

SPARKING CREATIVITY IN THE WORLD LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Strategies and Ideas to Build Your Students' Language Skills

**DEBORAH BLAZ
AND TOM ALSOP**

An Eye On Education Book



Sparking Creativity in the World Language Classroom

Jam-packed with inspiring lessons and ideas, this book will help you access and enhance your own creativity in the classroom and inspire your students to become motivated language learners.

Top authors Blaz and Alsop share practical strategies to channel your creative impulses and transform them into effective lessons that will energize students of all levels. Aligned with ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) and CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) standards, the resources in this book support creativity as a practical process, with step-by-step guidance on goal-setting, implementation, evaluation, and feedback. Examples come from many world languages and cover fun and original topics, including tapping into students' own interests through cooking, memes, online videos, sports, arts and crafts, and more.

Relevant for all levels of language instruction, this text includes plentiful photocopiable charts, templates, and samples to use in the classroom.

Deborah Blaz has taught French to grades 7 through 12 for the past 44 years in Indiana, and has taught dual credit, AP, and college classes. She serves as world language department chair at her school and frequently presents workshops and keynotes, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Tom Alsop's teaching career spans 58 years of service to the profession. After retiring from high school teaching, he taught Spanish at Butler University as an Adjunct for 23 years. Tom continues directing Spanish Teacher Summer Immersion Programs (*Aventuras Culturales*) in Madrid, Guadalajara, Mexico, and Havana, Cuba, and he hosts the Apple Podcast *Tom's World Language Cafe*.

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Detailed Table of Contents

<i>Meet the Authors</i>	xiv
<i>Preface</i>	xvi
1. Why Be Creative?	1
Introduction.....	1
For Your Students	2
For YOU	3
You Are Unique	3
Satisfaction	3
Revitalization.....	4
Life Skills	4
Confronting Challenge.....	5
2. The Creative Process from Start to Finish: Road Map to the Book	7
Introduction.....	7
How to Read This Book.....	7
First, a Little History.....	9
The Six Steps to Success.....	9
Mindsets Necessary Throughout the Process	10
Necessary Mindset.....	11
Positivity	11
Goal-Setting and Manageability.....	12
Risk-Taking.....	12
Persistence	12
Good Thinking Skills	13
Support.....	13
3. Curiosity: My Sparks	15
Introduction.....	15
What Lights You Up?	15
What Do I Like to Do?	16
Arts.....	16
Food/Cooking.....	18
Games	18
Games with a Ball.....	19
Other Games	20

Television Shows/Films.....	21
Relaxation.....	22
What Skills Do I Have?	22
I Can Dance.....	22
I Can Sing	23
I Can Play Musical Instruments.....	23
I Can Play a Sport.....	24
I Can Play Video Games.....	25
I Can Text.....	25
Other Skills.....	26
What Special Events Do I Look Forward To?	26
Birthdays	26
Parties With Friends	26
Holidays and Vacations	27
Stop and Think.....	28
Use the Familiar: Personalization	30
Personalize Using Your Life Events	30
Why?.....	31
Hot Seat.....	31
Cognate Crush	32
Personalize Using Students' Lives	32
Never.....	33
Personalize on a Broader Level.....	33
4. Imagination and Creativity	35
Introduction.....	35
Flights of Fancy.....	35
Synectics	35
Idioms	36
Humor.....	37
Internet as Inspiration	37
Strategies from Stand-up Comedians	39
Surprise	39
Exaggeration	39
Rule of Three	39
Keep it Real.....	39
Preliminary Chapter 5-Additional Information on Organization of Capsules: Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules	41
Introduction.....	41
ACTFL Standards/Communication/Proficiency Levels.....	42

5. Modes of Instruction: Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules	43
Introduction.....	43
Capsule 1 – Lesson Planning	44
Capsule 2 – Seating Arrangements	46
Capsule 3 – Comprehensible Input (CI).....	48
Capsule 4 – TPRS (Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling)	50
Capsule 5 – Multiple Intelligences	52
Capsule 6 – Differentiated Instruction.....	54
Capsule 7 – Cooperative Learning.....	56
Capsule 8 – Peer Teaching.....	58
Capsule 9 – Team Teaching	60
Capsule 10 – Learning Stations	62
Capsule 11 – Pragmatic Approach	64
6. Teaching Ideas: Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules	67
Introduction.....	67
Capsule 1 – Vocabulary.....	68
Capsule 2 – Grammar	70
Capsule 3 – Culture/Holidays	72
Capsule 4 – Culture/Songs/Music.....	74
Capsule 5 – Culture/Foods.....	76
Capsule 6 – Culture/Famous Painters	78
Capsule 7 – Culture/Famous Writers.....	80
Capsule 8 – Culture/Sports	82
Capsule 9 – Culture/Dance	84
Capsule 10 – Games/APPS.....	86
Capsule 11 – Skits/Theater	88
Capsule 12 – Puppet Shows	90
Capsule 13 – Commercials	92
7. Promotional Ideas: Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules	95
Introduction.....	95
Capsule 1 – Talent Show	96
Capsule 2 – Podcast/Radio Show	98
Capsule 3 – Market Day	100
Capsule 4 – Dinner Theater.....	102
Capsule 5 – Language Carnival.....	104

Capsule 6 – Teacher/Student/Parent Travel.....	106
Capsule 7 – Prizes/Awards.....	108
Capsule 8 – Professional Development.....	110
Capsule 9 – Language Clubs.....	112
Capsule Name/Topic.....	114
8. Support: Making the Creative Journey Fun and Easy.....	117
Introduction.....	117
Human Sources of Support 1 – Teacher Colleagues.....	118
Human Sources of Support 2 – Students	119
Human Sources of Support 3 – Parents.....	120
Human Sources of Support 4 – Administrators.....	121
Human Sources of Support 5 – Community	123
Human Sources of Support 6 – Myself.....	125
Sources of Support 7 – Technology	127
Using Technology to Spark Creativity	127
Social Media for Ideas on Presentation and Collaboration.....	128
Creating Content	131
Planning Page for Using Technology	137
9. The Path of Persistence: Creative Evaluation/How Did You Do?.....	139
Introduction.....	139
Self-Assessment Card 1 – My Persistence.....	142
Self-Assessment Card 2 – Your New Creative Teaching Strategies.....	143
Self-Assessment Card 3 – Your Support System.....	144
Self-Assessment Card 4 – Your Newest Super-Creative Teaching Strategies.....	145
Self-Assessment Card 5 – Your Expectations	146
Evaluation /Self-Assessment Step Card 6 – Your Successes.....	147
Self-Assessment Card 7 – Your Failures.....	148
Self-Assessment Card 8 – Your Positivity	149
Evaluation /Self-Assessment Step Card 9 – Rewarding Others.....	150
10. My Creativity Recipe Cards	151
Introduction.....	151
Level 1 – Recipes 1–10.....	153
Alphabet Creativity Recipe Card 1	153
Greetings-Farewells – Creativity Recipe Card 2	156

Weather Expressions – Creativity Recipe Card 3.....	159
Classroom Objects – Creativity Recipe Card 4.....	162
Food (to like) – Creativity Recipe Card 5.....	165
Clothing – Creativity Recipe Card 6.....	168
Present Tense Verbs – Creativity Recipe Card 7.....	171
Verb “to have” – Creativity Recipe Card 8.....	174
Christmas Carols Creative Recipe Card 9.....	177
TL Music – Creativity Recipe Card 10.....	180
Level 2 – Recipes 11–16.....	183
Shopping Spree – Creativity Recipe Card 11.....	183
Zoo – Creativity Recipe Card 12.....	186
Past Tense(s) – Creativity Recipe Card 13.....	189
Commands – Creativity Recipe Card 14.....	192
Dance – Creativity Recipe Card 15.....	195
Celebrities – Creativity Recipe Card 16.....	198
Advanced Levels – Recipes 17–22.....	201
Hospital – Creativity Recipe Card 17.....	201
Hotel Vocab – Creativity Recipe Card 18.....	204
Present Subjunctive Creativity Recipe Card 19.....	207
Past Subjunctive – Creativity Recipe Card 20.....	210
Writer’s Day – Creativity Recipe Card 21.....	213
Poetry – Creativity Recipe Card 22.....	216
My Own Recipes Created by ME.....	219
11. Stimulating Creativity in My Students.....	223
Introduction.....	223
Modeling.....	223
Strategies to Guarantee Creative Responses from Students.....	224
RAFT.....	224
Placemats/Chat Mats.....	225
Choice Boards (Tic-Tac-Toe, sometimes called noughts and crosses).....	225
Creativity Starter 1 – Crazy clothes.....	227
Creativity Starter 2 – Serenade a student.....	227
Creativity Starter 3 – Silence, please.....	227
Creativity Starter 4 – Conga line.....	228
Creativity Starter 5 – Be a cheerleader.....	228
Creativity Starter 6 – Stand on the desk and recite poetry.....	228
Creativity Starter 7 – Classroom zoo.....	229
Creativity Starter 8 – Imaginary bus ride.....	229

Creativity Starter 9 – Ghost time	229
Creativity Starter 10 – Celebrity dress-up day	230
Creativity Starter 11 – Crazy commands.....	230
Creativity Starter 12 – Exercise	230
Creativity Starter 13 – Animal sounds.....	231
Creativity Starter 14 – Paper airplane.....	231
Creativity Starter 15 – Spring cleaning.....	231
Creativity Starter 16 – Zany incident.....	232
Creativity Starter 17 – Karate lesson.....	232
Creativity Starter 18 – What’s in the suitcase?	232
Creativity Starter 19 – Airplane pilot.....	233
Creativity Starter 20 – Art museum	233
Creativity Starter 21 – Beach day	233
Creativity Starter 22 – Dance time	234
Creativity Starter 23 – Great singer.....	234
Creativity Starter 24 – Be a superhero	234
My Creativity Starter.....	235
12. Positivity, Celebration, and Final Thoughts	237
Introduction.....	237
Let’s Get Started.....	237
Positivity – Celebration 1.....	239
Teacher Colleague Support of the Year Award.....	239
Positivity – Celebration 2.....	239
World Language Student Support of the Year Award	239
Positivity – Celebration 3.....	239
World Language Parental Support of the Year Award	239
Positivity – Celebration 4.....	240
World Language Administrative Support of the Year Award.....	240
Positivity – Celebration 5.....	240
World Language Community Support of the Year Award.....	240
Positivity – Celebration 6.....	240
World Language Creative Modes of Instruction of the Year Award.....	240
Positivity – Celebration 7.....	241
World Language Creative Teaching Ideas of the Year Award	241
Positivity – Celebration 8.....	241
World Language Promotional Ideas of the Year Award.....	241

Positivity – Celebration 9.....	241
World Language Teacher Creativity Starter of the Year Award.....	241
Positivity – Celebration 10.....	242
World Language Teacher Creativity Improvement of the Year Award.....	242
Positivity – Celebration 11.....	242
World Language Student Academic Achievement of the Year Award.....	242
Positivity – Celebration 12.....	242
World Language Positive Attitude of the Year Award	242
Positivity – Celebration 13.....	242
World Language Creative Student of the Year Award	242
Positivity – Celebration 14.....	243
World Language Student Behavior of the Year Award	243
Positivity – Celebration 15.....	243
World Language Speaker of the Year Award	243
Positivity – Celebration 16.....	243
World Language Reader of the Year Award.....	243
Positivity – Celebration 17.....	244
World Language Writer of the Year Award.....	244
Positivity – Celebration 18.....	244
World Language Grammar Student of the Year Award	244
Positivity – Celebration 19.....	244
World Language Student Techie of the Year Award	244
Positivity – Celebration 20.....	244
World Language Social Media Student of the Year Award.....	244
Positivity – Celebration 21.....	245
World Language Most Improved Academic Achievement of the Year Award.....	245
Positivity – Celebration 22.....	245
World Language Most Improved Student Behavior of the Year Award	245
Positivity – Celebration 23.....	245
World Language Culture Project of the Year Award.....	245
Final Thoughts	269
<i>Appendix</i>	271
<i>Sources</i>	273

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Deb has published six books on language pedagogy as well as numerous articles in national and international language magazines, a chapter for a new book for beginning teachers, and was part of a translation team for an encyclopedia set. She is a keynote speaker and frequent workshop presenter.

Ms. Blaz was named to the All-USA Teacher team, Honorable Mention, by *USA Today* in 1998. She was also honored as the Indiana French Teacher of the Year in 1996 and received the Project E Excellence in Education award in 2000, the Dorothy S. Ludwig Excellence in Teaching, Secondary level award from the American Association of Teachers of French in 2020, as well as the Tom Alsop Distinguished World Language Publication/Research Award in 2020.

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Tom's teaching career spans 58 years of service to the profession. He taught middle school and high school Spanish for 35 years. The majority of that time, Tom taught at Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis. After retiring from high school teaching, he has taught Spanish at Butler University as an Adjunct for 23 years. Tom continues directing Spanish Teacher Summer Immersion Programs (*Aventuras Culturales*) in Madrid, Guadalajara, Mexico, and Havana, Cuba. Tom has an Apple Podcast, *Tom's World Language café*, and often presents at conferences around the country as well as doing workshops.

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During his career, Tom has been awarded a Rockefeller Fellowship, Lilly Teacher Creativity Fellowship, a Golden Apple Award, and the ACTFL Nelson Brooks Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Culture. Other awards that Tom has received during his career include the IFLTA World Language Teacher of the Year Award, the Indiana AATSP Teacher of the Year Award, the Ben Davis High School Teacher of the Year Award, and the Wayne Township Teacher of the Year Award. In 2017, Tom was inducted into the Salón de Enseñanza y Servicio by the Indiana AATSP. In 2020, the CSCTFL awarded Tom the Founders Award for his promotion of language learning, leadership, and dedication to the field of world languages. You can reach Tom at madridtomindy@gmail.com.

Preface

All the activities in this book are designed to be perfectly applicable to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, as well as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, and assessment (CEFR) descriptors. Very basic overviews of both, in our own words, can be found below for your reference. Also, throughout the book, TL represents the target language being taught.

ACTFL Proficiency Levels Overview

Novice

Communicates in TL when prompted, and generally at single word or phrase level

Low

Uses single words or short lists of words.

Mid

Uses short phrases, no creative language.

High

Uses fragments and occasionally uses single sentences.

Intermediate

Communicates in TL autonomously, and at sentence level

Low

In predictable situations, always uses single sentences when required. Can create original phrases.

Mid

Always uses sentences, and occasional strings of sentences.

High

Uses strings of longer sentences with connector words and often uses descriptive words.

Advanced

Communicates in TL using well-formed narratives, using paragraphs and a variety of tenses

Low

Can use paragraphs and past and future tenses with minimal errors.

Mid

Can ask and answer questions and actively express opinions in all time frames.

High

With few errors, can deal with unexpected situations and express complex thoughts.



Why Be Creative?

Introduction

Contrary to popular belief, everyone has a creative streak. You are reading this book because you are already interested in enhancing (or discovering) your creativity, but perhaps you have not considered all the benefits you can derive from being creative. In this this chapter, you will learn how truly creative you can be!

Creativity has two different aspects in education because it applies to two groups at once: the teacher and the students. So, who benefits from creativity? This question has an easy and obvious answer: creativity benefits everyone, both teachers and students – but who benefits most? That is a tough question to answer as virtually no research has been conducted on this topic because creativity is hard to define and measure. However, we all know that the teacher is the driving force in any classroom, and because you obviously are motivated to become more creative, it should be obvious that the focus of this book is and should be on YOU! Just as in an airplane when oxygen masks drop down and you are instructed to put your mask on first and then help others, as a teacher, your focus should be on yourself first and then later on your students.

In this book, the next eleven chapters show how you can increase your creativity and reap the benefits both personally and professionally – for

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you, and for your students. Chapter 11 discusses strategies that help you stimulate the creativity in your students. Before we get down to the nitty-gritty on how to stimulate and use your creativity, let's look at the many benefits that increasing your creative ideas will bring to *you*.

There are great benefits to being creative in your personal life as well as elsewhere. As journalist and speaker Warren Berger says, "Creativity has this amazing power to give you renewed enthusiasm and energy – even in the most difficult circumstances."

For Your Students

You are probably thinking that you want to be (more) creative for your students. Creativity on your part has demonstrated benefits and can increase learning in your classroom. In addition to improving retention, using creativity boosts participation, promotes active learning, motivates students, and creates fun and positivity for you and your students. Your modeling of creativity as well as inspiring, teaching, instilling, and demanding it in your students will benefit them.

Being creative means a break from routine. Routine is a big component for successful classroom management, but too much of it will allow students to sit back and tune out. A bit of spontaneity now and then will require more attention and careful listening on the part of students. Students used to the same thing every day will not be able to rely on routine, and will be alert, waiting excitedly to hear what you will do or have them do next. Breaking routine can be as simple as changing the setting (class outdoors or an in-school walk). Any sort of movement enhances long-term storage and retention of material. You can also change what *you* do: stand in a different part of the room, or delegate some of your roles to your students.

Varying activities places more emphasis on students to notice, manipulate, and/or even plan how results will be displayed. This literally enhances brain cells and memory through mental stimulation and the social gratification of successfully completing something new or unusual. Again, this is easy to do: give students the choice between two things ("Which should we do first?") or ask for student feedback. Thank them for their help and you get another boost in their investment in your class.

Finally, if you harness and focus your creativity, it will show you how to do this for them. Chapter 11 gives some suggestions on how to implement creativity in class.

For YOU

But this book is about *you*, and that should be the focus, not something external (though being good at your job is personally rewarding, of course). The above, a desire for your students' gratification, is what any teacher should want but, since being creative is a bit of extra work (idea, planning, implementation), what's in it for you? Answer: happiness! Shawn Achor, author of *The Happiness Advantage*, states that when *you* do better, your students do better, not the other way around, and that happiness always precedes success. So, reason #1 for being creative is that it will make you happy.

You Are Unique

You have your own physical traits, personality, intellect, curiosity, imagination, goals, ideas, and expectations. Some of those you have in common with your friends, but the combination of all those details makes you distinctly different from others. Can we become creative if we recognize our uniqueness and take time to be different and celebrate that? Of course! Remember, variety is the spice of life. Light up your personality and share that light with others.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction is twofold: job satisfaction (as in having fun teaching and watching students learn) and personal fulfillment. Looking at the professional aspect first, bringing your personal enthusiasms and interests into your lessons will not only allow students to see you in a new light, but it will be easy (they're your interests, after all) and fun (you already enjoy them, so why not do more?) If you love a sport, have an artistic inclination, a musical talent, or just an obsession with a certain topic or person, use that! I love to learn the origins of people's last names, I make things using origami, I can play the nose flute, and I know how to read palms...all things I incorporate in lessons at one time or another.

Now for the personal benefits: the next time you are in a museum staring at a masterpiece on the wall, don't just say "I wish I could do that." Try to simply appreciate what it took to generate such brilliant work and ask yourself what it is that *you* can create. Research shows that just being in the presence of artistic genius can be good for your health. But it is even better if you can do it, too. A common misconception is that creativity is artistic (books, music, etc.) – but anything can be looked at with a creative mind. Creativity can be deployed anywhere and on anything: a spreadsheet can become a plaything, a PowerPoint



Curiosity

My Sparks

Introduction

This book is about you: you are ALREADY so creative, but perhaps don't realize it. Here you will learn to list and harness your creative impulses in SO many ways! Use your skills (physical and mental) as well as activities – everyday ones or unusual ones – in more creative ways than ever and share them with others in new ways. Each section begins with a reflection piece followed by ways to flesh out and apply things you enjoy and are good at. This adds creativity and variety for your students and enjoyment for all!

What Lights You Up?

One of my favorite motivational sayings:

AN UNLIT CANDLE CANNOT LIGHT ANOTHER

So, what lights you up? Ask yourself:

- What do I really like to do?
- What am I good at?
- What do I look forward to doing?

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I really like to do this:	1.
	2.
I am good at this skill:	1.
	2.
I look forward to doing this <u>special</u> thing:	1.
	2.

Then, when you have the answers on this grid, ask yourself: how can I use this in class?

What Do I Like to Do?

Shawn Achor in his book *The Happiness Advantage* talks about what he calls the “Tetris Effect,” which tells us to learn to spot patterns of possibilities so we can seize those when we see them. That is what this chapter is all about. You have just listed some of your possibilities that you could act on. Next is to find happiness and that happiness will, in turn, lead to success. Let me share with you what I would list in that grid, and what those skills have led me to do as a teacher. In this chapter “I” and “me” refers to only one author; we wanted to show you ways of using the above grid successfully.

Arts

Using myself (Deb) as an example: I like to make things (crafts), so I search for opportunities to do things like that. For National French week, we make red, white, and blue bead creations to wear to represent the language we are taking that then initiate discussions with other students about the class and subject matter. We also decorate all the lockers in the school with positive comments in the target language (TL),

ACTFL: Culture, all proficiency levels, even when done in TL; **CEFR:** A2

with the same results: students ask others for help in reading them, and our notes stay up for months as they are much appreciated.

When studying Paris, we might use a template to carve a bar of Ivory soap into a replica of the Arc de Triomphe while studying Napoléon’s victories and legacy, or appreciate the challenges Eiffel faced in constructing his tower by building our own out of spaghetti and mini marshmallows.

Stop and Think

Stop and try at least one of these! Go back to your answers in the grid at the beginning of the chapter and see what you can come up with!

Sometimes the hardest part is not to find a topic, but to decide how to use it. Figure 3.3 is a list of activities/products you can refer to for inspiration.

Figure 3.3 Products

A	caption	dialogue	glossary
action plan	card game	diary	gossip column
adventure	cartoon	dictionary entry	graph
advertisement	CD cover	diorama	graphic organizer
advice column	celebrity profile	directions	greeting card
album	ceramic	discussion	guidebook
anagram	charade	display	H
analysis of samples	chart	documentary	haiku
anecdote	characterization	dramatization	hand puppet
animation	checklist	drawing	handbook
apparatus	children's book	E	handout
artifact collection	choral reading	editorial	hat
audiotape recording	cinquain	editorial cartoon	headline
autobiography	classified ad	equipment	hieroglyphic
anecdote	clothing	essay	history
avatar	collage	etching	hypothesis
award	collection	exaggeration	I
B	comedy act	exhibit	illustration
ballad	comic book	explanation	imprint
ballet	comment (blog)	eyewitness account	Instagram
banner	commentary	F	instrument
biographical	commercial	fabric	interior monologue
presentation	comparison	fairy tale	interview
bio-poem	computer program	field trip	invention
block picture story	conversation	film	invitation
blog	costume	finger puppet(s)	J
blueprints	couplet	flag	jigsaw puzzle
book	coupon	flannel board	jingle
book jacket	creative writing	flash cards	job description
booklet	critique	flip chart	joke
bookmark	crossword puzzle	flow chart	journal
book report	D	food	K
brainteaser	dance	free verse	kite
brochure	debate	friendly letter	kitsch
bullet chart	demonstration	furniture	L
bulletin board	description	G	law
business letter	design a structure	gadget	learning center
C	new product	gallery	lecture
calendar	new animal	game	
campaign speech	diagram		

(Continued)



Imagination and Creativity

Introduction

Using your imagination instead of just your personal experiences can add a great new dimension to your teaching. Borrow some ideas from industrial think tanks (like synectics), little quirks of the target language (TL) being studied, or stand-up comics techniques to get a laugh. Humor is great for the soul (and the classroom) and has been shown to stimulate long-term retention. Try these and you will not be disappointed!

Flights of Fancy

Synectics

One of my favorite activities to stimulate creative thinking is synectics, which I learned about when our school was changing to a block schedule, and we were investigating new strategies. This is usually done as a whole-class activity, but it is also quite possible to do with a partner or even alone; I do it all by myself when searching for a creative way to describe something.

Step 1 is to describe the object/person/idea: “you are a [fill in the topic]. How do you look and feel?” Write down your ideas. (If you can get someone else to help with this, groups are often more creative than

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- Give a “bravo” point each time students manage to work one into a conversation or composition.
- Teach them to students as a call-and-response signal to start class, end an activity, etc. (Example in English: teacher says “See you later” and students respond “alligator”).

Humor

Humor is possibly the very best teaching strategy of all. Using humor in the classroom contributes to a positive learning atmosphere by reducing tensions and making more amicable student-teacher relationships. It also keeps students interested and motivated. In addition, humor helps less sociable students feel part of the class/peer group and they are then more likely to join in communicative activities. Brain research also shows that using humor and laughter increases retention. It also stimulates both creative and critical thinking.

You know the standard silliness that appeals to children of any age: anything bathroom-oriented, silly accidents (like slipping on a banana peel), sounds like “yum” or burps, silly curse words (geez Louise, dad-gummit, etc.). Find what those are in the TL culture and insert those occasionally in lessons, stories, etc. Whenever possible, try to look for something humorous in any situation, and if it’s not there, add it.

Don’t forget to insert humor in a worksheet, test, or quiz. Put in celebrity names, teachers’ or students’ names, silly geographical (the name of your town or school) or cultural references, or current (“What is the Little Prince’s favorite free time occupation? Listening to Prince’s music.”).

Don’t overlook the usefulness of a good “Dad joke,” riddle, or pun. Translate from English into your TL and have fun!

Internet as Inspiration

If you find something interesting or entertaining, use it in the classroom; students will like it, too.

- A couple of years ago, I discovered the popular Internet “shame” photos where pets were photographed with a sign (around their neck or nearby) saying what their transgression was: I ate the birthday cake, peed on the hamster, etc. I said to myself: my students are studying the past tense – how fun would it

ACTFL: Presentational, Intermediate Mid and above; **CEFR:** A2+



Modes of Instruction

Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules

Introduction

This chapter offers 11 space capsules* with different modes of instruction. Choose different modes to try out as the school year progresses. Put on your creativity and positivity hat for the journey. Toast to your creativity and positivity! Some of the modes of instruction include comprehensible input (CI), teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling (TPRS), multiple intelligences, differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, and more. Take risks, have fun, and show and share your creativity and positivity. Variety is the spice of life!

*Please refer to the Detailed Table of Contents to view a list of each of the 11 modes of instruction space capsules.

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CAPSULE 3 – COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT (CI)

GETTING STARTED

1. Why change to CI teaching strategy?
2. Set a date for the changes.
3. How will you do this?
4. What will be some obstacles to overcome?
5. Will using CI improve the student-learning of the TL?
6. How can you make the use of CI as a powerful creative tool?

BE FLEXIBLE!

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Hand out a sheet, or send digitally, to students with everyday TL words you will use all the time in class.
2. Try to speak 90% TL with your students.
3. Use mini stories for practice. **(BE CURIOUS, IMAGINE, CREATE!)**
4. Explain basic vocabulary and grammar by speaking only in your TL.

ACTFL: Interpersonal, all levels; **CEFR:** A1

5. Ask students questions in the TL and have them answer in the TL.

ACTFL: Interpersonal, all levels; **CEFR:** A1

6. Have them ask you questions in the TL.

7. Use CI throughout the year. If unable to use CI all the time, mix it with some of your own tried-and-true strategies.

TIME TO BRAINSTORM

1. Do a search online and find out how to use CI. Be sure to look up the experts in CI.
2. Speak with a colleague who uses CI. Ask her/him/them about successes, failures, and helpful tips.

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3. Speak with heads of departments and ask them about their favorite CI teaching and learning activities.
4. How will you prepare students to try the CI method of world-language learning?
5. Imagine and invent some fun learning games for students to read, write, speak, and listen only in the TL.

CALL TO ACTION

1. Celebrate your decision to use CI with your colleagues.
2. Use a class roster to record each day when students speak only in the TL.
3. Encourage your students to speak only in the TL.
4. **DO IT!**
5. Award extra credit or world language stickers to students who speak only in their TL.
6. Toast to your IMAGINATION. Then take notes to make it even better next time!

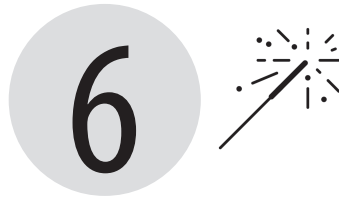
The idea(s) on this page that I'd like to try FIRST:

The first thing I need to do to implement this is: _____

How did things go? What worked well? Why?

Will I use these ideas again in the future? What changes are needed?





Teaching Ideas

Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules

Introduction

This chapter offers 13 space capsules* with a variety of teaching ideas. Choose new ideas to try out throughout the school year by putting on your creativity and positivity hat for the journey. Try something NEW! Some of the teaching ideas include strategies for grammar, vocabulary, holidays, food, dance, music, painters, writers and more. Toast to your creativity and positivity. RISK-TAKE!!! HAVE FUN!!! SHOW AND SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY/POSITIVITY!!! VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE!!!

*Please refer to the Detailed Table of Contents to view a list of each of the 13 space capsules!

DOI: 10.4324/9781003293255-7



CAPSULE 11 – SKITS/THEATER

GETTING STARTED

1. What value do skits have in learning a world language? Do skits provide ways for students to orally communicate and socialize in the TL?
2. Select a skit for students to practice and perform in class. How will you grade the students' work?
3. Provide time for students to prepare the skit. It could be a short fun skit, a shortened form of a fairy tale, or a scene from an easy-to-follow play. Let your students write a short play in the TL.
4. Use everyday pieces of life to use as skits: problems at home, car trouble, at a party, at a dance, a funny episode in Spanish class, etc. **(BE CURIOUS, IMAGINE, CREATE!)**
5. When will you do this? How long will the skits be in the world language?

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Will you use groups of three or four or work in pairs? How will you grade the skits? Use an easy-to-use grading scale: 5 – outstanding, 4 – good, 3 – average, 2 – so-so, 1 – needs work, very weak.
2. Have students dress up for their skit, bring props, and include music in the background.
3. Have students use short stories to act out. Act out a chapter from a short novel.
4. Have one student in each group be the director. Video each presentation!
5. Accept your role as teacher-facilitator. **(BE FLEXIBLE!)**
6. Set a time limit for students to complete work.

ACTFL: Presentational,
Novice High and above;
CEFR: A2

TIME TO BRAINSTORM

1. Speak with your colleagues and share ideas about how to prepare and teach skits for world language class.

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2. Speak with a theater, drama teacher in your school. Get some acting tips from her/him/them.
3. Invite a guest speaker/actor/actress to speak to the class about acting.
4. Invite the head of your department to watch your class in action as they perform their skits.
5. Have a skit competition. Appoint two students to be judges.
6. Perform your skits at a PTO meeting or at a World Language Dinner Theater.

CALL TO ACTION

1. **DO IT!**
2. **CELEBRATE** your students' successes! Award a **Golden Globe** or **Oscar** to the best actors/actresses!
3. Award special prizes to the best group performance.
4. Publicize the winning actors/actresses on social media, the school newspaper, and school website. Be sure to get parental approval.
5. Have special awards for the best costumes, musical background, or song and best director!
6. **CELEBRATE CREATIVITY!** Take photos of each group of actors and use as digital posters!

The idea(s) on this page that I'd like to try FIRST:

The first thing I need to do to implement this is: _____

How did things go? What worked well? Why?

Will I use these ideas again in the future? What changes are needed?



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Promotional Ideas

Goal Setting, Innovation, and Implementation Capsules

Introduction

This chapter provides nine space capsules* that help promote world languages. Choose different ideas to try out as the school year progresses. Put on your creativity and positivity hat for the journey. Toast to your creativity and positivity! Some of the promotional ideas include a talent show, podcast or radio show, market day, world language clubs, and more! TAKE RISKS!!! HAVE FUN!!! SHOW AND SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY/POSITIVITY!!! VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE!

*Please refer to the Detailed Table of Contents to view a list of each of the nine promotional ideas space capsules!

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CAPSULE 1 – TALENT SHOW

GETTING STARTED

1. How can I plan a **talent show**? Why do this? What are the benefits?
2. Do an online search for information about world language talent shows.
3. What are your goals? When and how will you do the talent shows? Will all world languages be represented in the talent show?
4. What do you need to do to prepare? (**BE CURIOUS, IMAGINE, CREATE!**)
5. What results do you expect? Will you invite parents, other relatives, administrators, etc.?
6. How can I accomplish my language and culture learning targets via a talent show? (**BE FLEXIBLE!**)

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What are your categories? Song, dance, speeches, comedy – joke telling, skits – plays, poetry readings, musical instruments – guitar, etc., with world language music?
- ACTFL:** Presentational, Intermediate Mid and above; **CEFR:** B1+
2. Select a student host from each language to present the acts in each world language. Make sure all presentations are in the world language.
 3. Be a facilitator and cheer leader as you walk about the class while the students prepare for the show. Encourage all to be in the talent show. Award a grade for participation.
 4. Video all.
 5. Practice several times before the event. You may wish to practice before or after school.

TIME TO BRAINSTORM

1. Brainstorm with a music teacher and a drama/theater teacher. Listen to their suggestions on how to stage a talent show. What props will you need? How many people do you invite?

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2. Where will the show take place? Will you charge admission? Use the money from ticket sales to buy materials for the world language department and for travel/study scholarships.
3. Invite members of the community to judge the events. Try to have native speakers as judges.
4. Have the hosts say a few words about the importance of world language study.
5. Did you meet your goals? What were your successes?
6. Speak with your students. Did they enjoy the learning experiences? Why or why not?

CALL TO ACTION

1. **DO IT!**
2. **CELEBRATE** creativity! Award prizes and/or certificates to the best individual and small group performers. Have Golden Oscar, Silver Tony, Bronze Emmy, or Golden Globe awards.
3. Publicize the event before and after. **ENCOURAGE** the community to attend – anyone interested in supporting world language study! Publicize on websites, social media, YouTube, community newspapers, flyers, etc.
4. Invite TV stations to attend and help promote the event before and after.
5. Invite all administrators in your school, the school superintendent and school board to attend!
6. Take video of the entire show and interview the guests on your version of the red carpet!

The idea(s) on this page that I'd like to try **FIRST**:

The first thing I need to do to implement this is: _____

How did things go? What worked well? Why?

Will I use these ideas again in the future? What changes are needed?



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CAPSULE 4 – DINNER THEATER

GETTING STARTED

1. Why have a **dinner theater**? What are some products, practices, and perspectives of the culture that we can observe during the dinner theater?
2. When do you want to do a dinner theater? What students will participate? What will you do at the theater? Which world languages will participate? One, two, all of them?
3. What materials will you need? Where will you have the **dinner theater**?
4. How long will the dinner theater last? (**BE CURIOUS, IMAGINE, CREATE!**)

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Will your students perform a play in the TL?
2. Will your students sing some songs in the TL?
3. Will your students be wait staff and take orders in the TL?
4. Will your language students make the meal? Will it be international cuisine? (**BE FLEXIBLE!**)
5. Which students will lead organize and lead the dinner theater team as they plan the event?

TIME TO BRAINSTORM

1. Applaud the **ACTIVE** learning going on now. **APPLAUD** your students. Be a cheerleader!
2. Speak with colleagues in other schools who have tried dinner theaters.
3. Search online to see if there have been similar events done around the country.
4. Have students only speak the TL during the dinner theater.

ACTFL: Interpersonal, Intermediate Mid and above; **CEFR:** B1+

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5. Pick a fun play for the students to act out. Pick a play that students can do without a super effort.

ACTFL: Presentational, Intermediate Mid and above; **CEFR:** B1+

6. Select some poems in the world language for the students to recite in a dramatic reading of the poem.

ACTFL: Presentational, Novice High and above; **CEFR:** A2

7. Ask parents and the community to assist you with this project. They could be great sources to help promote the event. Use social media!

8. Sell tickets to the event. Use any profits to purchase educational materials for the world language classroom or offer a small scholarship to a deserving world language student.

9. Allow students to make posters to promote the event.

CALL TO ACTION

1. **DO IT!** List the benefits to your students and the department before doing this.

2. Publicize your success at school and on social media!

3. **CELEBRATE CREATIVITY!** Create posters – digital or other – and spread them around in school and on social media!

4. Take pictures of the event.

5. Video the event!

6. Invite local TV stations to attend and promote the event!

7. Invite a well-known political figure to the event!

8. Invite a well-known athlete to the event!

The idea(s) on this page that I’d like to try FIRST:

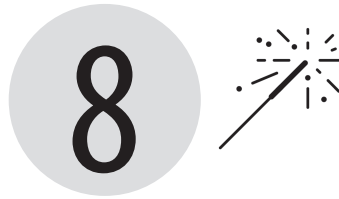
The first thing I need to do to implement this is: _____

How did things go? What worked well? Why?

Will I use these ideas again in the future? What changes are needed?



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Support

Making the Creative Journey Fun and Easy

Introduction

This chapter provides **sources of support** to make the **creative journey fun and easy**. There are two levels of support, human support and technology support. Included in the human support are six sources of support: our teacher colleagues, our students, parents, administrators, those living and working in the community and also our own unique supporter, ourselves. We need to toot our own horn.

The seventh source of support is technology support, including computer apps, world language software, games, social media and other useful technology sources that can be found online.

These levels of support make our creative journey more fun and easy. There is strength in numbers.

There are two **Planner Support Pages**, one for the human support sources and one for the technology support sources. These pages allow us, as well as our sources of support, to plan and evaluate how things went on the creative journey. You can find one of these at the end of the human support sources section (6-Myself) and the other at the end of the technology sources.



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Planner Support Page for Human Sources/Date _____

Please complete the answers below as well as the Rubric after you complete your task.

Sources of Support – Circle the support group you belong to and then answer the questions that follow. Be sure to complete the Rubric/Rating section at the bottom of this page.

Source of Support – Circle the one that pertains to you.

Teacher Colleague(s), Students, Parents, Administrators, Community, Myself

1. What did you do? What did you want the students in the world language class(es) to do? When did you do this and why?

2. What information and material did you need? Did you have all you needed to complete the task?

3. Did you complete your plan? Did you have fun? Did the students have fun?

4. Rubric/Rating - Circle **your rating. How was your support experience in the world language classroom? Please answer the question that follows. THANKS!**

5- outstanding, 4 - good, 3 - average, 4 - weak, 5 - terrible.



How can I improve what I did? Would you like to help again? Why or why not?



Sources of Support 7 – Technology

Using Technology to Spark Creativity

Creativity and technology *do* work together, but in terms of creativity, we need to think of it less as playing games or watching videos and instead consider using it more like a tool. Technology has enabled creative teachers to explore new paths and imagine new possibilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a catalyst as well, first creating a need, providing a goal, and so many sites offered free memberships and tutoring that there has been an explosion of avenues opened. Surveys of students all agree: learning is more interesting when technology is involved.

There are several steps to go through before using technology. I personally use the SAMR method: do I want to **S**ubstitute, **A**ugment, **M**odify or **R**edefine an activity that I would like to do in a more creative way? That will depend on my goals: what should I do, and what should my students be able to do? Bloom's Digital Taxonomy (many examples can be found online) also has a great model to show ways to use technology instead of previous strategies.

Once goals are decided upon, proceed to examine the technology needs, and decide how much to spend, and if not free, where the money can be found to pay for it. I have been careful to include only free resources in this chapter. Another issue is availability: check with your technology team to see if a site is allowed or blocked on your students' devices, or to get it whitelisted so they can use it. You don't want any nasty surprises, such as spending time making a stupendous presentation only to find out they can't see it or use it in the way you'd like it to be used.



But first, you need the creative idea. Here are several pages of resources and suggestions:

Social Media for Ideas on Presentation and Collaboration

The first way technology can aid with creativity is by giving us the opportunity to view others' creativity, and for creative teachers to share (and even market) their own. These opportunities occur mostly through social media: Facebook, Instagram, blogs, YouTube, and others.

BLOGS AND PODCASTS

Both of these are forms of social media used for networking. Which one to choose mostly depends on if you prefer reading or listening to discussions and information on teaching a TL.

A blog is designed for reading. Blog entries are organized like a diary and posted on a website. On a blog, teachers can talk about anything they want, interview others, play music, and share struggles and successes. All it takes is access to a photo or video recording device to make your own blog. You can vent about a topic or situation, engage in online discussions, and share creative ideas on social media platforms, which are usually read on a computer. Blogs enable us to post whatever we want and comment on it or receive comments from colleagues, but not in real time. Feedback may come quickly or slowly as readers access your blog when they have time.

How often do you need to blog? Most teachers only blog when they are moved to share something. Your audience is whatever you choose: fellow educators, students, and parents.

Reading someone else's blog is great if you feel stuck or need a mentor, too. Some free sites for creating teacher blogs are Edublogs.org, Blogger.com (managed by Google), Wix.com, and Wordpress.com. I suggest you find and follow a few bloggers to get your creativity stimulated by what others are doing. Some examples are listed here (there are MANY more to be found):

Spanish

www.funforspanishteachers.com For preschool and elementary level teachers.

<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-spanish/> For middle school and high school levels.



<http://palmyraspanish1.blogspot.com/> Comprehensible input (CI) ideas from three teachers.

<https://www.creativelanguageclass.com/> Two teachers share creative ideas since 2012.

<https://srojeda.com/> For advanced classes.

French

<https://thefrenchcorner.net/> By a middle school teacher.

<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-french/> A collection of blogs from French teachers.

Multiple Languages

The Motivated Classroom on Apple Podcasts my personal favorite, both theory and practical suggestions.

<https://language-gym.com/> French, Italian, German, Spanish and more.

<https://wlclassroom.com/> World Language Classroom collaboration site.

A podcast is designed for listening; it is only audio. Podcasts can be listened to on a variety of devices. Podcasts encourage speaking skills in the teacher and listening skills in whoever listens. Podcasts can be motivational monologues, interviews, or even online courses where new skills are taught. Because podcasts are audio, you can also hear sarcasm or irony, humor, and intelligence or knowledge in the speaker's voice, as well as intonation and accent if a native speaker has made it.

Podcasts generally are done on some sort of schedule, so people know when to tune in to a new one; many are weekly or monthly.

How does a podcast spark creativity? This book is a good example, as it is due to a discussion authors Tom and Deb had on Tom's podcast, World Language Café: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/toms-world-language-cafe/id1366590907>

Other Podcasts to Check Out

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/preaching-to-acquire/id1487871072> Using CI techniques.





The Path of Persistence

Creative Evaluation/How Did You Do?

Introduction

Persistence is necessary for any creative endeavor. Creative people need to encourage creativity and overcome difficulties or failure through **persistence** to continue to be creative. After a presentation of the importance of **being persistent** in your march to creativity, there are some **super-creative ideas** on how to keep going when things get challenging. This chapter closes with a group of **self-assessment cards** that allow you **to focus on details and rate** the good and the not-so-good of your creative endeavors. **What were your successes? What were your failures?** Did you learn from your failures? What will be next? These cards provide you with ideas to help focus on the present, past, and what you can do in the future to improve what happens on your creativity journey.

Self-assessment cards include these topics: Your Persistence, Your New Creative Teaching Strategies, Your Support Groups, Your Expectations, Your Newest Super-Creative Teaching Strategies, Your Successes, Your Failures, Your Positivity, and Rewarding Others. **Please feel free to print copies of the cards.**



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Self-Assessment Card 1 – My Persistence

1. Were you persistent enough in your efforts to be more creative? Why or why not? _____

2. How can you be less persistent? More persistent? _____

3. What good things happened when you were persistent? _____

4. How can you improve your persistence with any future projects? _____

5. What plan do you want to create for yourself to improve your persistence? _____

Rating for How Your Persistence Turned Out

Circle the best answer.

Excellent

Good

So, so

Not good

Awful



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10

My Creativity Recipe Cards

Introduction

This chapter contains Creativity Recipe Cards. Each recipe contains portions of the Six Steps to Success at being creative: a touch of curiosity, a dash of imagination, creativity, goal-setting, implementation, and evaluation, on a wide variety of topics that apply to any world language.

The purpose of the recipe cards is to make it fun for you to prepare classes. You can use the recipe cards when you want to crank up your inner creativity. The cards help create situations in which the students get to work in groups, interact, and do lots of fun communicative activities and play games, etc. while learning their language. The goal is to let the students use their TL while they participate in the recipe.

There are 22 categories of cards with three recipes (A, B, C) for each category. A cards are Appetizers, B cards are Main Courses, and C cards are Desserts – 66 cards in all. Recipes are organized into appropriate levels of language learning. There are ten recipes for Level 1, six for Level 2, and six for the Advanced Level. There is also a set of card templates the reader may use to create her/his own recipes.

The recipes are divided into levels. In each level, there are cards for vocabulary, grammar, and culture. Level 1 has six vocabulary recipes, two grammar recipes, and two recipes for culture. Level 2 and the

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Advanced Level each have two vocabulary recipes, two grammar recipes, and two recipes for culture.

Level 1 vocabulary includes greetings, clothing, weather, food, and more. Level 1 grammar uses the verb “to have” and more. Level 1 culture includes Christmas carols and more.

Level 2 vocabulary includes a shopping spree and more. Level 2 grammar focuses on commands and more. Level 2 culture includes dance and more.

The Advanced Level vocabulary includes hospital and more. Advanced grammar focuses on the present subjunctive and more. Advanced culture includes poet’s day and more.

Enjoy using the 22 recipes as needed throughout the school year. If you like to cook, use these recipes **often**. There are templates for Creativity Recipe Cards at the end for you to use for creating **your own** TL creativity recipes. **HAVE FUN!**

Celebrate the creative chef inside you. For added fun, **wear a chef’s hat** when you use the recipe card so the kids know you are trying out a new recipe **From the kitchen of (your name)!** Explain to them the ingredients, how to prepare them, how long it will take, how to serve, and what the results will be. Using a short, on-card rating, ask them if they liked the appetizer, main course, and dessert. Have the students make their own chef’s hat and wear them as well.

DO IT! Enjoy the recipes. **CELEBRATE** your renewed **POSITIVITY**. **HAVE FUN!**

Clothing – Creativity Recipe Card 6

6A-Appetizer

Ingredients

Pack your suitcase with 25 articles of clothing. Bring your suitcase to class. Ahead of time, prepare a handout with the 25 clothing words in your world language of the items in your suitcase. You could also put the list on a screen and not use a handout. Tell the class in your world language that you are going on a trip. Pull out an item of clothing and say in your world language you “have” that item of clothing.

ACTFL: Presentational,
Novice Low; **CEFR:** A1

How to do

Students are to work in a group of four and draw or design an online ad for three items of clothing. They are to label all in their world language. Have one group present to another group in their teams of four. Award a prize to the best designer!

Time to do

20 minutes

Serves 4 to 30 students

Results

Who liked this appetizer? (Circle the response to this recipe.)

Everyone almost everyone

some none

From the kitchen of _____



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6B-Main Course

Ingredients

Use the list of “articles of clothing” that you used from the Appetizer card. Students are to plan a fashion show in their world language. Students are to work in groups of four.

How to do

Students are to plan the fashion show. One student in the group of four is to narrate in her/his/their world language what each of the other three is wearing.

ACTFL: Presentational,
Novice High; **CEFR:** A2

Students who are modeling are to walk down a makeshift runway. Have students who are narrating say “I like” the dress, shoes, etc.

The narrator for each group can also say “(Name of student) is wearing” in her/his/their world language. Award an Oscar for the best fashion show. Props are fine! Wear sunglasses, lavish jewelry, earrings, nose rings, lip rings, etc. Incorporate the colors of the clothing in the description when possible. Have students take turns being the announcer.

Time to do

25 minutes

Serves 4 to 30 students

Results

Who liked this main course? (Circle your response to this recipe.)

Everyone almost everyone

some none

From the kitchen of _____



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6C-Dessert

Ingredients

Students are to use their list of clothing vocabulary from the Appetizer card. You need to prepare eight clothing words. Write out the words onto paper and cut each word up to use during the Win-Lose-or-Draw game.

ACTFL: Interpretive,
Novice Low; **CEFR:** A1

How to do

Play Win-Lose-or-Draw. Divide the class into two teams. Each team is to have a world language team name. Take turns.

Appoint one student to keep score. Give a “No Homework Assignment” award to the winning team. Appoint two talented student drawers from each team to go the front of room. Hand one drawer from one team two articles of clothing to draw. Her/his/their team is to guess what the two items are. They have one minute to guess the two articles of clothing. The drawer for the second team is up next. She/he/they is to draw two articles of clothing and her/his/their team has one minute to guess the two articles of clothing in their world language. Have two rounds with each team taking one turn in each of the two rounds. In the event of a tie, both teams win the “No Homework Assignment” award!

Time to do

10 minutes

Serves 2 to 30 students

Results

Who liked this dessert? (Circle the class teacher response to this recipe.)

Everyone almost everyone

some none

From the kitchen of _____



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My Own Recipes Created by ME

Please create and use your own Recipe Cards as well as those in this book!

Level **Topic** _____

My Creativity Recipe #

ACTFL Proficiency Level:

A – Appetizer

Ingredients

How to do

Time to do

Serves

Results

Who liked this appetizer? (Circle the response to this recipe.)

Everyone almost everyone

some none

From the kitchen of _____

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ACTFL Proficiency Level: _____

B – Main Course

Ingredients

How to do

Time to do

Serves

Results

Who liked the main course?
(Circle the response to this recipe.)

Everyone almost everyone

some none

From the kitchen of _____



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ACTFL Proficiency Level: _____

C – Dessert

Ingredients

How to do

Time to do

Serves

Results

Who liked this dessert? (Circle the response to this recipe.)

Everyone almost everyone

some none

From the kitchen of _____



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Stimulating Creativity in My Students

Introduction

This chapter focuses on methods to stimulate creativity in students: first, by modeling it yourself, but other strategies such as using curiosity, hooks, RAFT assignments for writing, chat mats for speaking, and choice boards for differentiated homework or virtual assignments. Tom has also contributed 24 low-prep and FUN creativity starter cards for an easy-to-use **creativity boost**, as well as a template for creating your own.

Modeling

Now it is time to focus on how to stimulate creativity in your students. You have modeled it well for them by using all the strategies in the first ten chapters. Now, harness students' curiosity with hooks, give them chat mats to enhance speaking, and RAFT assignments or choice boards for differentiated products that appeal to their unique talents, and which are MUCH more fun to evaluate since they will lack the cookie-cutter sameness of more structured specifications. Here are 24 low-prep and truly FUN creativity starters for an easy boost, and a template for creating your own inspirations.

The best stimulation for creativity is to model it, so you are on the right track in wanting to be more creative. Be the model by trying new activities, introducing new people and cultures to your students. Make

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If you feel creatively challenged, use the online RAFT generator for inspiration: <http://classroomcommons.blogspot.com/2013/11/historyfix-raft-writing-prompts-for.html>

Placemats/Chat Mats

Even if you have not ditched your textbook for comprehensive input (CI) teaching as I have, a placemat is indispensable as support for conversations and writing. These are a one- or two-sided papers

containing key words and phrases for the unit being studied, plus common exclamations, transitions, or grammar charts. With questions and answers right in front of them, students will quickly be able to converse or write in the TL. Amy Leonard has a wonderful set of free, highly recommended chat mats for Spanish, French, and German at *Amy's Chat Mats* (<https://wakelet.com/wake/mJIOim9REP4WFyhLBi9KE>). Bethanie Drew offers weekend chat maps in Spanish, French and German as well (<https://aventurasnuevas.wordpress.com/2018/09/03/weekend-chat-update-structures-to-support-student-learning-and-teacher-sanity-part-4/>).

ACTFL: Interpersonal,
Novice Mid and
above; **CEFR:** A1

Choice Boards (Tic-Tac-Toe, sometimes called noughts and crosses)

A choice board gives students voice and choice in how they practice a topic or theme. It is a grid of three (or five) rows across and the same number of

columns, which is why it is often called a Tic-Tac-Toe board. The grid is populated with a wide variety of assignments carefully placed so that in any one direction, there is a variety of tasks: speaking, reading, listening, and writing. It takes a while to create a good one, as you also need to consider the rigor of the activities in every possible direction. Figure 11.2 is a sample choice board for the beginning of the year Level 1 Novice students.

There are a variety of ways to assign a choice board. You can tell students to do all the activities in a row horizontally, vertically, or diagonally (as in tic-tac-toe). You can also put the product you want everyone

ACTFL: All types, all
levels; **CEFR:** all levels

Figure 11.2 Tic-tac-toe Greetings

ACTFL Novice Low level		
Greet five classmates, and write down who you greeted, and what they answered.	Read the story and write answers to the questions.	Sort the vocabulary phrases on Jamboard into matching pairs.
Do the EdPuzzle on greetings.	Make a cartoon about greeting a Spanish-speaking foreign exchange student.	With a classmate and both of you pretending to be someone famous, make a FlipGrid of you greeting each other.
Read the rebus story aloud to a classmate, replacing the pictures with the appropriate words.	Watch the video and write down two tips for a visiting American on how to properly greet someone in that country.	Identify the people on the list as tú or usted.

to do at the center and assign completion of all activities in a row in any direction that goes through the center square. You can assign the board and tell students to do any three (or four or five) squares that touch. Students will of course usually choose the one that sounds easiest or more fun, so the ones nearby need to enlarge the demands by assigning tasks that require students to perform in a way that is less in their comfort zones. I generally specify how many activities I require them to accomplish in a class period to keep them focused on the task at hand.

The idea(s) that I'd like students to try

FIRST: _____

What topic(s) can I use this for? _____

Creativity Starter 4 – Conga line

ACTFL: Culture: practices, Novice Mid; **CEFR:** A1

Teacher activity: Play the *Conga* song by Gloria Estefan from your smartphone or music list. Dance around the room as if leading a Conga line.

Students may comment in the TL while you dance.

Student activity: Have students do the Conga dance. Choose a student to lead the students around the room in song and dance. Students are to speak in the TL.

Creativity Starter 5 – Be a cheerleader

ACTFL: Presentational, Novice Mid; **CEFR:** A1

Teacher activity: Dress up as a cheerleader and lead a cheer in your world language. Keep wearing your outfit for the rest of the day.

Student activity: Have students repeat the cheer in the TL.

Choose several students to lead the cheer that you modeled above.

Creativity Starter 6 – Stand on the desk and recite poetry

ACTFL: Presentational, Intermediate Low; **CEFR:** A2

Teacher activity: Stand on top of your classroom desk and recite a famous poem by a great poet who is from a country where your world language is spoken. Students can respond in the TL. Be careful. Have two students help you get on and off the desk.

Student activity: Have students study a TL poem and recite the poem in pairs in the TL. Allow two students to recite the poem from atop your teacher desk!

12

Positivity, Celebration, and Final Thoughts

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to **positivity and celebration**. It asks, “What have you done with the activities in this book?” It also contains ideas to help create and then plan a **positivity/celebration event** to celebrate your creative successes. **CELEBRATIONS** are a **NECESSARY** part of creativity. Successes should be celebrated, and celebrations encourage continued creativity. Give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done, and reward others who helped you get there! Remember, positivity and celebration translate into super-promotion for your world language program, administrators, world language teachers, students, community, and parents!

There are 23 suggested awards to give, as well as printable certificate templates to use. At the end are some final thoughts (reflections and advice) from the authors.

Let’s Get Started

Let’s be **POSITIVE** and let’s **CELEBRATE!**

Each creative idea is a treasure, not to be lost in our creative journey.

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Let's remember our successes and make our creative journey **the reason we are here and why we teach!**

Be the one who can say, **"I DID IT! I WAS CREATIVE!!!"**

Let's start **ending our sentences with exclamation points instead of periods!** It is fine to include three exclamation points once in a while.

While we are at it, let's sometimes end sentences with **ten exclamation points!!!!!!!!!!**

Let's also try to do **at least one Positivity Celebration** for those who help us. For some added celebration, see the Special Note below.

Let's make others and ourselves feel really good! Let's recognize and celebrate creativity!

HAVE FUN!

Special Note: Teachers may present the awards in each category only to their students and supporters, or the entire world language department could have a special awards night toward the end of the school year. **You can call the night World Language Awards Night** and invite everyone. Or make it **World Languages Oscar Night!** Have world language students perform in all languages in skits, poetry readings, songs, native dress, play musical instruments, etc. Place each award/certificate into a nice frame before presenting the awards. Have everyone dress up and walk on the red carpet. Take videos of the highlights of the events. Send the videoclips to local TV stations. Post pictures and videos on social media. Send pictures and descriptors of the special event to local newspapers. Include all digitally for the online newspapers. Be sure to invite the Principal, Assistant Principal, deans, counselors, coaches, band directors. Go for it! Invite the mayor of the city, the governor, the city council, or TV celebrities! Write an article for a world language publication about your special night. Have everyone dress up. Wear tuxes and gowns if you really want to be fancy!

Credit for illustration art on each award certificate/ID 78190943

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Positivity – Celebration 4

World Language Administrative Support of the Year Award

Invite some administrators who have supported you throughout the year to an afternoon or evening world language event to honor a counselor, an Assistant Principal, Principal, Dean of Students, Superintendent, or a School Board member. Honor the administrative supporters with a **World Language Administrative Support Award!**

Invite your students and parents to be guests. Provide drinks and chips. Let students perform some skits in their world language and sing some songs in their world languages. You may choose to make these awards at the end of the school year at the **World Language Awards Night!**

Positivity – Celebration 5

World Language Community Support of the Year Award

Invite some members of the community, such as business leaders who have supported you by being guest speakers, scholarship supporters for student trips, or scholarship supporters for college students who plan to study world languages. These supporters may include politicians in the community such as mayor, governor, senator, local, state, and national representatives as well as local TV celebrities such as athletes, TV anchors, local authors, musicians, or actors!

Honor the community supporters with a **World Language Community Support Award** at the end of the year **World Language Awards Night!**

Positivity – Celebration 6

World Language Creative Modes of Instruction of the Year Award

Have an end-of-school world language department ceremony after school or in the evening. Use the school and invite some parents, administrators, and students. Have appetizers and refreshments. Honor the world language teacher who had the best creative mode of instruction plan with the **World Language Creative Mode of Instruction Award for the School Year** at the **World Language Awards Night**. Refer to Mode of Instruction Category 1 found in Chapter Five of this book for modes of instruction used throughout the school year.

World Language Administrative Support of the Year Award

Name of Administrator _____

In recognition of your creative and consistent administrative support of world language teachers in their march toward creativity! THANKS!!!



Date awarded _____

Signature - World Language Teacher _____

Signature - World Language Director _____

Signature - School Principal _____

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World Language Community Support of the Year Award

Name of Supporter _____

In recognition of your creative and consistent community support of world language teachers in their march toward creativity! THANKS!!!



Date awarded _____

Signature - World Language Teacher _____

Signature - World Language Director _____

Signature - School Principal _____

No matter what happens, your life will be enriched by trying to be creative. Go forth and sparkle.

