President’s Message

By Lea Graner Kennedy

As we are all in the homestretch of the school year, I would like to thank teachers, coordinators and administrators who are deeply committed to helping students make gains in language proficiency. This is the second year in which our state will award the Seal of Biliteracy in public, private and independent schools and we are continuing to see growth across the state. This award is a wonderful way to motivate students to continue their language studies in college and to possibly earn credits for receiving the Seal. Other students are showing their certificates to employers to validate their language skills. We are seeing more equity in the awarding of the Seal with students getting recognition for their heritage language as well. In the New Haven Public Schools, Jessica Haxhi coordinated testing for students of 14 different languages, both low-incidence and native languages, and those taught in the district. There are many resources available at the ctcolt.org website found under the Seal of Biliteracy tab. We have also included the Seal FAQs in this newsletter if you are looking for ways to start a program at your school.

Registration is open for CT COLT Summer Proficiency Institute taking place at Stonington High School on June 26th and 27th. We are fortunate to be working with Greg Duncan who will be with us again this summer and in 2020. The hope is that we can engage many more districts over these next two summers, delving into curricular units to better align with teaching for proficiency. As more students are testing for the Seal of Biliteracy and seeking gains in proficiency level, the need to familiarize teachers and build a common language around proficiency continues to grow. Please consider joining us. The Institute, which includes the 2-day workshop, breakfast, lunch, and an evening Proficiency Party costs $155. It’s an affordable, inspirational and exciting kickoff to summer with colleagues! Below you will see the description of the institute and can register at: http://ctcolt.org/pages/PDSummer2019registration.asp

The 2019 Summer Proficiency Institute will be an opportunity for teams of teachers from an individual district, or individual teachers from separate districts, to spend two days working on connecting units to proficiency targets. Greg will help participants apply learning about proficiency to curriculum and instruction. Participants will learn how to use backward design to plan units for a specific target by leading with essential questions and referencing exemplars to enhance or build their own units. Greg will illustrate how to design an arc of units for years 1 and 2, give guidance to groups as they build a unit, and provide feedback to teams or individuals as they design an action plan to continue their work over the upcoming school year. This institute will be a wonderful opportunity to work together with both colleagues and experts to apply learning about proficiency to design instructional units.

CT COLT has continued to engage students and teachers in great events and opportunities to showcase the progress that students have made in languages throughout the year. Both the CT COLT Rhyme and the Poetry Contest had record student involvement from districts around the state. With hundreds of students and their teachers celebrating and advocating for languages at each event, CT COLT shines a spotlight on the programs to garner continued support from stakeholders for language program funding. The CT COLT Poster and Essay Contests were both focused on our conference theme, the “Journey To Proficiency,” and we await the results from the committees. Student events take an enormous amount of time to coordinate. Thank you to all of the volunteers your time and dedication.

Please consider recognizing one of your outstanding colleagues for the CT COLT Teacher of the Year award. Teachers may nominate a colleague online through a Google Form to recognize their work and dedication to our profession. All nominees, once notified, must complete their applications by May 15th. We are very fortunate to have a vibrant and diverse organization, filled with talented teachers, volunteers and advocates of languages.

Have a wonderful end to your school year and feel free to reach out to us if you need resources from CT COLT.

Sincerely,
Lea Graner Kennedy
In Memoriam

Dr. Symond M. Yavener

Dr. Symond Yavener, of Red Wing, Minn. formerly of Glastonbury, Conn., Professor Emeritus of Central Connecticut State University, died September 27, 2018 at Deer Crest in Red Wing, where he has resided since 2015. He was the son of the late Jack and Augusta Yavener of Windsor, Conn. After attending the Windsor Public Schools, he studied at the University of Connecticut for his Bachelors and Masters Degrees and earned an additional Masters and a Doctorate from Middlebury College. He also studied extensively in universities in Germany, France and Russia. During the Korean conflict he was stationed in Germany and served in the army as an interpreter and translator. Before joining the Modern Language Department of Central Connecticut State University, Symond taught in Manchester and in Glastonbury where he served both as teacher and director of the foreign language program. He enjoyed working at all levels of instruction and was respected as being a knowledgeable, dynamic and creative teacher. Dr. Yavener was first and foremost a teacher and was, above all, devoted to helping his students see the world as it is, in all its diversity and splendor. He had such an effect on his students that many of them stayed in touch with him as a friend and mentor over the years. At Central he was honored as a recipient of the University's Distinguished Service award. He wrote and lectured extensively on language teaching methodology as well as on the culture of Russia. Throughout his life he was an inveterate traveler, having led many adventure and study groups throughout Europe, Asia and Africa. Dr. Yavener was a member of the First Church of Christ in Wethersfield where he served as a pastoral care minister. He is survived by many nieces, nephews and dear friends. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Martha (McCaughrty) Yavener, a brother Irving Yavener and a sister, Dorothy Garber. A memorial service was held on Saturday October 13 at 11am in First Church of Christ in Wethersfield. Burial was in Green Cemetery in Glastonbury. Memorials are preferred to the National Kidney Foundation. The Mulryan Funeral Home, Glastonbury had care of the arrangements.

Teacher Spotlight

Kathleen Archibald

Who are you? What and where do you teach?

Hola! My name is Kathleen Archibald and I teach at Bristol Central High School in Bristol, CT

2. How long have you been teaching?

This is my 17th year of teaching Spanish and my 6th year as the World Language Department Coordinator.

3. What has inspired you in this profession and what is a belief that you hold near and dear?

My path to becoming a Spanish teacher is a bit strange. I started off at Bristol Central as an athletic trainer. I decided to
become a teacher after working as the trainer for 3 years. I realized quickly that the part about my job that I loved the most was working with the athletes and teaching them how to rehabilitate and overcome their injuries. The teaching aspect was what really resonated and inspired me to go to CCSU to pursue my teaching certificate. I chose Spanish because I always excelled at languages and took Spanish through middle school, high school and in my undergraduate program. I love traveling and experiencing other cultures. I went to Spain for a semester abroad and when I returned, I changed roles from athletic trainer to Spanish teacher!

There are 2 beliefs I hold near and dear.

1. In order to be a great teacher you HAVE TO LIKE KIDS! The kids are our future. We need them to be great in order for all of us to be great!
2. You have to LOVE what you teach! Passion for your content is key. That comes through in your daily lessons and overall impact on the students.

4. Favorite place you’ve ever traveled and why?
Clearly, I LOVE Spain! I have been a few times and each time I fall in love again. There are so many wonderful enriching experiences that I could not possibly narrow it down. The museums, the accent, art, music, architecture, the “sobremesa”, the tapas and just the overall calmer way of life that the Spaniards follow is an inspiration.

5. Favorite cultural dish?
Paella cannot be beat! The entire dish is heaven!

6. What do you do when you’re not being an educator?
Every day after school in the rain, snow or shine, I walk my faithful furry companion named Lucy and I really enjoy fitness activities. On the weekends, I can be found outside with my husband and 2 boys on our mountain bikes as much as possible. Spring is here and we are all geared up! I also am part of a local community scholarship organization that keeps me busy as well. I love to read and every summer you will find me on the back deck, at a pool or on the beach in the Outer Banks with my nose in a novel!

Advocacy

A True National Security Threat—Foreign Language Programs Disappearing

Originally published in the San Francisco Chronicle

In January, the Modern Language Association reported that colleges across the country have shut down a “stunning” 651 language programs over the past three years. This astounding news did not make headlines. It is a quiet crisis — and a harbinger of peril for the next generation of U.S. leaders.

In 1957 a tiny satellite named Sputnik shook Americans out of their global leadership complacency. If the Russians could beat us into space, then maybe they could beat us in other areas as well.

The shock sparked a mad dash in math, engineering and science. It prompted an explosion nationwide in the study of Russian and other “critical languages” used by our allies and adversaries alike. It steeled our determination as a nation to boost our knowledge base and learn languages to maintain U.S. leadership and national security.
Once again, that leadership is at risk. And once again, the threat is as much complacency at home as danger abroad.

On the surface, language departments are suffering a fate similar to the rest of the humanities as universities look to cut costs and discover “relevant” fields of study. The standard rationale is that the sciences and engineering fields are universities’ (and students’) moneymakers. Those fields are booming. They are flush with government dollars and funding from tech giants. New laboratories and facilities are being built to attract star faculty. And with the whole world learning English, why bother anyway?

But science degrees, engineering careers and money aren’t the real issues. Languages (like many of the humanities) require little more than a professor, a textbook and a classroom, making a higher net profit to the institution than their hard science counterparts, with their labs, equipment and software. Italian is always Italian, after all.

The real issue is demand, which has been diminishing for decades and starts long before college: Nationwide, only 1 in 5 students from kindergarten through high school are taught a foreign language. Only 16 states require any world language learning at all in K-12 — and usually this amounts to only two years in high school. Language proficiency requirements are on the wane. Yet learning French or Korean is no different from learning English: It takes time to become proficient. Those who grow up without opportunities to learn other languages aren’t likely to ask for them when they get to college. It’s a vicious cycle, especially if parents have little to no experience with other languages.

There are places like Glastonbury, Conn., and Fairfax, Va., where school districts continue to offer comprehensive language programs for kids beginning early in elementary school. Concordia Language Villages in Minnesota offers a truly one of a kind experience for kids 7 to 18 to immerse themselves in 15 languages in a fun, camp-like setting.

But these places are exceptions — and those exceptions are bittersweet. They afford opportunities to tiny percentage of Americans who live in these school districts or who can pay for summer language camp programs. The rest of America — the 4 in 5 who have no opportunity to learn a second language — is left with few options.

Given the political environment, it’s hard not to be alarmist at America’s dismissal of world languages. The U.S. faces serious security threats: North Korea, Russia, Islamic State holdouts in the Middle East, the list goes on. To address those challenges effectively, we also need allies. The need to speak the language of our adversaries and our friends is still very present and very real, no matter what we tweet.

National security is not only about threats at the border or nuclear arms. It also involves economic strength. How can we expect to cut our trade deficits if we can’t speak the language of our customers?

Our quiet crisis is of our own making. It is not only short-sighted, it is tragic. It can be undone. Until we recognize the value of learning other tongues, however, there aren’t words in any language for the trouble we’ll be in.

Dan Hamilton is a professor at Johns Hopkins University and dean of Waldsee German Language Village, a program of Concordia Language Villages.

Stacie Nevadomski Berdan is a former global executive, an expert on international careers and co-author of “Raising Global Children.”
CT COLT Language Teacher of the Year Echoes NECTFL’s 2020 Conference Theme, and Underscores the Importance of Being a Member of our Professional Organizations

In early December of 2018, I received the news that I was named CTCOLT Language Teacher of the Year. This meant that I would represent CT COLT at NECTFL (and potentially at ACTFL at a future time). Being named 2018-2019 CT COLT Teacher of the Year is both an honor and a privilege of a lifetime! It does not, however, overshadow the honor and privilege of 28 years of serving as Language Educator & Facilitator for all learners, preparing them for the 21st Century global realities and opportunities of today’s and tomorrow’s world. I’ve always believed that Learning Languages is Everyone’s Birthright. After all, neuroscientific research and the prevalence of multilingualism in humanity in the world both corroborate this fact! This award provides me with a platform to continue to advocate for and promote my belief and CT COLT’s belief that all learners should have the opportunity to learn languages and develop cultural competence, and NECTFL’s 2020 Conference Theme: Languages for All: Envisioning Language Learning Opportunities for Every Learner.

In the second weekend in February, I attended the NECTFL Conference with the honor and privilege of being there as CT COLT’s Language Teacher of the Year. While there, I had the honor of meeting, in person, and spending some time with our very own CT COLT’s Rebecca Aubrey, 2019 ACTFL National Teacher of the Year, NECTFL’s Board Members, TOY Committee Members, and Language Teachers of the Year from the eight states. The opportunity to meet, connect and spend some time getting to know each of the other State TOY’s was facilitated by NECTFL’s TOY Committee. Each one of us was eager to share our work, experiences, passions and visions with one another, and also eager to exchange contact information with each other in order to collaborate on each other’s projects and lend support to each other’s work, whenever and wherever possible. For me, this opportunity to meet and chat with such brilliant, passionate, insightful, creative, innovative, resourceful and committed language teachers, from the various states, was truly one of the major highlights of attending this year’s NECTFL Conference, though not outshining the moments when each of us was called up to the stage during the conference, and awarded, with a plaque, the honor of being named 2019 NECTFL Language Teacher of The Year Finalist.

Another highlight, not to be outshined by the two previously mentioned ones, was the opportunity to learn from the Keynote Speaker Laura Terrill, a National Consultant, Content Specialist for the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) working with the STARTALK program, and co-author of the Second Edition of the ACTFL publication, Keys to Planning for Learning. Laura spoke passionately and commonsensically to us all, underscoring the utmost importance of Authentic Language, Authentic Learning in each of our classrooms, everyday! Once again, as is always the case whenever I have attended our CT COLT, CCSU, NECTFL and ACTFL conferences, or any other Language Education-related workshops, I sat there wishing that all my language educator colleagues and friends, each and e-v-e-r-y-o-n-e of you, were present at this invaluable and impressive keynote presentation! We simply do not know what we do not know when we are not present in the opportunities to learn, with each other and from each other, in our profession, through our Language Organizations!

I extend a cordial invitation to all my fellow CT Language Teachers, to share with your colleagues and friends in your buildings, two very important values I hold dear in my heart, and that will take our profession to soaring heights and to transform the lives of this generation and others to come:

1) Learning Languages is Everyone’s Birthright, and therefore we must truly commit to making sure that there be Language Learning Opportunities for Every Learner.

2) Our Professional Organizations provide us, through their membership, opportunities of lifelong learning, to improve and hone our practice, amazing professional experiences, networking and collaboration with colleagues, and unique and critical opportunities to contribute and transform the lives of all learners, todos los días.
CT COLT Teacher of the Year

Do you know of someone who is an outstanding teacher and a wonderful advocate for the teaching of languages in the state of Connecticut? CT COLT is seeking nominations for Connecticut's Language Teacher of the Year.

The CT COLT Teacher of the Year program is a way to acknowledge the contributions of a talented language teacher to our profession. The winner of Connecticut's Language Teacher of the Year will go on to compete at NECTFL for Regional Teacher of the Year.

So, if you or someone you know fits this description, please fill out (or encourage them to fill out) the application by May 15, 2019. We have changed our timeline this year to give our CT COLT Teacher of the Year more time to advocate for language teaching across Connecticut at the NECTFL conference.

All application materials must be turned in online. No paper applications will be accepted. We are accepting both self-nominations and peer-nominations.

After the committee reviews those applications, we will ask candidates who have completed applications to submit additional documentation, including letters of recommendation.

For more information, check the Teacher of the Year page on CTCOLT.org or email Matt Mangino (Teacher of the Year Coordinator) at manginom@ctcolt.org

Thank you!
Matthew Mangino and CT COLT

Personal Perspectives

¡Estados Unidos y Centro América!
By Suria Sinahara Sanchez
Elementary Spanish/Six to Six Magnet School in Bridgeport

I am honored to write about the experiences Taylor and I had this year of our active participation in the Teachers 2018 Mentor/Mentee Program offer by The CT Networking Fellowship of World Language with the support of the founders Gina Gallo-Reinhard and Amanda Robustelli-Price. ¡Bravo!

¡Fenomenal! ¡Fabuloso! ¡Encantador! Were the words that resonated in my mind, what an amazing opportunity for professional and personal growth. Even though I was not aware of the specifics of the program the significance of a being a “Mentor” was a total magnet to commit to the program.

Two weeks ago Taylor and I met at a restaurant in Middletown called “El Pulpo” that Taylor suggested. We enjoyed only Spanish conversation while having delicious tapas. Upon confirmation of our gathering Taylor sent me a text: “Si!!!! ¡El Pulpo! El plato de queso es fenomenal!” We reminisced of our fun times together and our discoveries of other delicious foods like sushi. We reflected and made some possible future traveling plans to Central and South America and shared some anecdotes from our classrooms as always. In the next few paragraphs Taylor described her experiences of the program.

My name is Taylor Pacekonis and now, as a Spanish Teacher, I can do that, fluently. However, a lot of work, studying, practice and travel went into me becoming a Spanish Teacher. I had many people who influenced me along the way. One of those people I met at the beginning of the year through the COLT Mentorship Program.
I was excited to participate as a mentee in the COLT Program because I still am not as surrounded with Spanish as I’d like to be. I grew up in South Windsor. My parents speak English. My teachers spoke English. So when I was offered the opportunity to learn a foreign language in 7th grade, I took Spanish. I was so excited. I remember thinking that I wanted to be speaking in full sentences, not just memorizing words. As teachers we speak Spanish at work, but I wanted to speak Spanish more outside of work. The first day I met Suria, we started talking in Spanish and I felt comfortable, like I was at home, speaking my own language. We had in depth conversations about things that mattered. She didn’t judge me when I made mistakes, she helped me learn and I knew she wanted to help. We clicked right away and I was grateful to have her as a mentor.

Throughout this process, I have loved communicating and spending time with Suria. She has so much knowledge about life because of her experiences which I’m grateful are both similar to and different than mine. I am not a native Spanish speaker, yet I am a Spanish Teacher. I still have to work very hard to keep up my Spanish level, to practice and to find opportunities to speak. She has helped me gain more confidence in myself, even though I am not a native speaker and she has helped me improve my language skills. Suria has also encouraged me to take time for myself. I am a “yes person” and at times I find the silver lining in everything and can have a hard time saying no. Suria has helped me to make some important decisions in my work life and my personal life that support not just my teacher self but my soul and my heart.

Talking with Suria for me, is a form of self-care. I have colleagues at work but I don’t have female influences in my department so it’s good to be able to talk to someone who has more life experience who can give me advice who knows me as a teacher but also for the person and woman I am.

I am so glad that I participated this year. My year would look drastically different without the experiences I gained through having a mentor in Suria. I hope the program continues because I think it’s a valuable experience for young teachers.

How encouraging is to read Taylor’s details of her experience. Taylor’s receptiveness to communicate all in Spanish in different platforms was inspiring to me. We connected immediately during our first meeting because we love the Spanish language. We both have concluded to be heroes not only for the students we serve but for each other.

I am a native speaker from El Salvador, Central America. During my first year in pre-law University education in El Salvador I had to participate in community service. I chose to teach reading to unprivileged children who worked in the markets and did not have access to an education due to the civil war during in 1980’s. It is during this amazing experience that I discovered my passion to become a teacher. I have worked in other educational platforms before becoming a World Language teacher in 2004. I have been teaching Spanish at the elementary level for 11 years and 4 years at the middle school level.

During this process one of my commitments was to maintain ongoing communication with Taylor. My focus was for Taylor to hear from me as much it was possible by phone calls, text and by creating an interesting and safe atmosphere during our times together. Consequently, Taylor felt comfortable in using her Spanish at all levels. We discussed school politics, general politics, student projects, traveling experiences, family and friends activities. We also supported each other in many levels as she describes and it has influenced in great numbers our professional and personal life,

As I indicated before Taylor is my hero. Taylor demonstrated her enthusiasm and dedication for her students by sharing her out beat personality when she would describe her worked scheduled and the hours she spent in planning for her classes. Taylor’s motivation to use Spanish was remarkable! Our times together were an affirmation for me to focus on supporting, influencing and encouraging teachers like Taylor.

In conclusion, I am also extremely glad that I participated this year in the Mentor/Mentee program. My year would not be the same without being a mentor for Taylor. My encouragement is for teachers to participate in this amazing program which is a valuable experience for novice and veteran teachers.

**My Key Takeaways from NECTFL 2019**

Jill Griswold
Spanish Teacher, South Windsor High School
@srtagriswold23

From connecting with teachers from all over the country, to listening to Laura Terril’s inspiring keynote address and participating in a handful of awesome workshops, I left NECTFL
2019 recharged and motivated to take some new risks in the classroom.

I think my favorite quote of the weekend came from Lisa Ritter and Paul Sandrock’s workshop on engaging and empowering language learners. They encouraged us that “small adjustments in your teaching make big changes in students’ learning.” Ever since NECTFL, I have kept this in the forefront of my lesson planning by reflecting on what small changes I can make to lessons I have taught before in order to improve instruction. Sandrock and Ritter challenged us to always examine what the communicative purpose is of the content we are teaching. The vocabulary and grammar we are teaching should always have a communicative purpose and that purpose needs to be made clear to the language learners as well, not just in the learning objectives, but evident in every learning activity also. Ritter and Sandrock explained that this could even just be a minor shift in how the teacher words prompts or directions to a class activity. For example, instead of instructing students to “describe what they are wearing today” (when they could just look at each other to see that their classmate is wearing a red t-shirt), instead, word the prompt so the students can see the real-world application. Perhaps instead, the context to this prompt is that they are studying abroad in Spain, meeting up with an intercambio partner whom they have not met yet, and they must write a text message to this person describing what they are wearing so that he/she can find them in a busy plaza. In Katrina Graff’s presentation, she also touched upon making those small adjustments to units that may be a little outdated or dry. For example, she no longer does a unit about “daily routines” and has crafted a unit on how to live a healthy life, with a focus on how to de-stress and the importance of mindfulness. While she may cover much of the same vocabulary and grammar, she felt like students connected with this new theme better because it became more relevant to their lives.

The other key idea that I took away from NECTFL 2019 came from a workshop with Katrina Graff and another with Leslie Grahn, both of whom focused on purposeful planning to maximize language instruction. One of the points that they both made was how to support students’ target language use in the classroom. While we as their teacher may have mastered the 90% use of TL in class, how do we encourage and plan for students to do the same? For starters, if we expect student TL use, then we need to provide them with the necessary resources to help them feel comfortable doing so in class. One suggestion was to make conversation cards that are specific to various classroom tasks to have on hand for students to use. For example, one card could contain key questions and phrases that students would need to review homework with a partner, and another could be used for classroom discussion (agree/disagree, clarifying questions, providing opinions, etc.) These cards, (which could be printed on 8x11 sheets of paper and laminated for reuse), should have key phrases, questions, and expressions accompanied by images or symbols that help students recognize the meaning of them.

The workshops I attended at NECTFL allowed me to collaborate with educators from different areas of the country and I loved the “give and take” idea sharing that took place all weekend long. I felt as though I walked away from the sessions with Lisa Ritter, Paul Sandrock, Katrina Graff, Thomas Sauer, Leslie Grahn and Laura Terril with clear goals in mind in regards to aspects of my instruction that I want to improve upon for the future. I hope that you will reflect on my two takeaways as well: What small adjustments can you make to rethink and reinforce the communicative purpose of the content that you are teaching? How is your planning purposeful to maximize
CT COLT FALL CONFERENCE 2019
10/20 & 10/21
THE JOURNEY: BUILDING PATHWAYS TO PROFICIENCY

Where are you on your journey?

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL TODAY
TEACHING FOR PROFICIENCY
INSTITUTE 2019

6/26-6/27
Featuring
GREG DUNCAN
instruction assessment proficiency gains

6/26-6/27, 8 A.M.-3:30 P.M.
STONINGTON HS, CT

CURRICULUM & PROFICIENCY
New and returning attendees welcome.

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*Member organizations: CT COLT, RIFLA, MAFLA, NYSFLT, FLENJ, NHAWLT, VFLA
*Includes breakfast and lunch both days, and proficiency party on Wednesday

CT COLT and RIFLA are thrilled to announce the return of Greg Duncan who will work with language educators on their journey to teaching for proficiency. After serving as Spanish teacher, an administrator and then as Coordinator of Foreign Languages and International Education for the Georgia Department of Education, Greg launched a career as an independent consultant. He has authored and collaborated in the authorship of numerous publications in the field of foreign language education.

www.ctcolt.org OR https://goo.gl/forms/gH5HqjSeSN19Pv613
www.rifla.org

Mystic Hilton Hotel: www.hilton.com
To reserve a room for $149 please call 1-800-774-1500.
Please use the code CT COLT when booking. This rate is available until 5/26.
language instruction and encourage student target language use in class?

**Methods, Materials & Resources**

**Stations in the World Language Classroom**
by Trudy Anderson

A few years ago, I decided to try something different and started using stations in my classroom. Stations are learning centers set up around the classroom where students can work together or independently on tasks of varying levels. At first, I was a bit leery about doing it because I was afraid that it could easily become an uncontrollable situation. However, I decided to do some research and started gathering materials based on the units that I was teaching. I tried it and was pleasantly surprised that my students loved working together and with advanced planning I also enjoyed those days.

Here are some reasons to try stations

- Students work independently or in groups depending on the tasks
- Great for review or expanding on information already taught
- The teacher can work with small groups. I have used this for small group tutoring, speaking assessments. I can also differentiate based on the groups.
- Introducing new material that is related to something they have already learned.
- Students work together to “figure it out”
- Students like the break from the normal routine
- Practice learned vocabulary and grammar

I must stress that planning is key in having stations work well. I think that it is well worth the effort and over time I have accumulated many resources that I readily use. It is also important to continually add new resources as you find them. Below are some things to consider.

- Number of stations you will use based on the duration of your class periods. Stations can be done in one or more class periods depending on time or number of tasks.
- Types of stations (see examples below)
- Collecting resources and authentic materials
- Keeping students on task
- Grouping students
- Classroom set up
- Accountability (see below)
- Follow up activities
- Making sure each station takes about the same amount of time
- Having a plan for early finishers

**Types of stations**

There are many types of stations to consider. Stations could include the following:

- Listening/videos/ reading (preferably authentic sources)
- Something old (test review, reviewing a skill)
- Fun activity (coloring based on a skill, games etc.)
- Holidays (learning about celebrations in target language countries and perhaps comparing them to ours)
- Songs (put lyric strips in order, write another verse)
- Ideas from thinking about the 3 modes of communication and the 5C's
- Teacher station- (tutoring, interviews, presentations)
- Stories-(students draw what they read, authentic story books)

**Choosing materials**

I suggest that as you find materials that you keep a running list and group them by the units or topics that you teach so that when you are ready to do your stations they will be readily available. Also, where ever possible, authentic resources should be used because I believe it is more challenging for the students and I am always amazed at how much my students can do if I structure the task well.

- Pinterest
- YouTube (be sure to watch entire video before showing to students and check language especially with songs)
- Newspapers, magazines, flyers
- Yellow pages, infographics
- Teacher created materials, textbook website
• Materials from other subjects-math, social studies etc.
• Pictures (make questions, describe what they see, make a story)  
  (ideas for using pictures)
• https://zachary-jones.com/zambombazo/panorama-tematico/ (authentic resources and more)
• http://www.spanishlistening.org/ (native speakers talking on various topics and levels)

After finding the resources, you will have to decide what you would like the students to with the material. This is the most challenging part. Here is where I consider what my goals are for the activity. In our world language department we have been working on question types and we have been using the following types of questions for interpretive tasks (main idea, fact/detail. Inference context, author’s purpose and some grammar questions)

**Setting up stations**

**Day before**

• Choose materials and decide how long each station will be
• Group students ahead of time and assign them a starting point
• Decide where each station will be placed in the room
• Make sure that there are enough stations that the groups are not too big
• Label each station clearly
• Sign up for lap top cart
• Post materials for students ( I use Google Classroom)

**Day of the stations**

• Make sure each station has all the necessary materials (copies, headphones, timer etc.) My students bring their own headphones.
• When students enter the room I ask them to put their belongings out of the way. I hand them a folder where they will place their completed work. I assign them a lap top. They will need headphones and a writing utensil.
• Since I teach middle schoolers, I find that it is necessary to walk them to each station and explain what they should do even though there are directions.

• Students go to their assigned start and teacher sets timer
• Be sure to monitor groups as they rotate through the stations
• Leave time for clean up at the end of class

Teachers must decide how much movement they are comfortable with. I tend to leave an extra station open so that if students finish early they can move to that station until it is time to rotate or they can just move to the next station in the sequence.

**Accountability**

Undoubtedly there will be students who will not be very serious about the work. With that in mind, I believe that the students should be told why they are doing the stations. They should expect that some of the work will be graded. I never tell them which ones will be graded ahead of time. The teacher should take time to monitor what the different groups are doing. There are times when my students are not able to finish an activity. I sometimes assign the rest for homework or use the next class to revisit difficulties they might have had.
Deciding to do stations in your class will take some upfront planning and collection of resources. However, it will be well worth the effort when you see the engagement of the students.

**Technology**

*Technology Corner: The Pros and Cons of Being a 1:1 School*

By Lisa Urso, Student Events Coordinator

It was during a faculty meeting four years ago when my principal announced that the district had decided to create an initiative where each student, from grades 5 through 8, would receive their own Chromebooks for school use.

I was skeptical at first. My mind immediately went to what would happen if students lost their Chromebooks, did not treat them properly, or used them to watch Netflix or search for inappropriate content. But I quickly came to the following realizations:

- I no longer had to negotiate with other teachers for computer lab or iPad cart use.
- Kids wouldn’t have to wait their turn to use one of the four virtual desktop computers in the back of the room.

These two aforementioned situations alone make the 1:1 initiative worth it. After three years, I have embraced the Chromebooks and frequently use them in my teaching. However, as with many new trends in education, the 1:1 technology initiative has its pros and cons.

**PROS:**

- **Assessing speaking is SO much easier.** I have students record themselves using apps such as Flipgrid or Screencastify. This is especially convenient for presentational assessment.
- **I have significantly reduced the amount of paper I use.** My classes are now 99% paperless. I don’t do well with physical clutter, and I appreciate anything that allows me to cut down on paper.
- **I can share resources with my students that I otherwise couldn’t in previous years.** I upload Quizlets, Google Slides presentations, and YouTube videos to Google Classroom as resources to help my students with various class materials. I can have them listen to a recording and respond to it in a Google Form. I can flip my classroom and have my kids prepare for a lesson the night before I teach it.

**CONS:**

- **Dealing with students who forget to charge their Chromebooks.** Most of the time, this is frequent during my morning classes. I don’t keep a charger in my room. I have been trying to come up with a system of accountability to help encourage students to charge their devices at home, as opposed to frequent reliance on a friend’s charger (or going to their lockers to grab theirs).
- **Cheating.** My district uses GoGuardian, a software program designed for teachers to monitor students’ Chromebook use. I am able to see if students, for example, are off-task during an assignment, or worse, if they cheat on a test. Although GoGuardian has various setups that one can use to block certain websites, students will often stay one step ahead and find loopholes that their teachers may not be aware of. For example, I caught a student using the “Explore” feature at the bottom of a Google Doc to translate a writing prompt when I had all other sites blocked.
- **Students finding ways around blocked technology.** Teachers always have to stay one step ahead of their students when it comes to technology, and this is much easier said than done. For every game or add-on that my district blocks, a new one
After three years of implementing Chromebooks throughout my curriculum, I have come up with a series of tips that you may find helpful:

- **Establish a set of VERY clear rules for when and when NOT to use the Chromebook during instruction.** My students are not allowed to use their Chromebooks unless I tell them to open them. If they are using the Chromebook during a time when they are not supposed to, I bring it to my desk, and give it back at the end of class. I usually only have to do this to a student once, and the message is well-received.

- **When students use Chromebooks during class, monitor VERY carefully.** I find that it helps for me to log in to GoGuardian on an iPad to assist with this task. I can easily monitor who is on task, and who isn’t. If I am helping another student, I can always glance quickly at the iPad to make sure the rest of the class is engaged with the current task.

- **Don’t use the Chromebooks for interpersonal assessments.** Some teachers may have found a way to successfully do this, but I personally have not. I have found that if I have students record their conversations, they’ll find ways to incorporate notes or scripts to assist them—which turns these assessments into presentational ones.

- **Paper is best for certain activities.** It’s good to take a break from the screen from time to time. Using paper and having students draw, write, or create helps engage different parts of the brain, and helps them retain more information.

All of these above suggestions have come from trial and error over the last three years. I am aware that some schools, instead of using Chromebooks, employ iPads as a 1:1 device of choice. I’m interested in finding out what your experiences are, and hope to share some of them in a future newsletter article. Please contact me at ursol@ctcolt.org or on Twitter @mllesrtaurso. I’d love to hear your thoughts!
Students recited rhymes in the following languages: Chinese, French, German, Greek, Japanese, Hindi, Portuguese, Romania, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Telegu, and Vietnamese.

Special thanks to our generous hosts in West Hartford, as well as our Rhyme Celebration chair, Kate Krotzer, for their hard work!

**Congratulations to the Newest Inductees to the CT COLT Future World Language Teachers Honor Society**

CT COLT would like to congratulate the future educators who were inducted into the CT COLT Future World Language Teachers Honor Society. These students who were inducted at the CT COLT Fall Conference or at the CCSU Spring Conference are language majors who have shown and proven a deep interest in language and culture and wish to share this love by becoming a world language teacher.

**From Quinnipiac University:**
Ashley Ponce
Brianna Gore
Morgan Fair
Allison Dripchak

**2019, Inductees from the CCSU Spring Conference**

**From Central Connecticut State University:**
Natali Epshtein
Carliira Hodge
Laurine Hoover
Sarah Levesque
Victoria Martins
Lia Negrón
Juliana Rivera

**From Southern Connecticut State University:**
Emily Gaspar
Waldina Hernandez
Nelly Quito
Shannon Reed
Matthew Torrisi

**From the University of Connecticut:**
Nora Alpers-León
Marianna Bedoya
Jenna Bordieri
Alexandra Leonelli
Hannah Mikesell

We would also like to thank the chapter sponsors:

- Central Connecticut State University: Rocio Fuentes
- Southern Connecticut State University: Jessica Haxhi and Jesse Gleason
Linda Dalpe and Aileen Dever are the coordinators for this group. Congratulations to all new members! Welcome to the profession.

## 2019 Poetry Recitation Contest

On April 3rd, Rockville High School in Vernon, CT hosted the 38th Annual CT COLT Poetry Recitation Contest. The contest is the largest student focused event that the organization holds. This year, over 590 students from all over Connecticut memorized poems and came to Vernon to recite their poems in front of panels of judges specific to the languages they represent. Memorizing poems benefits students in a variety of ways, including improving memory and verbal skills, enhancing public speaking skills, developing empathy and exposing students to language structures and vocabulary they might not otherwise see. Moreover, they experience learning about cultural themes they might not otherwise study and gain exposure to the beauty of different languages. Over fifteen languages were represented in the competition this year. Students were ranked and awarded medals for their excellence in reciting their selected poem. 230 medals were awarded to students. Students in all levels of language learning participated in this competition, from novice levels to the most advanced high school levels to heritage speakers. The Vernon Public Schools World Language Department was very proud to host this event so that students could come together, celebrate diversity and be recognized for their persistence and hard work!

## Organizational News

### 37th Annual ACTR National Russian Essay Contest

The Co-Chairs of the 2018 National Russian Essay contest are pleased to announce the first round results of the contest, which was administered last November. This year 1,193 students wrote essays for the contest, representing almost 100 more over last year. Students of various levels and study of Russian wrote essays, including Beginner, Beginner Heritage, Intermediate, Intermediate Heritage, Advanced, Advanced Heritage and Native Speaker on the topic, “Свободное время или Что я люблю делать, когда у меня есть свободное время?” (“Free Time or What I love to do when I have free time?”). Students were awarded Gold, Silver, Bronze and Honorable Mention based and the total number of medals awarded is detailed below:

### WHY POETRY MATTERS

When we teach poetry, we really must stop and reflect on the purposes of these lessons. Why poetry? Why teach, read, or write poetry at all? Poetry connects us in ways that many other types of texts do not. It moves us. It expands our worldview. It challenges societal norms and expectations. And it reminds us that we are not alone. That words are beautiful, and powerful, and meaningful. And this beauty, power, and meaning are not limited to the past.
Students who were awarded a medal or honorable mention will receive medals and/or certificates. The gold medal essays at the Advanced, Heritage Advanced, and Native Speaker levels have been forwarded to the Pushkin Institute in Moscow for the second round of judging. Second round results and awards will be available in April. Participating teachers are encouraged to complete and send the Administrator Information Form to make administrators aware of their students’ success in the contest.

Congratulations on the fine writing of Russian students! It is wonderful that 44 schools and 53 teachers in 16 states and the District of Columbia participated in the contest this year. If you have colleagues who currently do not participate in the NREC, please encourage them to contact the contest chairs about participating in the 38th National Russian Essay Contest in November 2019.

Sincerely,

John Rook (rookj@glastonburyus.org), Paavo Husen (E-mail: paavo@imsa.edu), Phillip Stosberg (E-mail: pstosberg@pritzkercollegeprep.org)

Co-chairs, NREC

News from CT Schools

Spanish Honor Society Supports Safe Futures

by Miranda Arruda

Stonington’s Pura Vida Chapter of the Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica bases a lot of their activities on the communities around them. Recently, the board started a collaboration with Safe Futures of Southeastern Connecticut. We purchased supplies and made hygiene kits that help aid victims who have recently escaped sexual abuse. Before we started this project, we invited Kris Wraight, the Associate Director of Prevention Education and Restorative Practices at Safe Futures, to give us a rundown of what her organization does. Safe Futures is an organization in New London, CT as well as Norwich, CT. They operate a 24-hour hotline, an emergency shelter, and transitional living programs for families working to rebuild lives shattered by domestic violence or sexual assault. As Kris talked to us about her organization, we asked her how hygiene kits can help the ones who have recently joined the transitional living apartments. She said, “it gives them a sense of home.” There is nothing like knowing that we are giving someone a sense of their home back. This has been the second year in a row that we have collected hygiene products and donated them to this organization. This activity shows that our Spanish Honor Society is willing to support community-based organizations that represent the diversity of our area. Safe Futures helps a variety of people with all sorts of ethnicities that all survive with the help of donations. Recently, Spanish Honor Society collected 70 hygiene kits filled with shampoo, conditioner, and other hygiene products. All of these bags were donated to Safe Futures in New London, CT. This is one of the many ways that our society supports the Latino culture in New London County. It is a society that helps anyone and everyone who needs it.
World Language Week at St. Luke’s School in New Canaan

The World Language Department at St. Luke’s School (New Canaan) went all out for its annual World Language Week. Daily activities for the entire school community included eating, singing, educational entertainment, guest speakers, and more.

The highlight of the week was a huge, multilingual, school-wide Lip Dub video that can be seen at tinyurl.com/stlukeslipdub2019.

Activities included:

- Multilingual "coffee house" performance event with songs performed by 5th-12th grade students
- A student “mousse-off” competition: a 5-year tradition
- International menus in the cafeteria each day, featuring specialties of well-known chefs from around the world
- Special sushi day with professional visiting Japanese sushi chefs
- A cake celebrating Rome’s 2772nd birthday
- Piñata decorating game show (that was “televised” thanks to the student-run Eye of the Storm club)
- Interactive workshop to learn about Chinese tea
- “Fishing Gone In-Seine” French trivia quiz game
- Display of new St. Luke’s laser-cut Eiffel Tower (designed and built in the St. Luke’s designLab by students and faculty)
- Latin-inspired game table and an interactive map booth
- International Night for 5th grade - special pot luck dinner and international presentations by students
- Guest speaker seminar from St. Luke’s parent and former United Nations Senior Officer Mohan Peck

For any questions, contact Jon Shee at sheej@stlukesct.org
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Stonington Public Schools
granerkennedyl@ctcolt.org

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Enfield High School
robustellipricea@ctcolt.org

### Treasurer
PAUL M. ST. LOUIS (2020)
275 Cedar Swamp Road, Monson, MA 01057-9303
stlouisp@ctcolt.org

### Recording Secretary
JOHN ROOK (2020)
Smith Middle School
rookj@ctcolt.org

### Corresponding Secretary
KATE KROTZER (2020)
Hebron Avenue School
krotzerk@ctcolt.org

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Glastonbury High School
wildmanj@ctcolt.org

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Quinnipiac University
dapel@ctcolt.org

### Social Media Specialist
STACEY CLARK
CREC
clarks@ctcolt.org

## Coordinators

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REBECCA AUBREY
Ashford School
aubreyr@ctcolt.org

### Seal of Biliteracy (2020)
JESSICA HAXHI
New Haven Public Schools
haxhij@ctcolt.org

### Membership (2020)
CHRISTINA VAZQUEZ MAURICIO
Darien Public Schools
mauricioc@ctcolt.org

### CT LILL (2020)
LEA GRANER KENNEDY
Stonington Public Schools
granerkennedyl@ctcolt.org

### Teacher of the Year (2020)
MATT MANGINO
Wethersfield Public Schools
manginom@ctcolt.org

### Summer Institute (2020)
KATHLEEN ARCHIBALD
Bristol Central High School
archibaldk@ctcolt.org

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JOCELYN TAMBORELLO-NOBLE
Hartford Public Schools
tamborellonoblej@ctcolt.org

### Student Events (2020)
LISA URSO
John Winthrop Middle School (Deep River)
ursol@ctcolt.org

### Hospitality (2020)
KAREN STOJ
South Windsor Public Schools
stojk@ctcolt.org

## Organizational Directors

### AATF-CT
BRIGITTE LANGE
brigitte@snet.net

### ACTR
JOHN ROOK
Smith Middle School
rookj@ctcolt.org

### Alliance Française
BETTY PERLOT
bperlot@snet.net

### CAPELL
KAREN STOJ
stojk@ctcolt.org
South Windsor Public Schools

### CITA
CARLA DESTEFANIS
destefanisc@ctcolt.org

### CLASS
CAROL CHEN-LIN
cchenlin@choate.edu
Choate Rosemary Hall, Wallingford

### CLASSCONN
MAUREEN LAMB
latintechtools@gmail.com
Kingswood Oxford

### CONNTESSOL
OPEN

### CT-AATG
OPEN

### CT-AATSP
AILEEN DEVER, Ph.D.
Aileen.Dever@quinnipiac.edu
Quinnipiac University, College of Liberal Arts

### NADSFL
LEA GRANER KENNEDY
granerkenneyl@ctcolt.org
Stonington Public Schools

### NNELL
LEA GRANER KENNEDY
granerkenneyl@ctcolt.org
Stonington Public Schools

### NNUC
KATE KROTZER
krotzerk@ctcolt.org
Glastonbury Public Schools
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Newsletter Submissions
Deadline for next newsletter: June 15, 2019.
Help us keep our membership records updated!
If you have moved or had a name change, please fill out the
Information update form at

CT COLT Fall Conference
The Journey: Building Pathways to Proficiency
October 20 – 21, 2019
Red Lion Hotel
Cromwell, CT

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