- ↳ develop insight into their own language and culture,
- ↳ act with greater awareness of self, of other cultures, and their own relationship to those cultures,
- ↳ gain direct access to additional bodies of knowledge, and
- ↳ participate more fully in the global community and marketplace.

*All students can be successful language and culture learners, and they*

- ↳ must have access to language and culture study that is integrated into the entire school experience,
- ↳ benefit from the development and maintenance of proficiency in more than one language,
- ↳ learn in a variety of ways and settings, and
- ↳ acquire proficiency at varied rates.

*Language and culture education is part of the core curriculum, and it*

- ↳ is tied to program models that incorporate effective strategies, assessment procedures, and technologies,
- ↳ reflects evolving standards at the national, state, and local levels, and
- ↳ develops and enhances basic communication skills and higher order thinking skills.



# Introduction

The businessperson, the poet, the emergency room nurse, the diplomat, the scientist, and the teenage computer buff are representative Americans who play diverse roles in life, yet each could present a convincing rationale for the importance of studying a foreign language. Their reasons might range from the realistic to the idealistic, but one simple truth would give substance to them all: to relate in a meaningful way to another human being, one must be able to *communicate*.

From the flowing green lawns and porch swings of rural America to the front stoops of our cities, ours has traditionally been a culture of openness, of passing the time of day with friends who stroll by. But today it is the whole world that is strolling by—coming to our doors to question and discuss, to request our aid, to bring rich gifts. And since the street leads in both directions, we are going out into the wide world to run *our* errands. The neighborhood language of the front porch will no longer serve to transact world business and to make new friends. We must acquire the ability to understand and to be understood in the languages of the worldwide neighborhood.

To study another language and culture gives one the powerful key to successful communication: *knowing how, when, and why, to say what to whom*. All the linguistic and social knowledge required for effective human-to-human interaction is encompassed in those ten words. Formerly, most teaching in foreign language classrooms concentrated on the *how* (grammar) to say *what* (vocabulary). While these components of language remain crucial, the current organizing principle for language study is communication, which also highlights the *why*, the *whom*, and the *when* (the sociolinguistic and cultural aspects of language). The approach to second language instruction found in today's schools is designed to facilitate genuine interaction with others, whether they are on another continent, across town, or within the neighborhood.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND THE EDUCATED CITIZEN

To study another language and culture enhances one's personal education in many ways. It is only in learning a new linguistic system that one acquires an objective view of one's native language. For someone who has never learned a second language, this point is difficult to comprehend; for those who have learned one, it is manifestly clear. The structural bones of one's language, the limits to the range of ideas expressible in that language, the intense interdependence of language and culture—all these concepts become apparent only as second language acquisition takes place. The student becomes aware of the ways in which language speakers adroitly switch levels of discourse as the context of communication changes. The contributions of volume, pitch, speed, and tone of voice to the emotional layers of language become clear. The language learner also realizes that eye contact, facial expression, and ges-



**WE MUST ACQUIRE  
THE ABILITY TO  
UNDERSTAND AND  
BE UNDERSTOOD IN  
THE LANGUAGES OF  
THE WORLDWIDE  
NEIGHBORHOOD.**

tures play a vital role in enhancing the message that is being conveyed. With these understandings comes a new-found respect for the beauty and grace of others' languages, as well as one's own.

Research studies indicate that the very process of studying another language may give students a cognitive boost which enables them to perform at higher levels in some other subjects. An analysis of data on over 17,000 students who applied for admission to Northeast Missouri State University between 1981-86 revealed that students who had completed a foreign language course in high school tended to have higher scores on the ACT exams in English and math *regardless of their ability level* (Olsen & Brown 1992). This study reinforces the findings of another researcher, who discovered that high school foreign language students perform significantly better on the SAT verbal exam than non-foreign-language students, and that SAT verbal scores increase successively with each half year of foreign language study. In the same study, it was shown that the economic background of foreign language students did not affect performance; students from lower socioeconomic levels who studied foreign languages performed on a par with their more affluent peers (Cooper 1987).

To study another language and culture provides access to literature as it is experienced by the audience for whom it was written. Irony, humor, satire, and other rich textures of prose are revealed at their deepest level only to those familiar with both the language and culture. Similarly, the subtle seasonings which flavor drama and poetry are discernible only to those who know the language of the playwright and the poet.

To study another language and culture increases enormously one's ability to see connections. Since the *content of a foreign language course deals with history, geography, social studies, science, math, and the fine arts*, it is easy for students to develop an interdisciplinary perspective at the same time they are gaining intercultural understandings. Pedagogically, this is enhanced by the methods used to teach foreign languages: the use of images and items from real life for sharpening perception, a wide variety of physical activities and games, involvement in role play and other dramatic activities, the use of music in both receptive and participatory modes, and learning experiences that call for sequencing, memorizing, problem solving as well as both inductive and deductive reasoning. This broad range of language learning strategies appeals to a variety of learning styles and expands the learner's awareness of the many dimensions of his/her own intelligence.

To study another language and culture is to gain an especially rich preparation for the future. It is difficult to imagine a job, a profession, a career, or a leisure activity in the twenty-first century which will not be enhanced by the ability to communicate efficiently and sensitively with others. While it is impossible to foresee which foreign language will be useful at a later point in life, those who have once experienced the process of acquiring a second language have gained language learning skills that make learning another language easier. *Possession of the linguistic and cultural insights which come with foreign language study will be a requisite for life as a citizen in the worldwide neighborhood.*

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS

In 1993, foreign language education became the seventh and final subject area to receive federal funding to develop national standards for students in kindergarten through twelfth



THE KEY TO  
SUCCESSFUL  
COMMUNICATION:  
KNOWING HOW,  
WHEN, AND WHY TO  
SAY WHAT TO WHOM

grade. An eleven-member task force, representing a variety of languages, levels of instruction, program models, and geographic regions, was appointed to undertake the enormous task of defining *content standards*—what students should know and be able to do—in foreign-language education in grades four, eight, and twelve. These standards are intended to serve as a gauge for excellence, as states and local districts carry out their responsibilities for curriculum in the schools.

### **The Process**

The members of the task force approached the development of standards by examining first what foreign language education should prepare students to do: they identified the broad goals of the discipline. Within each of these areas, they then identified the essential skills and knowledge students would need to acquire by the time they left the twelfth grade. It is these essential skills and knowledge which comprise the standards.

At each stage of development, the task force shared its work with the broader profession. Several drafts were broadly disseminated. Task force members gave literally hundreds of presentations and read through many more written comments with each iteration of the draft. All comments were seriously considered, and this document reflects many of the recommended changes.


### **Relationship to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines**

In 1986, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) released the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Based on the scale developed for use by the federal government, the guidelines provide a common metric against which to measure performance *in speaking, reading, writing, and listening in a second language. The work on proficiency* has provided the profession with a common yardstick with which to begin the discussion of performance assessment. These discussions have placed the foreign language profession in an excellent position to develop new kinds of performance-based assessments that reflect the content standards in this document. It is obvious in working with the content standards that they encompass much more than the separate skills format outlined in the *proficiency guidelines*.

Teachers will recognize the influence of the guidelines within the standards, particularly in the area of communication. However, in keeping with the attempt to create broadly conceived standards, communication is organized around a framework of interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes (see pages 32-34), rather than carved into separate skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Most importantly, the standards venture into areas that will bring legitimacy to many important elements of foreign language instruction that have often been viewed as options or add-ons to make the class "more interesting." It is this focus on content (i.e., gaining access to information in a range of areas of inquiry and human activity) that may have the most lasting impact on our students in the future.

### **Setting Performance Standards for Language Competencies**

Individual states and school districts hold the responsibility for determining performance standards for their students. At the same time, the standards document was developed in the context of raising U.S. expectations to those of schools in other nations. Consequently, schools are encouraged to set exit performance standards that go well beyond the minimal



# About Standards for Foreign Language Learning

*The Standards for Foreign Language Learning were written with a variety of audiences in mind: K-12 foreign language teachers and teacher educators, curriculum writers, administrators, policy makers at all levels of government, parents, and business and community leaders. The goal of this document is to describe for all of these audiences what students of foreign languages should know and be able to do at the end of high school; it does not prescribe how students should get there. Rather, it offers guidance to those responsible for assisting them on the journey.*

## A WORD ABOUT THE USE OF "FOREIGN LANGUAGE"

The use of the word "foreign" to describe the teaching of languages other than English is becoming increasingly problematic within the U.S. context. Many of the languages taught within our schools are not "foreign" to many of our students (e.g., Italian, Chinese, or Spanish), nor are they "foreign" to the United States (e.g., Native American languages, American Sign Language, Spanish, or French). Many states have recognized this situation by referring to these languages as *World Languages*, *Modern and Classical Languages*, *Languages Other Than English (LOTEs)*, or *Second Languages*, to name a few of the terms used. The members of the standards task force debated this issue many times over the three-year project period. In the end, the term "foreign language" was maintained in the title of the document because it is readily understood by all prospective audiences. Within the document, however, the decision was made to avoid the term "foreign" whenever possible. Hence, the terms "second language," "target language," and sometimes simply "language" are all used interchangeably to refer to languages other than English taught as an academic subject.

## ORGANIZATION AND DEFINITIONS

The standards for foreign language learning are organized within the five *goal areas* which make up foreign language education: *communication*, *cultures*, *connections*, *comparisons*, and *communities*. None of these goals stands alone; all are interconnected. Each goal area contains a rationale for its inclusion as a part of foreign language education and a discussion of definitions and important pedagogical issues associated with it.

Each goal area contains two to three *content standards*. These standards describe the knowledge and abilities that all students should acquire by the end of their high school education. Each standard is followed by a brief discussion to further explicate and illustrate the standard and to define its place within the goal area.

Under each standard are *sample progress indicators* for grades four, eight, and twelve that define student progress in meeting the standards, but are not themselves standards. The sample progress indicators are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive; they are designed to be applicable to many languages but not necessarily to all languages. They can realistically be

achieved at some level by all students and allow for a variety of content to demonstrate the indicator. Sample progress indicators provide for a multitude of instructional possibilities and are to be interpreted by curriculum developers and classroom teachers who will transform them into classroom practice. They are measurable and assessable in numerous ways and are designed for use by states and individual districts to establish acceptable performance levels for their students.

Following the standards is a section of *learning scenarios* to assist teachers in making the transition to standards-oriented instruction. Most of the scenarios are based on actual classroom activities submitted by teachers participating in a nine-month pilot study of the standards. The remainder are from the classrooms of task force members and their colleagues. Each scenario includes a list of the targeted standards, a brief description of the activity and the classroom in which it was used, and a reflection on how the scenario addressed the standards. Also included are suggestions for modifying the scenario for different classroom situations.



**STANDARDS...  
PROVIDE A GAUGE  
AGAINST WHICH TO  
MEASURE  
IMPROVEMENT IN  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
EDUCATION IN THE  
YEARS TO COME.**

### **HOW TO USE STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

*Standards for Foreign Language Learning* is a document designed for many audiences and with many purposes. Before using this document, however, it is important to understand what it is NOT. First and foremost, the standards do not describe the current state of foreign language education in this country. While they reflect the best practice in the country, they do not describe what is being attained by the majority of foreign language students. The standards described within these pages will not be achieved overnight; rather, they provide a gauge against which to measure improvement in foreign language education in the years to come.

The standards are not a curriculum guide. While this document suggests the types of content and curricular experiences needed to enable students to achieve the standards, and supports the ideal of extended sequences of study, it does not describe specific course content, nor a recommended scope and sequence.

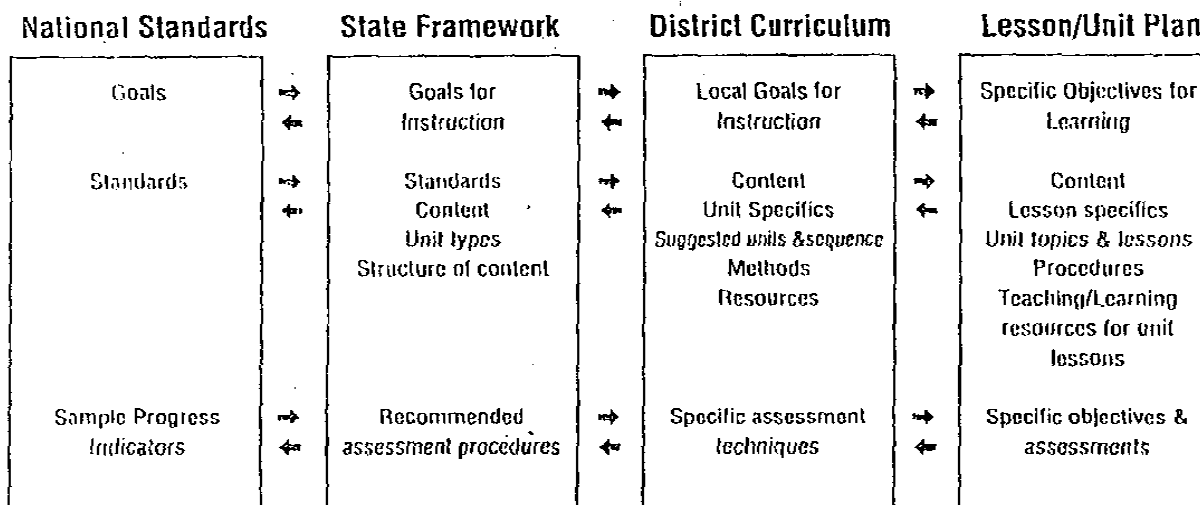
Finally, this is not a stand-alone document. It must be used in conjunction with state and local frameworks and standards to determine the best approaches and reasonable expectations for the students in individual districts and schools. As Figure 2 indicates, each of these documents will influence and inform the others, as administrators, teachers, parents, and others work together to ensure that tomorrow's learners are equipped to function in an ever-shrinking world.

#### **Standards and Specific Languages**

The standards included within these pages are generic; they are not written for any specific languages and are meant to be inclusive of all languages. However, all languages are different: they have different vocabulary, syntactic structures, sound systems, writing systems, and cultures. They also offer greater and lesser challenges to English-speaking students. Consequently, users of this document should note that modifications may be necessary in order to make them applicable to specific languages. The goals and standards represent the consensus of the field as to the overall objectives of second language study. In that sense they are stable. The sample progress indicators, however, are much more fluid. Students of lan-

guages with non-Roman alphabets, for example, may not be able to teach some of the progress indicators for written language at the level indicated in the current document.

**Figure 2. The Relationships Among National, State, and Local Standards Documents**



Adapted with permission from the  
*Visual Arts Education Reform Handbook: Suggested Policy Perspectives on Art Content and Student Learning in Art Education*  
 National Art Education Association, 1995

Conversely, the cultural differences embedded in the study of non-European languages may be more readily apparent than the cultural differences in European languages. Similar challenges exist when working with visual languages (e.g., American Sign Language), languages which are no longer spoken (e.g., Latin and Ancient Greek), and languages with no written component (e.g., some Native American languages).

At this writing, the organizations representing the teachers of specific languages are committed to developing standards tailored specifically to their individual languages. These will maintain the format and philosophy of the current document, but offer language-specific progress indicators and learning scenarios. In the meantime users of this document should keep in mind the nature of the language studied as they move toward the development of local curricula, assessments, and performance standards.

**Standards and Heritage Language Learners**

Similar modifications will need to be made when applying the standards to students who have a home background in the language studied. As stated previously, these students may come to class able to converse in the language in home and community situations, but may lack the abilities to interact comfortably in more formal settings. Further, they may be quite comfortable with oral language but possess limited skills in reading and writing. Again, the background of the learner is an important variable when developing implementation strategies for these standards.

### **Final Considerations**

In these introductory pages, the members of the standards task force have made every effort to respond to as many questions about these standards as possible. A compilation of frequently asked questions has been included at the end of the document as an additional resource. Naturally, *Standards for Foreign Language Education* will not provide all the answers. It remains a work in progress that will be modified and adapted in the coming years, as more and more students complete extended courses of study in other languages and as we continue to learn more about the nature of second language learning and how best to promote high standards in our classrooms.

# ▶ Standards for Foreign Language Learning

## COMMUNICATION

### Communicate in Languages Other Than English

**Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

**Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

**Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

## CULTURES

### Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

**Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

**Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

## CONNECTIONS

### Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

**Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

**Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

## COMPARISONS

### Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

**Standard 4.1:** Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

**Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

## COMMUNITIES

### Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

**Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

**Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

from comprehension in that the former implies the ability to “read (or listen) between the lines.”

**Figure 5. Framework of Communicative Modes**

	INTERPERSONAL	INTERPRETIVE	PRESENTATIONAL
D E F I N I T I O N S	Direct oral communication (e.g., face-to face or telephonic) between individuals who are in personal contact	Receptive communication of oral or written messages	Productive communication using oral or written language
	Direct written communication between individuals who come into personal contact	Mediated communication via print and non-print materials	Spoken or written communication for people (an audience) with whom there is no immediate personal contact or which takes place in a one-to-many mode
P A T H S	Productive abilities: speaking, writing  Receptive abilities: listening, reading	Primarily receptive abilities: listening, reading, viewing	Primarily productive abilities: speaking, writing, showing
	Knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different ages, statuses, backgrounds	Knowledge of how cultural perspectives are embedded in products (literary and artistic)	Knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between a speaker and his/her audience and a writer and his/her reader
C U L T U R A L	Ability to recognize that languages use different practices to communicate	Knowledge of how meaning is encoded in products	Ability to present crosscultural information based on background of the audience
	Ability to recognize that cultures use different patterns of interaction	Ability to analyze content, compare it to information available in own language and assess linguistic and cultural differences	Ability to recognize that cultures use different patterns of interaction
	<b>KNOWLEDGE OF THE LINGUISTIC SYSTEM</b>		
	The use of grammatical, lexical, phonological, semantic, pragmatic, and discourse features necessary for participation in the Communicative Modes.		

Since the Interpretive Mode does not allow for active negotiation between the reader and the writer or the listener and the speaker, it requires a much more profound knowledge of culture from the outset. The more one knows about the other language and culture, the greater the chances of creating the appropriate cultural interpretation of a written or spoken text. It must be noted, however, that cultural literacy and the ability to read or listen between the lines are developed over time and through exposure to the language and culture.

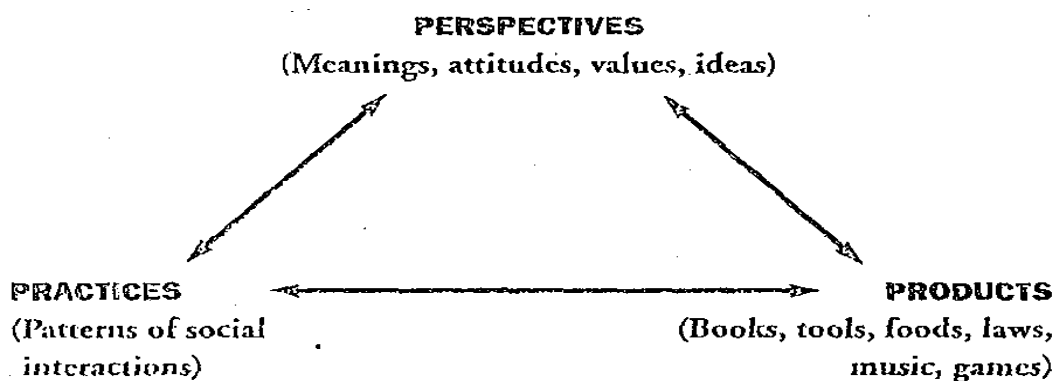
# ► Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

## RATIONALE

The study of another language enables students to understand a different culture *on its own terms*. The exquisite connections between the culture that is lived and the language that is spoken can only be realized by those who possess a knowledge of both. American students need to develop an awareness of other people's world views, of their unique way of life, and of the patterns of behavior which order their world, as well as learn about contributions of other cultures to the world at large and the solutions they offer to the common problems of humankind. Such awareness will help combat the ethnocentrism that often dominates the thinking of our young people. Oliver Wendell Holmes' contention that the human mind, once stretched to a new idea, never returns to its former dimensions (*The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*) underscores the benefits which the study of cultures through their own language can bring.

## DISCUSSION

**What is Culture?** The term "culture" is generally understood to include the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products—both tangible and intangible—of a society. The diagram below illustrates how the products and practices are derived from the philosophical perspectives that form the world view of a cultural group. It also shows how these three components of culture are closely interrelated.



Because language is the primary vehicle for expressing cultural perspectives and participating in social practices, the study of a language provides opportunities for students to develop insights in a culture that are available in no other way. In reality, then, the true content of the foreign language course is not the grammar and the vocabulary of the language, but the cultures

expressed through that language. It is important that students become skilled observers and analysts of other cultures.

In the last few decades, members of the foreign language profession have tended to divide culture into two bins: "Big C" (formal) and "little c" (daily life) cultures. Most teachers were comfortable with the concept of "Big C" (formal) culture, which required some knowledge of the formal institutions (social, political, and economic), the great figures of history, and those products of literature, fine arts, and the sciences that were traditionally assigned to the category of elite culture. The "little c" (daily life) culture bin included those aspects of daily living studied by the sociologist and the anthropologist: housing, clothing, food, tools, transportation, and all the patterns of behavior that members of the culture regard as necessary and appropriate. This "Big C" (formal), "little c" (daily life) division was valuable initially because it drew attention to the sociological components of culture that in the past had been virtually ignored in textbooks and classrooms. However, because both aspects of culture are inextricably woven into the language of those who live in the culture, and because understanding and involvement with both is vitally important for students at all levels of language learning, they are viewed as inseparable in this document.

**Avoiding Cultural Misunderstandings.** People who share the same native language share many common perspectives, practices, and products. Speakers of a single language may live in various parts of the world; consequently, they belong to different cultures, the traditions and expressions of which have been shaped by time, geographical location, and various profound and unique experiences that cause groups to differ from each other even though they share a language. To apply a single set of criteria in analyzing, teaching, and interacting with those cultures would be to ignore reality and fail to respect the dignity of disparate cultural groups. To assume, for example, that the Spanish-speaking cultures in Latin America are essentially the same as the cultures of Spain or the cultures of immigrants from Mexico or the Caribbean living in the United States is to deny the special identity of each group. The same can be said for the French-speaking cultures of Africa, North America, the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and France itself. Such examples of cultural diversity within commonly shared languages are numerous and significant, and their impact has been particularly poignant in the pluralistic society of the United States.

It is equally important that students recognize that members of one culture tend to make assumptions and draw corresponding conclusions about other cultures based upon their own values. Opinions and attitudes, both hidden and expressed, are often based upon a surface examination of other cultures using criteria that can be applied with validity only to one's own culture. The erroneous judgments that result from such assumptions, born of a lack of adequate information, understanding, and sensitivity, eventually lead to negative reactions to members of different cultures. To counteract this tendency, teachers can provide learning activities appropriate to grade level that explore the process of stereotyping

and the role stereotypes play in forming and sustaining prejudice. Finally, it is critical to provide opportunities for many different kinds of interaction with members of other cultures, so that students draw informed conclusions and develop sensitivity to the perspectives, practices, and products of others.

**Teaching Similarities and Differences.** While nobody doubts that both similarities and differences exist among any given cultures, the question that concerns teachers is which to present first. There is some evidence to show that a positive point of departure—understanding ways in which members of the other culture share similar interests and behaviors with language learners in the United States—establishes a favorable mindset toward speakers of the other language. It is essential, however, that cultural differences not be swept under a pedagogical rug. It is the differences in world view and the behavior patterns based on those differing assumptions and values that give rise to misunderstandings and conflict. It is important to help students *expect* differences and learn how to *analyze* observed differences (how to put them into perspective within the cultural framework of the other language). At every stage of language learning, *both* similarities and differences among the students' own culture and the other cultures should be presented. Interactions with representatives of the other cultures and experience with a variety of cultural expressions (personal anecdotes, poetry, headlines, editorials, laws, music, museums, trains, and pets, for example) help learners shape their own awareness. This personal exploration in the language of the culture enables students to develop crosscultural understanding and respect.

**The Specific Role of Second Language Study.** The enduring dimension of cultural study is the actual participation in the exchange of information and ideas among members of various cultures using the foreign language. While a great deal of information about other cultures can be gained through the study of other disciplines, such as the social sciences and the arts, *only second language study empowers learners to engage successfully in meaningful, direct interaction, both orally and in writing, with members of other cultures.* The perspectives, practices, and products of culture—be they historical or contemporary—can be shared in a special way with members of the culture in which they originated. This new, "insider's" perspective is the true catalyst for crosscultural understanding.

## STANDARDS

The Cultures Goal includes two standards. The first emphasizes the practices, the second the products associated with cultural perspectives.



WHILE SOME  
CULTURAL  
KNOWLEDGE CAN  
BE OBTAINED FROM  
OTHER COURSES,  
ONLY LANGUAGE  
STUDY EMPOWERS  
LEARNERS TO  
ENGAGE IN DIRECT  
INTERACTION WITH  
MEMBERS OF  
OTHER CULTURES.

**STANDARD 2.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.**



**CULTURAL  
PRACTICES:  
PATTERNS OF  
BEHAVIOR  
ACCEPTED BY A  
SOCIETY**

This standard focuses on the practices that are derived from the traditional ideas, attitudes, and values (*perspectives*) of a culture. Cultural practices refer to patterns of behavior accepted by a society and deal with aspects of culture such as rites of passage, the use of forms of discourse, the social "pecking order," and the use of space. In short, they represent the knowledge of "what to do when and where." It is important to understand the relationship between these practices and the underlying perspectives that represent the culture's view of the world.

For example, in some Asian cultures members are positioned (a *perspective*) on a hierarchical scale based on age, social status, education, or similar variables. In those cultures, the exchange of business cards (a *product*) that provides key information is a helpful *practice*. Because these cards facilitate social interaction and are treated with respect in those cultures, one should not scribble another name or telephone number on the business card (taboo *practice*). The information on the card also directly affects the nonverbal behavior (*practice*) of those involved in the communicative interaction, as well as the choice of linguistic forms (*products*) that indicate status.

The following progress indicators relate to learning activities based on the culture studied:

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students observe, identify, and/or discuss simple patterns of behavior or interaction in various settings such as school, family, and the community.
- Students use appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave takings, and common classroom interactions.
- Students participate in age-appropriate cultural activities such as games, songs, birthday celebrations, story telling, and dramatizations.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students observe, analyze, and discuss patterns of behavior typical of their peer group.
- Students use appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior for daily activities among peers and adults.
- Students learn about and participate in age-appropriate cultural practices such as games (role of leader, taking turns, etc.), sports, and entertainment (e.g., music, dance, drama).

### Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12

- Students interact in a variety of cultural contexts that reflect both peer-group and adult activities within the culture studied, using the appropriate verbal and nonverbal cues.
- Students learn about and participate in age-appropriate cultural practices, such as games, sports, and entertainment.
- Students identify, analyze, and discuss various patterns of behavior or interaction typical of the culture studied.
- Students identify, examine, and discuss connections between cultural perspectives and socially approved behavioral patterns.



**CULTURAL  
PRODUCTS ARE  
REQUIRED OR  
JUSTIFIED BY THE  
UNDERLYING  
BELIEFS AND  
VALUES OF THAT  
CULTURE.**

### **STANDARD 2.2 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.**

This standard focuses on the *products* of the culture studied and on how they reflect the *perspectives* of that culture. *Products* may be tangible (e.g., a painting, a cathedral, a piece of literature, a pair of chopsticks) or intangible (e.g., an oral tale, a dance, a sacred ritual, a system of education). Whatever the form of the product, its presence within the culture is required or justified by the underlying beliefs and values (*perspectives*) of that culture, and the cultural *practices* involve the use of that *product*.

For example, in the United States, youth has traditionally been valued more than old age (a *perspective*). As a result, *products* that purport to prolong youth and vitality (e.g., face creams, high fiber breakfast cereals, and "exercycles") have become an integral part of our culture. At the same time, *practices* that are perceived as prolonging youth and health are encouraged: school children exercise to meet the goals of the President's Physical Fitness Award; teenagers go on crash diets; whole segments of the population invest in running shoes and jogging togs (*products*).

### Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4:

- Students identify and observe tangible products of the culture such as toys, dress, types of dwellings, and foods.
- Students identify, experience, or read about expressive products of the culture such as children's songs, selections from children's literature, and types of artwork enjoyed or produced by their peer group in the cultures studied.
- Students identify, discuss, and produce types of artwork, crafts, or graphic representations enjoyed or made by their peer group within the cultures studied.
- Students recognize themes, ideas, or perspectives of the culture.

### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students experience (*read, listen to, observe, perform*) expressive products of the culture (e.g., stories, poetry, music, paintings, dance, and drama) and then explore the effects of these products on the larger communities.
- Students search for, identify, and investigate the function of utilitarian products (e.g., sports equipment, household items, tools, foods, and clothing) of the culture studied as found within their homes and communities.
- Students identify, discuss, and analyze themes, ideas, and perspectives related to the products being studied.

### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12**

- Students identify, discuss, and analyze such intangible products of the target culture as *social, economic, and political institutions*, and explore relationships among these institutions and the perspectives of the culture.
- Students experience, discuss, and analyze expressive products of the culture, including *selections from various literary genres and the fine arts*.
- Students identify, analyze, and evaluate themes, ideas, and perspectives related to the products being studied.
- Students explore the relationships among the products, practices, and perspectives of the culture.

# ► Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

## RATIONALE

Foreign language learning expands the educational experience of all students by connecting with other disciplines in the school curriculum either formally or informally. Knowledge is power, and extending student access to information through the use of a foreign language increases student ability to "know and do." Using a foreign language to acquire information empowers students with knowledge, no matter what the topic or discipline. It also provides learners with skills and interests that look beyond the limits of their formal educational experiences.

In today's society, access to information takes on a variety of forms and occurs both in and out of school. Students may watch news releases from foreign countries, listen to interviews with foreign nationals before or during the translation, or access vast stores of information from around the world through internet connections in their homes. Classroom instruction serves as an organizer by preparing students to access the variety of sources in the other language. They may acquire information through technology, personal interviews, newspapers, magazines, dictionaries, and encyclopedias in the school library.

The conscious effort to connect the foreign language curriculum with other parts of students' academic lives opens doors to information and experiences which enrich the students' entire school and life experience. Those connections flow from other areas to the foreign language classroom and also originate in the foreign language classroom to add unique experiences and insights to the rest of the curriculum.

## DISCUSSION

Knowledge of a second language and culture combines with the study of other disciplines and shifts the focus from language acquisition to broader learning experiences for the student. Language used in this way helps students integrate the contributions from any discipline into a holistic and ever-expanding open system. For example, while learning about the origins of the German classical music tradition, students with a knowledge of the language deepen their understanding of a composer's works by reading segments of Bach's correspondence with contemporaries or excerpts from his diary describing the creative process. The same information could also be useful in other classes as students learn to forge connections across the disciplines, shifting emphasis from the learning of individual language pieces to recognition that language acquisition is a continuous process contributing to life-long learning.

Taking the shift from teacher-directed to student-directed learning one more step, students use their developing language skills to go beyond the requirements for class work and pursue

topics further for personal interest, unrelated to the limits of academic life. In this way, students are “weaned” from language-learning and begin to nurture life-long learning skills and life-long language-using skills.

Although students entering the language classroom may have had no prior conscious experience with language learning, they are not empty vessels. They bring a wealth of experience and knowledge of the world around them (both in other areas of the curriculum and from personal experience). Furthermore, those children who know languages other than English bring additional linguistic and cultural experiences to their classrooms. With the goal of language instruction to “acquire information and connect to other disciplines,” the teacher can use the classroom language learning experience to build upon what students already know. In this way, foreign language acquisition focuses on the broader education of students; it benefits their growth in non-language disciplines, encourages the transfer, enrichment, and strengthening of information; it helps students “learn how to learn.”

### STANDARDS

The Connections Goal includes two standards. The first focuses on target language support for content from other disciplines. The second focuses on information now available to the learner through the target language.

#### **STANDARD 3.1 Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.**

Learning today is no longer restricted to a specific discipline; it has become interdisciplinary. Just as reading cannot be limited to a particular segment of the school day but is central to all aspects of the school curriculum, so, too, can foreign language build upon the knowledge that students acquire in other subject areas. In addition, students can relate the information studied in other subjects to their learning of the foreign language and culture. Students expand and deepen their understanding of and exposure to other areas of knowledge, even as they refine their communicative abilities and broaden their cultural understanding. The new information and concepts presented in one class become the basis of continued learning in the foreign language classroom. In the lower grades, for example, students in a science class are introduced to the range of vocabulary related to weather, seasons, and temperatures. At the same time, the foreign language class continues this presentation with the months of the year, seasons, and weather vocabulary in the foreign language. By comparing the weather conditions in the foreign country with those at home, students have acquired new knowledge at the same time that they have deepened their understanding of previous information.

Interdisciplinary reinforcement can occur at all levels of the school curriculum. At various stages, the foreign language teacher could teach more than the names and events pre-



### CONCEPTS

PRESENTED IN ONE

CLASS ARE THE

BASIS FOR

CONTINUED

LEARNING IN THE

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

CLASS.

sented in the history class and geographical place names by introducing students to journalistic accounts of historical events or literary depictions of individuals living at that time. Furthermore, in addition to the concepts and processes introduced in science and the achievements of artists and musicians studied in art, students could read documentation in various reference materials, the descriptions of success and failure in biographical sketches of various individuals, as well as the autobiographical accounts documented in personal letters and diaries of those historical figures. Prior discussion of works of literature in the English class enables students to have a better understanding of various genres—from the detective story to the sonnet—and literary conventions when they encounter similar texts in the language classroom. Even the manipulations and story problems taught in math provide content and a basis for discussion and exploration in the foreign language classroom. Students who are grappling with a science problem are aided in their attempts to understand it by relating it to their peers in the language classroom. When integrated into the broader curriculum, foreign language learning contributes to the entire educational experience of students.

#### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students demonstrate an understanding about concepts learned in other subject areas in the target language, including weather, math facts, measurements, animals, insects, or geographical concepts.

#### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students discuss topics from other school subjects in the target language, including geographical terms and concepts, historical facts and concepts, mathematical terms and problems, and scientific information.
- Students comprehend articles or short videos in the target language on topics being studied in other classes.
- Students present reports in the target language, orally and/or in writing, on topics being studied in other classes.

#### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12**

- Students discuss topics from other school subjects in the target language, including political and historical concepts, worldwide health issues, and environmental concerns.
- Students acquire information from a variety of sources written in the target language about a topic being studied in other school subjects.

- Students combine information from other school subjects with information available in the foreign language in order to complete activities in the foreign language classroom.



**LANGUAGE**

**LEARNERS**

**BROADEN THE**

**SOURCES OF**

**INFORMATION**

**AVAILABLE TO THEM.**

**STANDARD 3.2 Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.**

As a consequence of learning another language and gaining access to its unique means of communication and ways of thinking, students acquire new information and perspectives. As learners of a foreign language, they broaden the sources of information available to them. They have a "new window on the world." In the earlier stages of language learning, they begin to examine a variety of sources intended for native speakers, and extract specific information. As they become more proficient users of the foreign language, they seek out materials of interest to them, analyze the content, compare it to information available in their own language, and assess the linguistic and cultural differences.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students read, listen to, and talk about age-appropriate school content, folk tales, short stories, poems, and songs written for native speakers of the target language.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students use sources intended for same-age speakers of the target language to prepare reports on topics of personal interest, or those with which they have limited previous experience.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12**

- Students use a variety of sources intended for same-age speakers of the target language to prepare reports on topics of personal interest, or those with which they have limited previous experience, and compare these to information obtained on the same topics written in English.

# Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

## RATIONALE

Students benefit from language learning by discovering different patterns among language systems and cultures. Through the study of a new language system and the way such a system expresses meanings in culturally appropriate ways, students gain insights into the nature of language, linguistic and grammatical concepts, and the communicative functions of language in society, as well as the complexity of the interaction between language and culture.

## DISCUSSION

There is a generally held notion that students are better able to reflect on their first language and culture after having experienced learning a second. Evidence of this notion arises in various studies done on the effects of second language learning. Although the research remains inconclusive, anecdotal evidence supports the idea that, by engaging in comparisons between their language and the language studied, learners develop a greater understanding of their own language and culture and of language and culture in the broadest sense.

Some would argue that equivalent knowledge of language and cultural systems can be acquired in other types of courses (e.g., linguistics, anthropology). However, when students study another language and participate in communicative interactions, the actual experiential dimension makes such an understanding more real. By struggling with how to express particular meanings in a second language, how to encode them linguistically, and how to be sensitive to norms of politeness in another culture, students gain awareness of the nature of language itself.

For example, students often come to the study of another language with the assumptions that all languages are like their own. Shortly, they discover categories that exist in other languages (e.g., neuter gender) that do not exist in their own. They discover that elements to which they gave scant attention (e.g., ends of words) may be quite important in another language. Moreover, they realize that what is polite in one cultural system (e.g., when and to whom to say thank you) is not parallel in the other. These experiences direct attention to a comparison of language and cultural systems. In turn, such awareness enhances the ability not only to use the target language, but also to gain insights into the strategies their own language uses to communicate meaning. Whether or not students continue the study of that particular language, the understandings gained about the nature of language and its interaction with culture carry over into future situations where they may have to interact in other cultural settings. Students learn ways of hypothesizing and making predictions about how language is likely to work in a setting with which they are not familiar. They cease to make naive assumptions about other languages and cultures solely based upon knowledge of their own.



**STRUGGLING TO  
EXPRESS  
PARTICULAR  
MEANINGS IN A  
SECOND  
LANGUAGE  
BRINGS  
AWARENESS OF  
THE NATURE OF  
LANGUAGE ITSELF.**

The long-term experience of studying another language leads students to discover that other cultures view the world from a perspective different from their own. Students view concepts in a new light as they probe apparently similar concepts in the target culture. For example, the word "bread" evokes certain images among American students based on its role and reality in our culture. These images cannot be automatically transferred to the second language. The appearance, taste, use, and perception of bread in another culture may be entirely different. When students understand that the target culture assigns new associations to the label "bread," they are drawn to examine this concept more closely in their native language. They begin to realize that language learning is not simply a matter of learning different vocabulary words, but of acquiring an entirely new set of concepts associated with the words.

The study of a second language and the resulting intercultural exploration expand a learner's view of the world in different ways. This study creates an awareness of the existence of alternative views of other cultures while, at the same time, providing insights into the learner's native language and culture. In addition, by comparing both cultural and linguistic systems, students develop their critical thinking abilities in valuable and important ways.

**STANDARDS**

The Comparisons Goal includes two standards; the first standard focuses on the nature of language, the second on the concept of culture.

**STANDARD 4.1 Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.**

This standard focuses on the impact that learning the linguistic elements in the new language has on students' ability to examine their own language, and to develop hypotheses about the structure and use of languages. From the earliest language learning experiences, students can compare and contrast the two languages as different elements are presented. Activities can be systematically integrated into instruction that will assist students in understanding how languages work.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students cite and use examples of words that are borrowed in the language they are learning and their own, and they pose guesses about why languages in general might need to borrow words.
- Students realize that cognates enhance comprehension of spoken and written language and demonstrate that awareness by identifying commonly occurring cognates in the language they are learning.

- Students are aware of the existence of idiomatic expressions in both their native language and the language being learned and talk about how idiomatic expressions work in general.
- Students demonstrate an awareness of formal and informal forms of language in greetings and leave-takings and try out expressions of politeness in other languages and their own.
- Students report differences and similarities between the sound and writing systems of their own language and the language being learned.
- Students demonstrate an awareness of the various ways of expressing ideas both in their own language and the language being learned.

#### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students recognize the category of grammatical gender in languages, and their spoken and written language reflects that awareness.
- Students hypothesize about the relationship among languages based on their awareness of cognates and similarity of idioms.
- Students demonstrate an awareness of ways of expressing respect and communicating status differences in their own language and the language they are learning.
- Students demonstrate awareness that languages have critical sound distinctions that must be mastered in order to communicate meaning.

#### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12**

- Students recognize that cognates have the same as well as different meanings among languages and speculate about the evolution of language.
- Students demonstrate an awareness that there are phrases and idioms that do not translate directly from one language to another.
- Students analyze elements of the target language, such as time and tense, and comparable linguistic elements in English, and conjecture about how languages use forms to express time and tense relationships.
- Students report on the relationship between word order and meaning and hypothesize on how this may or may not reflect the ways in which cultures organize information and view the world.
- Students compare the writing system of the target language and their own. They also examine other writing systems and report about the nature of those writing systems (e.g., logographic, syllabic, alphabetic).

**STANDARD 4.2 Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.**



**LANGUAGE**

**LEARNING IS NOT**

**SIMPLY LEARNING**

**NEW WORDS, BUT**

**ALSO ACQUIRING**

**NEW CONCEPTS**

**ASSOCIATED WITH**

**THE WORDS.**

As students expand their knowledge of cultures through language learning, they continually discover perspectives, practices, and products that are similar to and different from those in their own culture. They develop the ability to hypothesize about cultural systems in general. Some students may make these comparisons naturally, others learn to do so. This standard helps focus this reflective process for all students by encouraging integration of this process into instruction from the earliest levels of learning.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students compare simple patterns of behavior or interaction in various cultural settings.
- Students demonstrate an awareness that gestures are an important part of communication and that gestures may differ among languages.
- Students compare and contrast tangible products (e.g., toys, sports, equipment, food) of the target cultures and their own.
- Students compare and contrast intangible products (e.g., rhymes, songs, folktales) of the target cultures and their own.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students contrast verbal and nonverbal behavior within particular activities in the target cultures and their own.
- Students demonstrate an awareness that they, too, have a culture, based on comparisons of sample daily activities in the target culture and their own.
- Students speculate on why certain products originate in and/or are important to particular cultures by analyzing selected products from the target cultures and their own.
- Students hypothesize about the relationship between cultural perspectives and practices (e.g., holidays, celebrations, work habits, play) by analyzing selected practices from the target cultures and their own.
- Students hypothesize about the relationship between cultural perspectives and expressive products (e.g., music, visual arts, appropriate forms of literature) by analyzing selected products from the target cultures and their own.

### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12**

- Students hypothesize about the origins of idioms as reflections of culture, citing examples from the language and cultures being studied and their own.
- Students compare nuances of meanings of words, idioms, and vocal inflections in the target language and their own.
- Students analyze the relationship of perspectives and practices in the target culture and compare and contrast these with their own.
- Students analyze the relationship between the products and perspectives in the cultures studied and compare and contrast these with their own.
- Students identify and analyze cultural perspectives as reflected in a variety of literary genres.

# Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

## **RATIONALE**

The shift from a manufacturing-based economy to one increasingly based on information, technology, and service reflects a changing America. As businesses expand domestic and international markets, American citizens need to be proficient in English and in other languages. These skills allow Americans to access directly knowledge and information generated by other countries and cultures and allow for face-to-face negotiations in political, business, and personal dealings. This proficiency is developed and sustained by the opportunity to learn and use a language over a long period of time. Moreover, students are highly motivated to excel in their study of a second language when they see immediate applications for the skills they learn. They find that their ability to communicate in other languages better prepares them for school and community service projects, enables them to expand their employment opportunities both at home and abroad, and allows them to pursue their own interests for personal benefit. Ultimately, as a result of their ability to communicate in other languages, students realize the interdependence of people throughout the world. This goal combines elements from each of the other goal areas. Once again, careful application of the components of language and culture are vital. The standards in this goal are dependent not only on careful language use, but on the ability to apply knowledge of the perspectives, products and practices of a culture, the ability to connect to other discipline areas, and the development of insight into one's own language and culture.

## **DISCUSSION**

Recognizing the need for a productive and competitive work force, many schools are emphasizing a curriculum that better prepares students for the school-to-work or school-to-college transition. These educational efforts extend to the language classroom, preparing competent and self-confident students for work in the multilingual communities around the globe. The needs of today's society and work force are best met by weaving together the resources and expertise of vocational schools, academic institutions, businesses, governments at local, state, and national levels, and public and private organizations. A changing American society and a world of instant global communications require a strong work force that meets the needs of consumers who may not speak English. Knowledge of another language and culture puts workers in a better position to serve the needs of a global society.

Some students are fortunate to have direct access to multilingual communities through their home backgrounds; all students benefit from an awareness of the many communities in the U.S. where English and other languages are spoken—communities such as the French-



**STUDENTS COME TO  
REALIZE THE  
ADVANTAGES  
INHERENT IN  
KNOWING OTHER  
LANGUAGES.**

speaking Cajun areas of Louisiana, the German areas of the Texas Hill Country, the Italian communities of the Northeast, the Spanish-speaking communities of the Southeast and Southwest, and the Asian neighborhoods of the West Coast. Language students develop a keener awareness of cultures and are better equipped to function in the multilingual communities that exist in the U.S. and abroad.

In addition to the ability to communicate in more than one language as a job skill, knowledge of other languages and cultures opens the door to many types of leisure activities. From the television screen to the computer monitor, Americans have a direct link with the entire contemporary world. Through works of great literature and the arts, a deeper understanding of self is attainable. As Americans travel to other countries and interact with speakers of other languages, they realize that competence in more than one language and knowledge of other cultures empower them to experience more fully the artistic and cultural creations of those cultures.

### **STANDARDS**

The Communities Goal includes two standards. The first standard emphasizes applied learning, while the second focuses on personal enrichment.

#### **STANDARD 5.1 Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.**

This standard focuses on language as a tool for communication with speakers of the language throughout one's life: in schools, in the community, and abroad. In schools, students share their knowledge of language and culture with classmates and with younger students who may be learning the language. Applying what has been learned in the language program as defined by the other standards, students come to realize the advantages inherent in being able to communicate in more than one language and develop an understanding of the power of language. Well-developed language applications increase not only the marketability of the employee, but also the ability of the employer to meet the expectations of the customer. *Many of the Progress Indicators for Standard 5.1 are repeated at Grade 4, 8 and 12 not only to emphasize that the activity may be similar, but also to indicate that a spiraling of tasks and competencies advances with age. As students have opportunities to use language in response to real-world needs, they seek out situations to apply their competencies beyond the school setting.*

#### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students communicate on a personal level with speakers of the language via letters, e-mail, audio, and video tapes.

- Students identify professions which require proficiency in another language.
- Students use the language to create imaginary situations.
- Students present information about the language and culture to others.
- Students write and illustrate stories to present to others.
- Students perform for a school or community celebration.

### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students discuss their preferences concerning leisure activities and current events, in written form or orally, with peers who speak the language.
- Students interact with members of the local community to hear how they use the language in their various fields of work.
- Students present information about the language and culture to others.
- Students participate in club activities which benefit the school or community.
- Students write and illustrate stories to present to others.
- Students perform for a school or community celebration.

### **Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12**

- Students communicate orally or in writing with members of the other culture regarding topics of personal interest, community, or world concern.
- Students participate in a career exploration or school-to-work project which requires proficiency in the language and culture.
- Students use community resources to research a topic related to culture and/or language study.
- Students present information about the language and culture to others.
- Students participate in club activities which benefit the school or community.
- Students write and illustrate stories to present to others.
- Students perform for a school or community celebration.

**STANDARD 5.2 Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.**



**LANGUAGE  
STUDENTS GAIN  
ACCESS TO  
ENTERTAINMENT  
AND INFORMATION  
SOURCES  
AVAILABLE ONLY TO  
SPEAKERS OF  
THOSE LANGUAGES.**

Language is an avenue to information and interpersonal relations. Each day millions of Americans spend leisure time reading, listening to music, viewing films and television programs, and interacting with each other. By developing a certain level of comfort with the new language, students can use these skills to access information as they continue to learn throughout their lives. Students who study a language can use their skills to further enrich their personal lives by accessing various entertainment and information sources available to speakers of the other language. Some students may have the opportunity to travel to communities and countries where the language is used extensively and, through this experience, further develop their language skills and understanding of the culture. Many of the Progress Indicators for standard 5.2 are repeated at Grade 4, 8, and 12 to emphasize that the activities may be similar. However, the sophistication and ease with which the activities are performed depend greatly on the student's age and abilities.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 4**

- Students read materials and/or use media from the language and culture for enjoyment.
- Students play sports or games from the culture.
- Students exchange information about topics of personal interest.
- Students plan real or imaginary travel.
- Students attend or view via media cultural events and social activities.
- Students listen to music, sing songs, or play musical instruments from the target culture.

**Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 8**

- Students consult various sources in the language to obtain information on topics of personal interest.
- Students play sports or games from the culture.
- Students exchange information around topics of personal interest.
- Students use various media from the language and culture for entertainment.
- Students attend or view via media cultural events and social activities.
- Students listen to music, sing songs, or play musical instruments from the target culture.

## Sample Progress Indicators, Grade 12

- Students consult various sources in the language to obtain information on topics of personal interest.
- Students play sports or games from the culture.
- Students read and/or use various media from the language and culture for entertainment or personal growth.
- Students establish and/or maintain interpersonal relations with speakers of the language.
- Students attend or view via media cultural events and social activities.
- Students listen to music, sing songs, or play musical instruments from the target culture.

## *Sample Scenario Plan*

### **1. Theme: Family**

### **2. Title: "Changing Family Values"**

**3. Language Level and Context of Instruction.** Students (from 18 to 25 years old) in their first semester of the second-year intermediate French will examine the modern family and changes in values and attitudes across cultures. In this Learning Scenario there are ample opportunities for incorporating all three Standards of the Communications goal. The teacher could introduce the unit by bringing in pictures of family members and talking (in the target language) about the different relationship she/she has with the children and grandchildren and the differences in their life priorities and their life styles as compared to the parents. Students present their families similarly. Students could conduct surveys to determine differences in values among various family members. There would be opportunities to deal with the first Standard of the Cultures goal, since the class would be looking at the American "practice" of leaving the nest in the late teens and early twenties (or returning to the nest because of financial or marital difficulties) and examining attitudes ("perspectives") of the young adults and their parents concerning these practices. Since students would be acquiring demographic information about the modern family in France and America through authentic video, newspapers and native informants, the second Standard of the Connections goal would be treated. The unit would certainly provide comparisons about aspects of language and culture akin to the theme topic, so both Standards of the Comparisons goal would receive attention. Out-of-class interviews with other Francophone students were planned. Guest visits were arranged with professor in sociology who speaks French and is knowledgeable about family issues in France and with a Venezuelan language teacher (former French major) who could talk in French about families in her country. To keep all of these ideas in mind, the teacher needs to write out each part of the scenario. The third part which describes the main activities in the unit would look like this:

### **4. Summary Description of Classroom Activities**

The teacher will model a presentation of his/her own family with photos. This talk will include comments about the nature of relationships with parents, children, and grandchildren and compare the differences in life priorities and styles across generations. Students in the class will present their families similarly. Through in-class and out-of-class surveys, students will explore family values and determine the differences in attitudes among the parents, grandparents, and their adult children. They will research articles from the media on family values and present the main points to their classmates. Guest speakers, a sociology professor and a Venezuelan language teacher, will discuss family values in terms of their research and personal backgrounds.

The next step is to outline ideas for in-class and out-of class activities that would relate to the Standards in the unit. For some of the Standards there are samples of exercises (in French, but translated into English for this article) provided that were eventually developed and used in the unit. The following are the selected Standard clusters (Several Standards are often targeted in a single projector activity) with a summary of possible teaching/learning activities:

### **5. Curricular Weave**

Student behaviours related to the Scenario illustrating how other curricular elements and goals are woven into the lesson include:

1. The language system - Students review and practice, in the context of the family, the third person object pronouns. In the surveys and group and pair work, most questions using direct and indirect objects should be answered using appropriate pronouns: Q: When your parents get old, will you be patient and listen to them when they tell the same story over and over again? A: I'll let them tell their stories, but I probably won't really listen to them.
2. Communication strategies - Students conduct surveys, and ask guest speakers questions. They negotiate for meaning and understanding during these exchanges. They will ask for clarifications, repetitions, examples when communication breaks down.
3. Critical thinking skills - Students will compare their values with those of other family members and acquaintances. They will identify some of the main problems with the modern family and analyze causes and propose solutions. The final Scenario with all its parts is summarized below. It is a short document of less than one page to which the teacher can continually refer while constructing the thematic unit.

In the space provided below, briefly reflect on which standards are addressed in the scenario.

1.1	Interpersonal Communication:
1.2	Interpretive Communication:
1.3	Presentational Communication:
2.1	Practices of Culture:
2.2	Products of Culture:
3.1	Making Connections:
3.2	Acquiring Information:
4.1	Language Comparisons:
4.2	Cultural Comparisons:
5.1	School and Community:
5.2	Lifelong Learning:

## Learning Scenarios: The New Foreign Language Curriculum

*Emily Spinelli and Anne Grundstrom Nerenz, Clear News, Volume 8, Issue 1, Spring 2004  
(Michigan State University)*

Since 1996, when the Standards for Foreign Language Learning first appeared, foreign language teachers have worked to revise their teaching goals and objectives so that students might have a broader range of meaningful and authentic experiences. As a result, both curriculum and assessment have been refocused, away from learning about language and toward learning to use language in culturally appropriate ways. Learning scenarios are a direct reflection of this change in focus. These extended thematic units offer challenging, creative, and individualized opportunities for students to learn the foreign language and then demonstrate what they have learned.

Throughout a learning scenario, students develop and demonstrate interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational language skills. They also work with authentic materials, contact members of a living language community, and gather and share cultural information. In addition, students demonstrate a variety of technological, interpersonal, investigative, and academic skills, and learn and incorporate content from other disciplines. Each scenario concludes with one or more culminating authentic assessments in the form of a student-created product, a presentation, or a project on a high-interest and age-appropriate topic of their choice.

The term learning scenario is now in general use and represents the essential component of a Standards-based curriculum.<sup>1</sup> It is important to realize, however, that scenarios are distinctly different from a typical classroom activity that can generally be completed within a single class period. Likewise, scenarios are far more complex than the traditional curriculum consisting of a sequence of exercises and activities revolving around a single grammatical structure or limited number of vocabulary items. In order to understand what a learning scenario is and how it functions, let's look at the following example created by Cindy Kendall, who was teaching Spanish at Williamston (MI) High School when this scenario was published.

### **NEWSCAST**

In the Spanish II classes in Williamston High School, students work in groups to write, produce, and videotape a fifteen-twenty minute news show that includes current events; a live, on-the-scene report; weather; sports; and commercials. The news events include items from the Spanish-speaking world, the U.S., and both state and local news.

#### **Reflection: How the Standards are Incorporated**

- 1.1 Students work in groups to produce the newscast.
- 1.2 Students view taped newscasts and commercials from two Spanish-speaking countries and use them as models for their project.
- 1.3 Students present the newscast.
- 2.1 Students reflect a perspective from the culture studied in the news stories.
- 2.2 Students analyze the different perspectives from the target language newscast.
- 3.1 Students develop news items using information from many fields.
- 3.2 Students watch foreign language news broadcasts and acquire information not available to them in English.
- 4.1 Students compare and contrast language styles between English-language news broadcasts and Spanish-language news broadcasts.
- 4.2 Students note cultural similarities and differences in the videotapes of news broadcasts.
- 5.1 Students create a context for using the language in the classroom.
- 5.2 Students develop insights necessary for media literacy.

*Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century, p. 89.*

As we begin to analyze the above scenario, we note that the time needed to complete it would be 20-30 class periods, or 4-6 weeks. We note also that the scenario is Standards-based and that it incorporates all five Cs: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Further analysis reveals that during the scenario, students engage in original research (they gain knowledge of current events, entertainment, sports, and weather in Spanish-speaking countries) and develop a final product (the TV news program) using technology (computers, the Internet, video-taping).

As the students research and prepare their TV news program, they also use the three modes of communication: students engage in *interpersonal communication* as they discuss the content for their news broadcast; they engage in *interpretive communication* as they research news articles on the Internet or listen to live news broadcasts on the radio or television; they engage in *presentational communication* as they broadcast and tape their news program.

It is generally accepted that well-designed learning scenarios share common characteristics such as those in the following list.

Learning scenarios are extended thematic units that

- connect to the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*
- are of high interest to students
- are age- and level-appropriate
- incorporate technology
- incorporate authentic target language materials
- incorporate content from other disciplines
- involve learners in the development of a final product of their choice, such as an oral presentation, video presentation, written report, or other project
- help develop critical thinking skills
- allow learners to develop the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication
- allow learners to gather and share information from the point of view of both the native and target cultures
- connect learners to a language community in a real or virtual manner
- allow learners to compare and contrast the native and target language and cultures

A curriculum consisting of learning scenarios has many benefits over a more traditional curriculum. The use of scenarios begins to place the foreign language curriculum on a par with the curriculum of other disciplines such as English or social studies. The study of foreign language takes on a new dimension as students begin to use the target language to conduct research and gain new knowledge about their own and other cultures. As a result, students begin to see the purpose of language study as something with real-world value and life-long advantages.

Even though an instructor may have a well-conceived description of a learning scenario, the implementation of that scenario requires the development of detailed, daily lesson plans. The instructor must make decisions regarding the vocabulary, grammar, and linguistic functions to be taught and/or reviewed, the cultural content to be emphasized, the materials and technology to be incorporated, and the length of time to be devoted to the creation of the student product. The instructor must then decide how to proceed on a day-to-day basis. The instructor must also develop an assessment plan for the linguistic and cultural content as well as for the products that the students create.

As a result, both traditional quizzes and tests are generally used in conjunction with performance-based assessments. Additional learning scenarios can be found at the following website, which contains twenty-six scenarios accompanied by complete lesson plans that were developed in conjunction with Project Mich-I-Lifts, a three-year grant project funded by the Foreign Language Assistance Program; the scenarios are for French, German, or Spanish and represent levels K-12: [www.mfla.org/michi-index.htm](http://www.mfla.org/michi-index.htm).

Learning scenarios for less-commonly taught languages such as Japanese, Korean, and Kiswahili can be located at <http://clear.msu.edu/training/03institutes/standards.html>. These scenarios were developed in conjunction with the 2003 CLEAR summer workshop “Developing a Learning Scenario to Bring Out the Best in Your Foreign Language Class.”

For those interested in learning more about how to develop and implement learning scenarios, CLEAR is offering a summer workshop entitled “Improving the Teaching of Foreign Languages through Learning Scenarios” from June 21-24, 2004. For complete information on the workshop, see <http://clear.msu.edu/training/04institutes/scenarios.htm>

## REFERENCES

National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project. (1996).

*Standards for foreign language learning: Preparing for the 21st century*. Yonkers, NY: National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project. National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project. (1999). *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century*. Yonkers, NY: National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project.

Nerenz, A., Spinelli, E., Kendall, C., Wilson, J., Lovik, T., & Moase-Burke-J. (2002). Supporting and sustaining change: The MICH-I-LIFTS project. In G. Crouse, S. Doering & C. Smith (Eds.) *Sustaining change: New directions as standard practice*. 2002 report of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (pp. 45-64). Valdosta, GA: Lee Bradley.

Nerenz, A. & Spinelli, E. (2003). Learning scenarios: Integrating curriculum and assessment. In K. H. Cárdenas & M. Klein (Eds.) *Traditional values and contemporary perspectives in language teaching*. 2003 report of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (pp. 115-132). Valdosta, GA: Lee Bradley.

Spinelli, E., Lovik, T., & Nerenz, A. (Eds.) (2002). *Mich-I-Lifts project report and participant learning scenarios*. Lansing, MI: Michigan Department of Education. [On-line] Available: <[www.mfla.org/michi-index.htm](http://www.mfla.org/michi-index.htm)>.

Spinelli, E., Lovik, T., & Nerenz, A. (Eds.) Learning Scenarios [On-line]. Available: <<http://clear.msu.edu>>.

## NOTES

The 1996 book *Standards for foreign language learning: Preparing for the 21st century* included thirty-four learning scenarios for various languages and levels in order to illustrate how the five Cs can be integrated into the curriculum and language classroom. Each scenario consisted of a lengthy paragraph description of the curricular unit accompanied by a list of the Standards incorporated. In 1999, when the language-specific *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century* were published, they too were accompanied by numerous learning scenarios for the eight languages included in the new book.

**Emily Spinelli** (Professor of Spanish and Coordinator of the Teacher Certification Program at the University of Michigan-Dearborn) and **Anne Grundstrom Nerenz** (Professor of French and Foreign Language Education at Eastern Michigan University) have co-authored articles and given many workshops nationally and at CLEAR on learning scenarios and the national Standards for Foreign Language Education. Professors Spinelli and Nerenz teach courses in foreign language methodology and supervise student teachers at their home institutions. In addition, both are authors and/or editors of numerous projects and are very active in professional language organizations. (Continued from page 3).