



PAVING THE WAY FOR THE SEAL OF BILITERACY:

*Teaching Thematic,
Culturally-Focused Units*

Elena Spathis
Pascack Valley High School



INTRODUCTION

- About me
- Best language teaching practices
 - Culturally-focused, thematic units
 - Assessing the three modes
- Applicability to all languages
- Seal of Biliteracy



The persistence of memory, Salvador Dalí.
Source: M. Steele via Flickr.

FIRST STEPS

- Backwards planning
 - What are your goals for students at the end of the unit?
 - End-of-unit assessment (Integrated Performance Assessment) in mind
 - Interpretive, interpersonal, presentational tasks
- Essential Questions
- Purpose of the Unit/Rationale
- Communicative Functions
 - Language and culture

FIRST STEPS

- Standards Alignment
 - NJSLS for World Languages
 - ACTFL Can-Do Statements and Proficiency Benchmarks
- Compiling resources to create appropriate tasks
 - Aim for authentic resources as you see fit.
 - Select key paintings/artwork to serve as your basis
 - Compile articles, video or audio clips, infographics

SAMPLE UNIT

Artistic Exploration: Examining the Target Culture through Artwork

- Designing Backwards: Start with the end goal → Integrated Performance Assessment to target the three modes
- Sample Essential Questions:
 - *What is the artist's purpose in creating this work of art, and how does it reflect the target culture or community?*
 - *How can I analyze and interpret a work of art?*
 - *What are some key artistic forms and movements in the target country/countries?*
 - *What are some similarities and differences between artwork from the target culture or community and my own?*

UNIT BREAKDOWN: Honors Spanish IV

Proficiency Target → Intermediate Low

- Introduction to the unit
 - Definition of art/its purpose/its importance
 - Debate on graffiti - Art or vandalism?
- The Study of Surrealism
 - Key Artist: Salvador Dalí
- The Study of Cubism
 - Key Artist: Pablo Picasso
- The study of Muralism
 - Key Artists: Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, Rufino Tamayo, Juan O'Gorman






Girl Before a Mirror, Pablo Picasso.
Source: Nathan Laurell via Flickr.

**NOVICE
PROFICIENCY BENCHMARK**

**INTERMEDIATE
PROFICIENCY BENCHMARK**

COMMUNICATION

	NOVICE PROFICIENCY BENCHMARK	INTERMEDIATE PROFICIENCY BENCHMARK
 INTERPRETIVE	<p><i>I can</i> identify the general topic and some basic information in both very familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences in texts that are spoken, written, or signed.</p>	<p><i>I can</i> understand the main idea and some pieces of information on familiar topics from sentences and series of connected sentences within texts that are spoken, written, or signed.</p>
 INTERPERSONAL	<p><i>I can</i> communicate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences, and questions.</p>	<p><i>I can</i> participate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on familiar topics, creating sentences and series of sentences to ask and answer a variety of questions.</p>
 PRESENTATIONAL	<p><i>I can</i> present information on both very familiar and everyday topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences through spoken, written, or signed language.</p>	<p><i>I can</i> communicate information, make presentations, and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences through spoken, written, or signed language.</p>

Source:
ACTFL
Intermediate
Can-Do
Statements
<https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/CanDos/Intermediate%20Can-Do%20Statements.pdf>

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

 <p>INVESTIGATE</p>	In my own and other cultures I can identify products and practices to help me understand perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can make comparisons between products and practices to help me understand perspectives.
 <p>INTERACT</p>	I can interact at a survival level in some familiar everyday contexts.	I can interact at a functional level in some familiar contexts.

Source:
ACTFL Intermediate Can-Do
Statements
<https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/CanDos/Intermediate%20Can-Do%20Statements.pdf>

GENERAL RESOURCES

Highlighting the best practices

- [ACTFL Membership - Special Interest Groups](#)
 - <https://www.actfl.org/membership/special-interest-groups-sigs>
- [Ohio Department of Education Model Curriculum/Rubrics](#)
 - <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Foreign-Language/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum>
- [Annenberg Learner: World Languages](#)
 - <https://www.learner.org/subject/world-languages/>

GENERAL RESOURCES

- [Wayside Publishing Proficiency Talks Blog](https://blog.waysidepublishing.com/)
 - <https://blog.waysidepublishing.com/>
- [Cult of Pedagogy Blog](https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/)
 - <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/>
- [Edutopia](https://www.edutopia.org/)
 - <https://www.edutopia.org/>

Search the hashtag #langchat on Twitter!

SAMPLE INTERPRETIVE TASKS

To build listening and reading comprehension skills

- As a means of modeling the analysis and interpretation of a work of art: Create a teacher-narrated Screencast-o-matic presentation with a corresponding activity (virtual instruction)
- Utilize authentic videos/audio clips/articles/infographics focused on a work of art, artistic period, specific artist with comprehension questions

Useful Spanish resource: Experiencias con arte YouTube channel

SAMPLE INTERPERSONAL TASKS

To build two-way speaking and writing skills

- Compare and contrast two works of art or two artistic periods in a threaded written discussion/texting conversation/in-person conversation
- Simulated conversation to spontaneously and informally converse about a work of art or artist
- Formal reply email to respond about a topic related to an artistic period or works of art

SAMPLE PRESENTATIONAL TASKS

To build one-way speaking and writing skills

- Gallery walk in small groups - analyze posted works of art in a small group and write about them / present to the whole class
- Oral cultural comparison to compare and contrast a work of art from the United States and one from a target country
- Re-create a work of art and describe it in writing or orally

SAMPLE PROJECT

- Students mindfully “recreate” a work of art inspired by a specific artistic period (surrealism, cubism, impressionism, etc)
- Students present (in person) or record themselves speaking (virtually) about the artwork they created, how it reflects that specific artistic period
- Students can then critique their classmates’ artwork; teacher can create a gallery of all students’ works by posting them on the classroom walls or in a Google Slides presentation (virtually)



INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

(SAMPLE IPA - Intermediate level)

Scenario: You hope to be the museum's newest tour guide due to your expertise!

<i>Interpretive Task</i>	<i>Interpersonal Task</i>	<i>Presentational Task</i>
Stay informed! Read an authentic article or listen to a clip a new exhibit happening at another nearby museum in the target country. Respond to comprehension questions.	After receiving an informational email about a new tour guide position at a museum in the target language country, express your interest in a formal email to the director. Explain why you are qualified for the job, and ask any pertinent questions related to the position.	Show off your skills and expertise! Select two works of art from the target language country, and conduct an an analysis in the form of an oral 2-minute presentation.

SAMPLE CHOICE BOARD

Opción #1: ¡A recrear una obra!

Recreate/replicate any work of art we studied by Dalí or Picasso that impacted you. Post a picture of your artwork, along with a Vocaroo recording of you describing what you created and how the original work inspired you on a collaborative Slides presentation.

Opción #2: Eres el/la narrador/a

You are the narrator behind a painting. Choose a work by Dalí or Picasso that we did not review together in class (there are many options out there!), and tell the story behind it, providing your own analysis and impression of the painting. Record your response via Flipgrid.

Opción #3: Comparaciones

Select a famous piece of American artwork. Compare and contrast it to a work of art from the Spanish-speaking world - specifically by Picasso, Dalí, or any muralist. Record your response on Padlet.

Opción #4: El surrealismo

Listen to [this clip](#) about surrealism. Select a surrealist work of art that we did not study in class. Write a paragraph, with references to the video, explaining why the artwork you selected is surrealist. Include a picture of the surrealist painting you've selected.

Opción #5: Correo electrónico formal

In a Google Doc or Word Document, write a formal email to your favorite artist we have studied - Dalí, Picasso, or any of the muralists. Tell the artist why you are inspired by his work, and ask any questions you have!

Opción #6: El muralismo

Select any mural by Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, or José Clemente Orozco. Describe how the mural addresses global challenges, and explain whether or not it still is relevant today. Record your response via Flipgrid.



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, DISCUSSION

*What are your favorite
thematic units or go-to
resources?*

Thank you for tuning in!

Twitter @ElenaSpathis

Email elenaspath18@gmail.com

