



President's Message

Jeanne O'Hearn, 2021 MaFLA President



Greetings! As we find ourselves at the halfway point of an extraordinary school year, we at MaFLA are filled with hope and anticipation to see what 2021 will bring. I am so grateful that we have been able to maintain a sense of community by offering a variety of learning experiences such as the very popular Classroom Collaborative last summer and our ongoing series of outstanding free webinars.

As the Board of Directors starts another year I would like to first acknowledge those directors whose terms ended at the end of 2020. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Helena Alfonzo, Julie Caldarone, and Ted Zarrow for their years of service and many contributions to MaFLA. These talented professionals volunteered their time and energy generously and their dedication to our mission is appreciated. In 2021 we welcome three new directors. I am pleased to announce the following new board members: Vanessa Faublas from Brooke Charter High School in Boston, Kristin Gillett from Blanchard Middle School in Westford, and Mike Travers

from Wellesley High School. During 2020 we also welcomed Adriana Thomas from Salem Public Schools as she joined us to complete the term vacated by Callie Egan when Callie took on the challenging role of Treasurer due to the unexpected passing of Maryann Brady.

In last year's Winter Newsletter I wrote about themes of clarity and focus. The Board's goals included continuing its work on our strategic plan and furthering our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Little did I know what 2020 had in store for us! Our professional development programming was canceled for the year and we created new opportunities for our members to share and learn from each other as we prepared to start a school year like no other.

Since so much of what we wanted to accomplish last year was sidelined, the Board voted to extend the terms of the executive track Officers for one more year. Myself as President, Beckie Bray Rankin as President Elect, Pat Dipillo as 1st Vice President, and Sarah Moghtader as 2nd Vice President will all serve in our roles through 2021. This will allow us to continue the work we had hoped to start in 2020. Just as we have had to prioritize what we do in the classroom with our students every day, the Board will strive to operate as efficiently and effectively as we can with a strong focus on our mission of promoting effective world language education by supporting a diverse community of language educators. Even in this time of virtual meetings and virtual classes, we

will do everything we can to sustain the MaFLA community. We look forward to the day when we can gather in person. Until then, MaFLA is pleased to offer the following virtual professional development opportunities in 2021:

- Winter Workshops - a series of four interactive workshops available via Zoom focused on strategies you can use right now in your classroom. These workshops, taking place on January 19 and 26, and February 3 and 9, feature nationally-known presenters.
- Webinars - The 2021 series of Webinars, Spotlight on the Remote/Hybrid Classroom, continues to be FREE! Currently, we have monthly webinars scheduled in January, February, and March focusing on topics such as Assessment, Rubrics, Self Care, and Remote Learning Through an Equity Lens.

Visit our website www.mafla.org for more details. Also, stay tuned for information about a second Classroom Collaborative and the annual Conference!

Please let us know what MaFLA can do for you by emailing me at jean-nemafla@gmail.com or posting on our interactive Facebook Group MaFLA PLC. As we prioritize what is most important in our personal and professional lives, please tell us if there is something you would like to see MaFLA offer in 2021.

On behalf of the MaFLA Board of Directors, I wish you a year of good health, peace, and inspiration.

Officers

President

JEANNE L. O'HEARN
Masconomet Regional Middle School

President Elect

REBEKAH RANKIN
Lexington High School

First Vice President

PAT DIPILLO
Falmouth High School

Second Vice President

SARAH MOGHTADER
Pollard School, Needham

Clerk

KATHLEEN M. TURNER
Sharon High School

Treasurer

KATHLEEN EGAN
Dover Sherborn Middle School

Directors

ADRIANA THOMAS (2021)

Salem Public Schools

SHENG-CHU LU (2021)

Pingree School

BÁRBARA BARNETT (2021)

Wellesley Public Schools

LULUAH MUSTAFA (2022)

Boston University

TERESA BENEDETTI (2022)

Minnechaug High School

VILMA BIBEAU (2022)

Medford High School

NILMA DOMINIQUE (2023)

MIT

MICHAEL FARKAS (2023)

Canton High School

SHANNON VIGEANT (2023)

Mt. Greylock Reg. High School

VANESSA FAUBLAS (2024)

Brooks Charter High School

KRISTIN GILLETT (2024)

Blanchard Middle School

MICHAEL TRAVERS (2024)

Wellesley High School

Coordinators

Membership

DEBRA HEATON
Woburn High School (ret.)

Events

JOYCE BECKWITH

Communications

RONIE R. WEBSTER
Monson High School (ret.)

Programming

CATHERINE RITZ
Boston University

Exhibits

DOMINIQUE TROTIN
Holliston Public Schools

Webmaster

LARRY WEBSTER

Adjuncts

KIM TALBOT, Salem Public Schools
NICOLE SHERF, Salem State University
TIM EAGAN, Wellesley Public Schools

CARLOS-LUIS BROWN,
Wilmington Public Schools

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in MaFLA is open to anyone interested in the learning and teaching of languages. The basic membership runs one year from date of inception. There are four categories of membership - Individual, Student, Retired, and First-Year Teachers.

Individual memberships:

\$45.00 for 1 year

\$120.00 for 3 years

New Teacher Memberships (first year in the profession) \$25.00

Retired memberships: \$25.00 per year

Student memberships: \$15.00 per year

For more info and/or a membership application packet, contact:

Debra Heaton
membership@mafla.org

Now you can join, renew or update your profile online! Just visit mafla.org.

The MaFLA Newsletter

The MaFLA Newsletter is the official publication of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. It is published four times per year - Winter, Spring, Back To School, and End of Year. MaFLA welcomes short articles, anecdotes, brief reviews of books and other teaching materials, and other items of interest to members of the profession. The opinions expressed by the authors of articles published in this newsletter are their own and are not necessarily shared or endorsed by MaFLA or its Board of Directors.

Deadlines are:

Winter - January 5

Back to School - August 5

Spring - March 5

End of Year - November 5

All submissions should be sent to:

Ronie R. Webster

Email: ronie@mafla.org

41 Glenn Drive

Wilbraham, MA 01095-1439

Tel: 413-596-9284

MaFLA Membership Special!

Due to the unprecedented events of the last few months, MaFLA is offering a special rate for new and renewing members who want to extend their membership. Now you can get 3 years for the price of 2! A regular 3-year membership (Member 3) is \$120. From June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021, it is only \$90. This means you can have all the member benefits - registrations, newsletters, and 2021 Conference without having to renew your membership. It also covers the 2022 ACTFL Convention in Boston. MaFLA members can go without signing up for ACTFL membership!

So, when you renew your membership, choose Member 3 and you will get this special renew rate! Don't worry if you have recently renewed since this rate goes for a year, you can simply take advantage of it the next time you renew!

Click [here](#) to renew.

Click [here](#) to join.

Meet The New Board Members



Kristin Gillett

Mrs. Kristin Gillett is from Westford, MA, where she is currently teaching German at Blanchard Middle School. With her 26 years of knowledge and experience in teaching German, she continues to see teaching as the perfect profession. Although she started off as a theater major in college and just happened to “fall into teaching” during an exchange program, she has still been able to commit to her two passions: “performing” for her students while pursuing her second passion, teaching. “Encourage my students to see the world” is her mantra she continuously lives by and helps her students stay globally connected to the world. Being an active member of MaFLA will not only help with building a bridge between German educators and the organization, but also an avenue to build connections with other educators.

Vanessa Faublas

Vanessa Faublas is a Spanish teacher in Boston who teaches upper levels and Heritage speakers. Vanessa’s path to becoming a teacher was not a direct one but helped her realize what she loves so much about the job. In college she started as a journalism and dietician major but fell in love with the Spanish language through music and knew that she wanted to bring that joy to students. Vanessa is excited to join the Board of Directors after speaking with one of its members, Mike Farkas, and being encouraged to join. After attending the October Conference, Vanessa called it an eye opener with great topics, she knew it was an organization she wanted to be a part of. When asked what her main motivation for joining was, she said that she felt that there needed to be more Latinx voices on the Board and that the Latinx community needs to be heard and represented. Her goal on the Board is to help teachers learn how to engage in uncomfortable but necessary conversations on topics of race and colorism in their classes. Vanessa wants to be part of the change and the effective leadership that helps teachers realize that conversations about race are not meant for only one month in October or February but instead should be happening more frequently.



Michael Travers

Michael Travers has been teaching Spanish at Wellesley High School for the past six years. A graduate of Stonehill College majoring in Spanish and French, Mike is passionate about teaching languages with a focus on proficiency, even claiming that the most valuable professional development he’s experienced was MaFLA’s Summer Proficiency Academy. Mike joins the MaFLA Board of Directors, hoping to give back to the profession, encouraging teachers to develop proficiency-based instruction. He lives in Foxboro with his boyfriend and his two dogs; a rescue greyhound named Inca, and Lou, a Chiweenie (Chihuahua/Dachshund mix).

MaFLA's Educator In The Spotlight

An Interview With Grace Dudley, Teacher of Spanish, Tewksbury Memorial High School

María da Graça Lealdini-Dudley is our Educator in the Spotlight. She is a teacher of Spanish at Tewksbury Memorial High School where she teaches Spanish. María is very involved in the Language Opportunity Coalition and very passionate about the Seal of Biliteracy. She is often seen at MaFLA events, both in person and online. She is a professional who strives to stay up-to-date through her active participation in MaFLA activities.

MAFLA: Tell us a little about yourself.

Grace: How did a Brazilian woman come to the United States at age 26 and become a Spanish teacher? Here's a little bit about my story. After completing my college education, I was teaching English part-time and working as a full-time bilingual secretary for Johnson & Johnson. I enjoyed both jobs, but teaching was where my passion was. To be a better teacher, I knew that I needed to focus on my own learning. Specifically, I felt that I needed to experience more such as trying coleslaw and peanut butter. I felt inadequate to teach a language and culture that I had mostly learned from textbooks and movies. Although I didn't know it at the time, I wanted to experience the product, participate in the practice and deepen my perspectives. So, I quit my jobs, sold my car, and came to the US on a student visa and started working as an *au pair*. My intention was to stay for one year but I met my prince, Mike, that first year.

Mike and I have been married for thirty years. We have been blessed with two beautiful daughters. I started teaching in Massachusetts in the 90s, moved to Florida where I taught in a K-12 private school and then moved back to Massachusetts. Overall, I have been teaching Spanish for 24 years.

MaFLA: You've taught a wide range of students and levels. What teaching skills do you find work with all the grades that you teach?

Grace: The number one skill any teacher needs is to be able to relate to the students. Students need to feel that you care for them and that you believe in their potential for success. The classroom has to be a safe and welcoming space for everyone.

MaFLA: What do you like best about being a teacher and helping students every day?

Grace: I love to interact with the students. I love the relevance of helping them become more aware of the world and their place in it.

MaFLA: Since the proficiency movement is so new, how do you think language teaching will evolve over the next few decades? - or where do you see yourself in making the transition to teaching for proficiency.

Grace: Teaching in Florida helped me learn about proficiency without even realizing that was what it was called. In Florida, the "need" to learn Spanish is in your face as you drive down interstate I-4 and see a billboard with an advertisement for a Juanes' concert. So many of the "real life situations" that we try to create in class feel more real there. Every year, we would participate at the Florida Spanish Conference, a weekend where students from Spanish 1 to AP would come together to compete in 3 main categories: impromptu speech, declamations, and a play. That made me focus on what the students were able to do with the language all the time. Instead of purely being motivated by the grade, I encouraged my students to "own it." I would say, "If you can sing it, you own it." "If you can draw it, you own it." "Don't study the vocabulary for a grade, own it." Relevance of the material was key.

Then I moved back to Massachusetts in 2010 and my new school had not started on the path to teaching for proficiency. The Spanish Conference had been my goal for so many years that when I no longer had it, I felt a little lost. The students' motivation to learn was lacking terribly and I was failing on how to kindle their interest.

Then, I rejoined MaFLA where I reconnected with some dear friends. MaryAnn Brady, the former treasurer for MaFLA who had been a mentor for me and my department head when I first started teaching Spanish in the US, supported me once again. Consequently, I participated in the first MaFLA Summer Academy in Westfield. Greg Duncan gave me the spark that I needed to start my pathway to teaching for proficiency.

MaFLA: So then what would be your advice to another teacher making the transition to proficiency-based teaching?

Grace: I think every teacher needs to "walk" his/her own path to understanding this shift. It is a path, not a "dive" into proficiency. The teacher needs to have a good understanding of what teaching for proficiency is; you can't just pass on a unit plan for somebody else to use.

The MaFLA Summer Academy provides an immersive and rich opportunity to learn about the pedagogy and practice of proficiency-based teaching. You participate all day in workshops, you have time to digest the information and plan lessons that you can actually use later on. I have participated twice and loved the format. Staying over at the dorms, having dinner with new colleagues and having a wine & cheese night was ideal for further collaboration and fun!

Throughout the year MaFLA offers opportunities to learn about teaching for proficiency. Idiomias Education & Consulting has excellent graduate courses on teaching and assessing for proficiency. Yet, most essential, is collaboration with colleagues in your own school. Attend workshops together, and plan how to apply the information in your classes. I certainly have been guilty of participating in great workshops but then not following through with applying what I had just learned.

MaFLA: What are some of the fun things you like to do in class? How have they affected your teaching and students' learning?

Grace: I like to "play the part" and dress up when appropriate. Now that we are hybrid it is more difficult. Nonetheless, I am trying to keep things just as interesting. For instance, last year for my Identity Unit, I dressed up as a fortune teller. I set up a table with a crystal ball and lights in my room. Students would ask questions about their future, roll a die and receive some interesting answers based on the numbers they rolled. Well, this year even though the format had to change a little because of social distancing and the hybrid model, we still did the interpersonal activity with

MaFLA's Educator In The Spotlight

An Interview With Grace Dudley, Teacher of Spanish, Tewksbury Memorial High School

some modifications. I enjoyed myself and I think that's the key to have them enjoying themselves in class as well.

MaFLA: What do you do to motivate students?

Grace: For me there are two main things that motivate my students. First, is my own motivation. My positive energy and attitude set the tone. Second, is to use strategies to empower students. From taking a SEL (Sheltered English Language) course a few years back, I learned a few tricks. Number #1: speak and pause. Students need time to process the information. Number #2: use sentence frames to help students who can get the gist, but feel

lost when producing language. If the difficulty level is too high, students shut down. I can help motivate students by knowing where they are, meeting them where they are, and guiding their learning. In one of Leslie Grahm's workshops for MaFLA I learned that we can change the text or we can change the task to fit the students' needs. Language +1 is how you move forward. It is how you challenge the students and make progress.

MaFLA: Is there anything else you would like to share?

Grace: As I mentioned before I felt that my students here in Massachusetts were lacking motivation but now I think that they

were lacking a destination. They didn't know where they wanted to go with the language; they didn't see the roadmap in front of them. I believe that the shift to teaching for proficiency has laid out the roadmap and the implementation of the Seal of Biliteracy has given them a destination. There are more students continuing with their language studies rather than taking just the required two years.

MaFLA: You have been an active member of MaFLA. How has your membership inspired your teaching?

Grace: MaFLA has provided us with excellent guidance to make the shift to teaching for proficiency.

From The Editor

Motivation?

Are you feeling motivated right now? If you are, then you might be part of a small group. At this time of the year, with the cold, windy weather, the gray, dreary days and the limited sunlight, many of us suffer from a lack of motivation and focus. We know that spring will be coming soon yet we still struggle. This issue of the MaFLA Newsletter focuses on Motivation. We have looked at it from both sides, from the teacher view point and from that of students. We also have a unique article from a professor who has incorporated boxing into her curriculum as a motivational tool. Sound intriguing? Then don't miss her article and the others that highlight motivation.

This issue also continues with our Educator in the Spotlight feature. With each interview, I am truly amazed by the quality, the creativity and the passion of educators we have here in Massachusetts. So be sure to get to know your colleague Maria Grace Dudley. One comment she made in her interview really struck home with me. She states, "They (referring to the students) didn't know where they wanted to go with the language; they didn't see the roadmap in front of them." I have signed up for virtual run/walk missions and these have mo-

tivated me to get out and exercise each day. Yes, that roadmap and destination are such important motivators.

This issue also contains information about all of our awards and contests. Please involve your students in one of several of our contests, the video, the graphic art, the poster and the essay. It just may be what they need at this time of the year to get re-motivated. We also have our student awards and scholarships. Be sure to nominate an exceptional student who has focused and persevered during this challenging academic year. We also have several teacher scholarships and awards. Apply yourself, encourage a colleague or nominate a colleague. We need to highlight all of the amazing things that are happening in our classroom.

I wish you all the best for the rest of the academic year. I know that once we start to see those warmer days and budding flowers and trees, we will all once again be motivated to make it to that finish line.

Please consider offering an article, an insight or a resource for our MaFLA Spring Issue. The Theme is very relevant – Social Emotional Learning. This has been a year during which we all have had to check in frequently not only on our students but on our colleagues, relatives and friends to be sure that they are OK. We have learned the importance of taking the time to show we care. Share what you are doing with Social Emotional Learning! We want to hear from you!

Theme – Social Emotional Learning

How do you incorporate Social Emotional Learning into your curriculum?

What does Social Emotional Learning look like?

How do you teach Social Emotional Skills?

What are they? Why are they important?

What are some strategies you use to promote Social Emotional Learning?

Send your submission to ronie@mafla.org. Deadline is March 5.

MaFLA's Educator In The Spotlight

An Interview With Grace Dudley, Teacher of Spanish, Tewksbury Memorial High School

MaFLA: *Last March, teachers found themselves all of a sudden teaching virtually. What techniques or strategies worked well for you in the virtual classroom?*

Grace: One thing that became very evident during remote learning was that the students are struggling with executive function. A colleague and I collaborated to learn about executive function and strategies to help in the classroom. I stopped thinking that students knew how to use simple things like Google calendar and started teaching them how to use tech tools that became essential to manage their learning.

Working with students to identify where their struggles are and brainstorming strategies is a necessity. Often the problem has not been the content. Significant lagging executive function skills impede students from accessing any curriculum. It is not about learning the target language. It is about functioning in school.

Seth Perler's free [mini-course](#) for teachers is a great place to learn more.

MaFLA: *Do you have an idea or strategy that you feel would be helpful to share with other teachers?*

The inspiration for this project came from an article in [Newsela](#) about the Getty Museum.

Last April to complement our art unit for Spanish and French 4 students, my colleague and I were able to continue to engage the students virtually with an art challenge where they had to recreate a work of art with whatever they had available at home. It also involved presentational writing and speaking about their creation. Students viewed each other's work and voted on their favorite in a number of categories. The culminating activity was to get together virtually as a community to award prizes and celebrate their learning.

Pictures Of My Students' Reproductions

At Home Art Challenge

La Duquesa de Alba, Goya

"Great effort with dress and adding background."
-art department

"Incredible effort."
-WL department

"It looks the most like the actual painting."
-peer review



Caza con reclamo, Goya



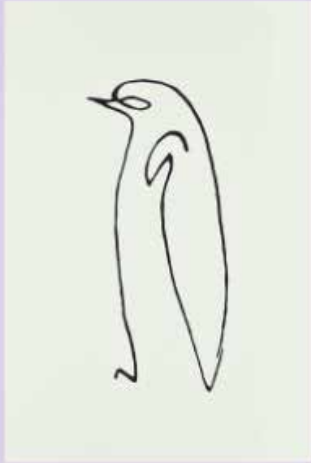
"I think this one had the most pieces and was difficult to set up. And yet, it worked out to be very similar to the painting." -peer review



MaFLA's Educator In The Spotlight

An Interview With Grace Dudley, Teacher of Spanish, Tewksbury Memorial High School

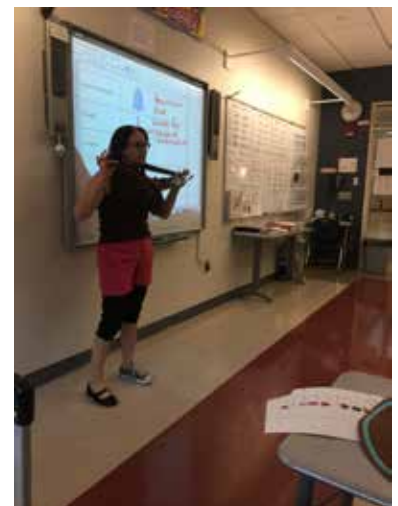
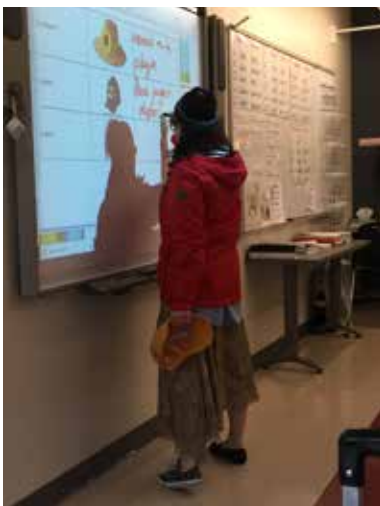
Pinguino, Picasso



Fortune Telling remotely



In these photos I am wearing a lot of different clothes that I kept taking off one item at a time to illustrate the vocabulary that they were learning. That's what I mean by "I dress up".



In Memoriam

Gladys Lipton

January 18, 1923- January 21, 2021

With the death of Gladys Lipton, one of the foremost authorities on the teaching and learning of FLES for over 50 years, our profession has lost one of its most formidable advocates. Not only did Gladys publish many books, including bilingual dictionaries in French, Spanish and Italian, but also over 200 articles on the advantages of foreign language instruction in the elementary and middle schools. She also worked as a consultant with school districts across the country and in Europe and Asia.

French teachers will be forever grateful to Gladys for creating the National French Week (NFW) initiative in 1999 which she launched in Saint Louis during the AATF Convention while she was serving as National President. A week in November was chosen as a celebration to make French more visible, not only in school settings but also in the community. In Gladys' words, "We all must become publicity hounds for French at every single opportunity! Advertise, Publicize and Propagandize, so that everyone knows that French is a worthwhile and a vital area of study in today's political, scientific and business world." Each day during NFW, a new area was chosen to focus on: cuisine, science, arts and crafts, music, dance and more recently technology, traditions and careers. For students there were poster, essay and video contests which have been expanded to animation and trivia, with monetary prizes awarded at each level of study.

A few weeks before arriving in Saint Louis, I received a phone call from Gladys reviewing her plans for introducing NFW. "You're in charge to announce it at the Opening Session," she said, "so give it all the hype you can!" No one ever said no to Gladys! I contacted several other Regional Reps, wrote a cheer à la "Rah! Rah! Sis! Boom! Bah!" and packed some "pom poms" in my suitcase! NFW was off and running, and we followed up with a session appropriately titled "Pop! Bang! Bells and Whistles! Let's Plan for NFW!" Twenty-one years later, National French Week continues to be a positive and successful event for French teachers.



**"Grandes Dames" of language education
Phyllis Dragonas and Gladys Lipton**

For her efforts in promoting the French language and Francophone culture across the country, Gladys received the highest rank of Commandeur in the Order of the French Academic Palms from the Ministry of Education in Paris, as well as a medal from the French Renaissance Society. When she finally retired, Gladys turned to art, creating over 600 abstract paintings which were exhibited in 18 solo shows in Washington, D.C.



Gladys Lipton receiving her Nelson H. Brooks Award at the Northeast Conference

Approaching her 95th birthday, Gladys was asked how she was coping. She replied: "Wake up each day with curiosity and anticipation, participate in various activities, have interactions with people and follow your passion for something very close to your heart!" What incredible and insightful advice from an icon! Not only did Gladys teach us to advocate, to believe in our power to change norms and traditions, but she also inspired us to live life to its fullest until the very end. Adieu Chère Collègue! May your memory be a blessing to all whose lives you touched.

Joyce Beckwith January 2021

MaFLA Fall Conference 2021

Conference Chair Pat Dipillo

Greetings and Happy New Year to our members! I am excited to announce that the Fall Conference has kicked into high gear once again! The session proposal portal is open again with a new twist. If you have an idea for a session applicable to remote learning/hybrid classroom teaching, we welcome those proposals. There is a complete list of instructions for what type of session you would like to propose and how to do it in a format that suits you.

As the conference chair it is my responsibility to create a budget for the conference and make sure that we live within it. I am in the process of doing that now. My priorities are high quality professional development for members and a focus on the conference theme. In that sense, we are making great progress on being economical yet adhering to the great services we are accustomed to providing for our attendees.

Aside from meeting once a month as a conference team, a certain high tech



CREATING CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

MaFLA 2021 Fall Conference

October 21-23, 2021

Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel

sub-committee meets to prepare the App, now called the Virtual Event Space. We are keeping abreast of recent technological developments to bring our members the services they need in the ways they need them. The pandemic, as we all are aware, has created new opportunities for learning in new ways, and we want to make sure that we are prepared for every type of learning. Along with that is a discussion of the Exhibit Hall and what that will look like in this new environment

So, strand leaders have been chosen who will search their networks for target

language experts in their respective fields and invite them to submit proposals. Their main responsibility is to vet the proposals that come in, so that you experience a high caliber presenter with a top-notch presentation. Our strands represent all the languages that we promote on our Board.

I want to thank my conference team for their hard work and dedication. Without their collective efforts, a conference of this magnitude under these circumstances would never be possible. In particular, I would like to recognize Ronie and Larry Webster, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to get the proposal submission portal, and registration up and running, Catherine Ritz for her expertise in on-line instruction, and my advisor, Joyce Beckwith, for her experience and support. We want you to join us as we embrace our theme. The “We are the World” conference is on track to be a spectacular event!

COMING ATTRACTIONS!

WATCH YOUR EMAIL FOR:

**Announcements about our Spring PD - Coming Soon
Announcement of Our Summer Opportunities - Coming in Spring
Updates on the MaFLA Fall Conference!**

Keep up with the latest– Check mafla.org often

and

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

ACTFL 2020 - A Different Take On PD

Ronie Webster

Not San Antonio . . . But Still Great PD

This fall the ACTFL Annual Convention and Expo was scheduled to be in San Antonio, Texas. When I saw this on the ACTFL future convention list several years ago, I was delighted as San Antonio is one of my favorite locations for ACTFL Conventions. In fact, San Antonio was the venue for my very first ACTFL Convention, the one that got me hooked. This would have been my fourth ACTFL Convention in San Antonio. I was once again excited to travel to this beautiful location, learn and network with colleagues, and further explore the city and the area. The current pandemic, however, changed these plans as ACTFL, like many other large conferences and gatherings, was now occurring in a virtual format.

Yours truly was not going to miss this even though it was virtual. Having attended 25 ACTFL conventions already, I knew that this would be a not-to-miss experience in order to learn, network, and attend presentations by some of the top educators in the world. ACTFL never disappoints. Although we were not together, and I didn't have the opportunities to continue my explorations of the area, I still attended an outstanding convention.

Sitting in my home office day one of the Convention, already tuned into the Opening General Session, I could already feel the excitement. As I was awaiting the start, I could feel the same anticipation that I have felt as we were all gathering in past conventions.

The program began with a warm welcome by ACTFL President Bridget Yaden and quickly moved to the awarding of the ACTFL 2021 Teacher of the Year. After all five regional candidates had been introduced with interesting videos about each, which had been prepared by their students, the ACTFL 2021 Teacher of the Year was presented. Elena Kamenetzky, a Japanese teacher at Eastern High School in Louisville, KY and a regional finalist representing the Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT), was announced as the awardee.

Next was an excellent Keynote presentation by John Quiñones, the Emmy

award winning co-anchor of ABC's "Primetime" and the solo anchor of the Primetime series "What Would You Do?" The topic of his address was *A Vision for America: Building Bridges, Not Walls*. In his address he asked us to reflect on how we would react when confronted with dilemmas that compel us to either take action or walk away. He asked us what would we do if and when we witness any kind of injustice or what would we do when we have the opportunity to right a wrong? His speech provided us with thought-provoking insights into human nature and ethical behavior, topics so very appropriate for our present time.

The program for this year consisted of General Sessions, the *General Opening Session with Keynote*, a *Saturday General Session with Keynote* by Erin Jones and a *Closing General Session with Keynote* by Nyle DiMarco. Also available to attendees were On-Demand Sessions, pre-recorded virtual sessions which were available to view anytime throughout the convention dates.

There also were Simulive Sessions which occurred on a specific schedule. These were pre-recorded sessions, which featured the presenter available live through the chat feature. I opted for mostly Simulive sessions and discovered that I really enjoyed them. I felt that I had more connection with the presenter than I would usually have had in a packed live session.

For example, at ACTFL 2020 I attended a session presented by Laura Terrill. I loved that as I was watching and listening to the video I could follow the various questions posed by attendees and the corresponding responses from Laura in the chat. Often as a question popped into my head someone else had just asked that same questions and already received a response. It seemed like I was having a one-on-one conversation with Laura.

This was so much better than some of the past-conference in-person sessions, presented by very popular and well-known educators, that had standing room only. My connections with the presenters in those sessions where sometimes I was standing at the back of a crowded room or I was sitting on the floor in one of the aisles was certainly not as powerful. For my style of learning,

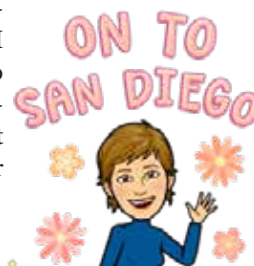
the Simulive was perfect. I really felt like I had a personal connection to the speaker whose advice and expertise I wanted.

Since Simulive was my choice throughout the three days, I made sure that as a follow up I went back to watch the On-Demand sessions at my leisure. Because everything was available throughout December I was able to watch some of the Simulive sessions that I had missed as they were scheduled opposite one I had decided to attend.

The best thing about on-demand was I got to see more Simulive sessions, all of which included the recorded chat so I could peruse the questions asked and responses from the presenters. It really was a rich learning experience for me and I had the opportunity to attend so many sessions.

Yes, I was sad that I would not have the opportunity to visit the restaurants of San Antonio, walk the beautiful River Walk, check out historic spots and do a bit of shopping, but ACTFL did offer some interesting alternatives. On Saturday, there was a Family Lunch and Learn: *Dressing for the Job with Vaquero Josh* from the Witte Museum of San Antonio. At 4:45, I participated in a very informative Virtual Tour of San Antonio, *Puro San Antonio* and on Sunday there was another Lunch and Learn: *Let's Make a Corn Tortilla*. These were all so engaging and fun. Now, when I finally do get back to San Antonio I will know more about the area, the food, the customs and the history. I was surprised at how much I could do virtually.

I send KUDOS to ACTFL who pivoted quickly from their usual in-person convention to this very successful virtual program. I truly enjoyed it and stayed safe during this very difficult time. Thanks ACTFL. ACTFL 2020, although it was virtual, inspired and enriched me just as much as all of the past ACTFL Conventions have. I look forward to 2021 in San Diego – whether it be in person or virtual.



Staying Motivated Amidst Changing Conditions

Teresa Benedetti

Teaching has always been a demanding profession keeping us busy well beyond the classroom hours during evenings, weekends and vacations. 2020 has certainly asked so much more of all of us. The increased need to be self-disciplined and self-motivated for students and teachers to be successful in this learning situation surely took us by storm. Student motivation is an ever-present concern for teachers in our daily work but this year has shown that we teachers, more than ever, are concerned with our own motivation.

Results provided to the profession by The EdWeek Research Center from a November 2020 survey state that 85% of teachers report lower morale, a more than 20% increase since before March of 2020. Additionally, 42% of teachers who responded to the survey report that they now feel less motivated for the work required of them due to the pandemic. The greatest challenge reported for online learning is lack of student participation. Survey details showed that when the pandemic crisis hit and online teaching began, fewer than half of students participated in online learning. (<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/as-teacher-morale-hits-a-new-low-schools-look-for-ways-to-give-breaks-restoration/2021/01>)

When online learning was new to us, teacher decisions were focused on what to do and what tools would best help us develop and deliver lessons. In a sudden and reactive way, educators responded by signing up for various online tools and programs and were busy accessing social media. Now with online teaching and learning as our order of business, many veterans of the profession feel like novices in their first year. Before school shutdowns occurred, digital content and tools served more as supplemental resources but now that remote teaching contexts are the norm, teachers have realized that they need to make these digital tools core instructional practices (Achieve 3000: https://fs24.formsite.com/edweek/images/WPAchieve30005_Strategies_to_Ensure_Student_Engagement-Online.pdf). With the new demands on our time, with fewer boundaries between home and school and with all the new tech-

nology tools that teachers are either learning or creating on their own, teachers find themselves concerned with how to maintain their own motivation to keep pace and sustain their energy.

The Importance of Staying Connected

It seems plausible to say that none of us became teachers to experience social distancing. It is our interaction and connections with our students that motivate us to do our best work for them. Collaboration and connections are words inherent to our everyday functioning. Eighty-seven per cent of teachers surveyed agreed that their own enthusiasm is directly related to an increase in student interest and motivation (EdWeek Special Report). The constantly changing circumstances of quarantining regulations and challenges of converting all materials to online formatting, understandably create conditions in which teachers feel more worn out in all ways; physically, mentally and emotionally and cause us to describe ourselves as functioning in survival mode and feeling continuously behind.

In an effort to help teachers cope with these demands and less than satisfactory emotions, school districts across the country have responded to teachers' needs with strategies for connections and rest. In Blacksburg VA, the schools of Montgomery County teach in a hybrid model and their district has chosen to allow teachers and students to spend every Wednesday remotely. Teachers are given this day to catch their breath and catch up on their planning and grading. Students are given the day to work on the week's assignment as schools are closed for deep cleanings (EdWeek Special Report). In Minnesota, the governor has signed an executive order to provide teachers with 30 minutes of extra planning time every day. At Milton Hershey School, a private cost-free boarding school in Hershey PA, administrators provide teachers with coverage if they need a break during the teaching day and have also implemented mindfulness breaks every day with lessons facilitated by school psychologists. Their social and emotional lessons help students

and faculty simultaneously to learn self-care strategies and empower their well-being.

The loss of connection to students that teachers are currently struggling with adds the pressure of not being able to provide timely and relevant feedback to students. As we know from researchers such as John Hattie, providing effective and relevant feedback to students is one of the ten most important effects of student achievement. School districts that had centralized resources and strong district wide expectations for remote teaching in place before the pandemic shut downs, when the unexpected happened, were able to keep more students engaged consistently during the pandemic than those districts that did not have such practices and resources in place." (Achieve 3000: https://fs24.formsite.com/edweek/images/WPAchieve30005_Strategies_to_Ensure_Student_Engagement-Online.pdf).

When teachers are overwhelmed it follows logically that students are overwhelmed. In their Research Brief entitled 5 Best Practices to Ensure Student and Teacher Engagement Online, Achieve 3000 recommends that teachers choose digital tools that are easy to put into action to serve our purposes. They recommend not requiring students to have to learn to master too many logins since even when these login details seem easy enough to teachers and regular users of digital tools, questions from students are abundant (Achieve3000).

Keeping Praise Sincere

Whether you visit a website, social media forum or are in the halls of our schools, we have all heard teachers, administrators and well-intentioned others offer teachers comments of encouragement:

- "You've got this!"
- "Well, look at the bright side, it could be worse."
- "You're an awesome teacher, they are lucky to have you!"

We've all seen the colorful banners and signs telling teachers that their actions and energy are heroic. And, I could venture to say that many of us have seen teachers post

Staying Motivated Amidst Changing Conditions

Teresa Benedetti

their newly created tasks online and show their work to peers all around the country. In a special report by EdWeek on school climate, Arianna Prothero warns against these practices because it can increase teacher anxiety by making someone who is anxious or less motivated to feel guilty about what they are experiencing and feeling. Prothero calls this toxic positivity and encourages teachers to tell these well-meaning others that they need to articulate that these statements actually make them feel more anxious or less than capable during this time. She recommends engaging in self talk to acknowledge these difficult feelings and to try breathing and mindfulness exercises to reduce stress and anxiety.

Reflections on motivation and the WL Classroom

After surveying the research on teacher and student motivation during the pandemic and noting the prevalence of feelings of anxiety, the need for connections and self-care and the constant search for the right tool to effectively engage our students, I feel fortunate to be a part of a school with a supportive administrative team that understands our needs for sincere positivity and assistance with our new conditions. Our administrators have carefully considered the need for mindfulness practice and have included it in all of our 2020-21 faculty meetings and PD. These are led by a member of our Physical Education Department who teaches yoga. This practice has been very helpful to us as we implement the hybrid model of teaching. Several teachers are now integrating this into their daily practice. We have learned to slow down, to become more aware of how we feel, to judge less and to be more fully present in our experiences as a faculty. The ability to focus on what we are sensing without engaging in judgement has become a teaching tool. Integrating mindfulness moments in class is now a self-care practice that many of my colleagues are using to help deal with our new teaching and learning situation.

Consequently, many of us have learned or are practicing how to slow ourselves down. We've learned to trust this new

teaching and learning process, to let it unfold bit by bit. Although integrating these mindfulness sessions is good for our own self-care as teachers and therefore extends to our students, this fits so naturally into our language teaching. The added benefit of the input we give students in the target language when we remind them to breathe in through your nose or close your eyes or notice how you are feeling allows us to integrate our CI and TPR methodologies. Our content area inherently lends itself to this process helping to restore us and situate ourselves and our students in the learning context. Connecting to our environment and to those around us has been a key element in keeping me motivated this year.

Showing interest and slowing down

One challenge that teachers have mentioned about online learning is that it is harder to get to know our students. Thankfully we have our slide decks that we can convert into interactive activities and digital games that engage and motivate students with the content. We see them interact with the content and can observe their progress. Sustaining motivation is an on-going process and to help do so, we can get to know our students better by offering choice boards, choices in assignments, encouraging students to follow their interests to demonstrate their proficiency. Teachers as facilitators can, as Kinji Ito has said, play the "role as a concert conductor and each student is playing an instrument. With all

those instruments playing in harmony, the orchestra yields an amazing outcome" (<https://fltmag.com/interview-with-kinji-ito/>). Student choice can be a powerful vehicle for us to better know our students as we learn more about them as individuals and their interests and comfort levels with the content we are focused on in class. Getting to know what they prefer or like to do helps us create more connections.

As mentioned earlier, this year has asked a lot of all of us. Many times, when I couldn't imagine having to log on to another Zoom session to attend a webinar or a meeting, the result was actually the opposite of what I was expecting. I truly thought I couldn't learn one more digital tool or kindly engage with others. In one instance, while attending our local collaborative's monthly PD session, after I thought I had learned all I could about the use of Jamboard, I was surprised by what I learned by participating with it as a student during this PD session. This online meeting gave me the opportunity to slow down, see another teacher's take on the tool and reflect on how I could do something similar. The pandemic has allowed us to slow down at times as in these moments of reflection. As teachers, while we understand and experience Zoom fatigue, we also have seen that these opportunities do actually help us to connect and regroup for the greater purpose of serving our students.

We all appreciate down time and a break from the anxiety we may feel. One practice I found that students have appreciated more since this school year began is our Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) practice. This gives students time to slow down, receive input and practice interpretive skills. Fortunately, a much younger and much more tech savvy colleague of mine curated the digitized material we would need to carry out this process in our classrooms! On the teacher side of FVR, it provides a time to attend to tech needs or complete small classroom tasks that otherwise we would have no time to complete. In the moments when we also read while the students read, we model how to slow down and appreciate the target language. This, along with the sharing about our reading, is beneficial to students as we



What Keeps Us Motivated

Rachel Myers & Renata Del Vecchio

Throughout the school year, many students will find themselves without drive, without motivation. They may start falling behind on assignments, stop participating in class, and lose any will to study for tests and put in extra work. From personal experience, we can say that it is really easy to lose track of the reasons we care about our classes. The assignments can feel pointless, the class discussions become boring, and the time it takes to really study for a test just doesn't seem worth it.

Our names are Rachel and Renata, and we are two students in an AP Italian class at Medford High in Massachusetts. We both really enjoy our Italian class, from the culture to the grammar, but even we can sometimes feel a bit unmotivated. Especially now, in the midst of a pandemic, where the classroom is a 14 in. screen, it is easy to slip up, lose the drive, and forget why we love our Italian class. But as the times get more difficult, we find it more important than ever to stop and think about what keeps us motivated to do well in Italian.

First, we looked to our personal lives and how Italian has affected them. It is well known that learning a new language is great for one's mind in many ways, some of which extend to other fields of study. Additionally, being able to say that we are fluent in two languages is a point of pride for us, something to boost our self-confidence. In this pandemic, when we have a tendency to feel bad and lazy for not doing anything with our newly expanded amount of free time,

being able to say that we are studying hard and improving ourselves is certainly something we can be proud of. While being stuck at home, we are broadening our knowledge of different world cultures, and learning how to connect with people through language, the root of all communication.

Next, we looked at how learning a language, specifically Italian, helps increase our enjoyment of the ways we pass time. We both spend a lot of time on social media apps like TikTok, and streaming websites like YouTube, where videos from people who speak many different languages can easily be accessed. Some of our favorite creators come from Italy, and we are able to listen to them speak in their native language and understand what they are saying because of our lessons in Italian. We found that when we listen to and understand these creators, we feel a small rush of joy, a thrill to be able to hear a foreign language and understand it. And when class comes, or we are doing an assignment, we take that spark and turn it into fuel to keep focusing and learning, and see that in the future, when we interact with more Italian media, we will understand more.

One final example comes from the ways we noticed our Italian lessons helping us in our other hobbies. We enjoy writing and reading quite a bit, as well as music, and in both of those hobbies we can see the influence of Italian language and culture. The English language is heavily influenced by Latin, which is also the language that

most directly formed Italian. So we can see root words and Italian cognates as we write in our English language, and study Italian. It feels like spotting a clue from history, or seeing the live impact of the long-dead Roman Empire in every communication in English. And in music, especially classical music, we can see the influence of Italian with words like "opera", "aria", or "allegro", which come directly from the Italian language. Many operas have been written in Italian, and so by studying the Italian language we are able to understand the songs without needing to look at translations or captions. We see here again how learning Italian helps us to better understand and enjoy the activities we love.

In our search for what keeps us motivated to do well in Italian, we found the multitude of ways in which our class and studies improve our lives. Other students may find these improvements to be relatable, or completely alien to their own experiences. We can say, though, that the common thread through all of our strongest motivations to keep working on our Italian came from within. We noticed external motivations as well, like not wanting to fail our class or disappoint our teachers and parents, but could safely say that those pushes were not nearly as strong as our internal drive to improve ourselves through studying Italian. So to close this exploration of motivation, we offer a piece of advice for those struggling to find that push in their classes: look inside for the ways, even the small ones, that your classes improve your life and yourself, and there you will find the motivation you need.

Submitted by Vilma Nasuti Bibeau.

Staying Motivated (conc.)

model another way to slow down. We can model how to trust the process and create connections with our students. And, if you have a very tech savvy younger colleague as I do, the initial sharing engenders more sharing and collaboration in a sincere "We can do this!" manner. My colleague's sharing of the digital tools motivated me to try new tools, develop ones on my own and continue the sharing process.

Maintaining motivation during this crisis is, no doubt, difficult. We may be

teaching alone from home, from our empty classrooms or with only half of our students in a socially distanced manner. Knowing how to slow down, share with colleagues, engage in self-care and find the moments and opportunities for connections are the ways I've noticed help me keep going. This pandemic has taught me that we can find connectivity online and when positivity is sincere and teachers take care of themselves and each other, we are taking care of our students.

TWENTY YEARS FROM
NOW YOU WILL BE MORE
DISAPPOINTED BY THE
THINGS THAT YOU DIDN'T
DO THAN BY THE ONES
YOU DID DO.

Mark Twain

A Language Of Knock Out

A. CANDia

“Does somebody know what a jab is?”, I asked in the middle of a meeting and everyone jumped up to show me how to set a jab - I have to say that they all were men. I realized that I had no idea about boxing language and was far from using it or even practicing it. I always had an interest in boxing in the neighborhood where I grew up in Mexico City - especially to be able to defend myself physically. But I never read about it. In 2014, I started to learn about the sport through journalism and literature. Going through all those materials, I started to be interested in learning more, so I went to a gym to live the experience. I put on boxing gloves and put into practice the whole-body language, which is the kinesthesia part. I was interacting with real scenarios to increase my knowledge, the same way when we practice the target language that we are learning.



After 2 years of looking for more information, learning from it and “kind of” boxing, I took the next step to bring it to my classes. The first project was to invite Erika Montoya (the first Mexican boxing journalist) to have an interview with my students. They spent 55 minutes talking via videoconference. Students wrote their own questions and took turns asking Erika. Each student wrote a 2-page composition. Class proficiency level, according to ACTFL’s structure, was intermediate mid. The results were exceptional, a K.O.

This practice influenced the students greatly. Besides boxing, they got into the fact that this woman, Erika, had to face so many challenges to gain a place in a sport where, for decades, just men had control. The majority of the students could recognize the prior role of women in society. This

event gave me the idea and opportunity to explore some other anthropological aspects of boxing.

Later, I combined boxing with movies. This time, I chose three movies: *Cantinflas*¹, *Bayoneta*², and *Fuera del cielo*³. The topics in these movies which the students discovered were immigration, poverty, crime, language barriers, and adaptability. After watching each movie, students wrote a reflection of the movie combined with topics reviewed in class. Then we had a roundtable exchanging our opinions and the possible solutions we would have.

At the end of the session, they had to prepare a 2-minute role-play to show a scene from the movie or to create an original one based on the content. In this activity, they had five minutes to put them all together to present the scene in class. Throughout the sessions, students found empathy with the stories, situations, and characters. A biographical movie experience can be a challenge considering that a real person lived the scene they were playing.

For seven years I collaborated as a co-producer and host in a radio show *La Mezcla* from WDRT 91.9 FM Viroqua. This radio show was a community service providing immigrants a space to connect with their roots and traditions, as well as music and fun. In 2018, in collaboration with the boxing blog *Art De-KO*, we produced the show *La Pelea del Inmigrante*⁴, combining many aspects of this “Sweet science” known as boxing. This combination brought another activity to my classes. An important part of language curricula nowadays is culture. Because of this, I asked the students to

read the article: “*Bert Colima: ídolo de California (y también de todo México)*”⁵, along with listening to the radio show. They could see all the art and culture implicit in the sport. Then, in 2 or 3-person groups, they designed presentations incorporating one part of the information from the article and one part of the radio show to share in class using the grammar that we were learning at that time. Some made presentations by PowerPoint, some created short videos (3 minutes), some designed a poster, and some performed a role-play.

Having completed all these activities I decided to try something else. We feel excited to talk and practice the target language with a native speaker, but what happens when the



person is famous or well known in the field of his/her profession. For a final project of my second Master I looked for a professional boxer. I had the opportunity to integrate Jackie “La Princesa Azteca” Nava, and Francisco “El Bandido” Vargas. My project incorporated two groups 1) a group of high school students in France, 2) a group of university students in the U.S. The first group viewed a video of a journalist interview I had with Jackie “La Princesa Azteca” Nava. I traveled to France to have a kinetic activity to see the reaction and development of the groups (I spent a week there). Although I am not a professional boxer, throughout the school year the groups and I exchanged letters, completely in the target language, with the Spanish teacher in France who was taking part with me, supporting the activities which she included in her syllabus, by email.

¹ Guerra, I (producer), Del Amo, S (director). 2014. *Cantinflas* [biographical film] Mexico: Kenio Films.

² Terrazas, K (director). 2018. *Bayoneta* [based on real events film]. Mexico: Co-production Mexico-Phinland; Woo Films.

³ Patrón Fox, J (2007). *Fuera del cielo*. [Fiction Film] Mexico: Argos Cinde, Fidecine, Videocine, Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía (IMCINE), Panamax Film.

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izNCPNClonQ&t=2132s>

⁵ <https://artdeko697981504.wordpress.com/?s=colima>

A Language Of Knock Out

A. CANDia

The second group had the interview, by videoconference, with Francisco “El Bandido” Vargas. Francisco opened the conversation by getting to know the students. Then, instead of an interview, this turned out to be a chat where they were exchanging their own experiences.

There were activities related to former interviews, this way students had more knowledge of the topic but also the vocabulary. One of them was the memory game (you can use it, too) in the platform Educaplay (there are some others too)⁶ which we used effectively to show the main aspects of



the vocabulary and actions that referred to boxing. Besides these activities, students read some articles from boxing blog, *Art De-KO*⁷.

As part of the final assessments, I interacted with students via social media. The group of high school students in France, wrote their opinions of the experience in *Inhala*⁸, one of the articles of the boxing blog, *Art De-KO*. The group of U.S. university students wrote their impressions of the interview using the Facebook page *Boxing Once*⁹ which I opened since I was involved with boxing.

To keep developing activities for my classes I designed a semester project. This time I set small groups and I included different activities as part of grading:

⁶ <https://www.educaplay.com/learning-resources/4454765-conociendo-el-boxeo.html>

⁷ <https://artdeko697981504.wordpress.com/author/wichotorralba/>

⁸ <https://artdeko697981504.wordpress.com/?s=inhala>

oral practice, essays, readings, and grammar worksheets, looking for information, watching movies, forums, and round tables. In addition, an interview with Steve Salazar Ramírez, national boxing champion from Costa Rica, was part of the assessments. I assigned a side topic to each group: A) Boxing and Immigration: Immigrant boxers' stories. B) Boxing female: Are there equal opportunities? C) Boxing and languages: How to learn boxing? D) Boxing: A safe job to make a living? E) Boxing in the arts: An artistic expression. Then finally, each group created a 7-to-10 minute video. The creativity was important to put together all information collected. Some groups created a News show; others made a variety show, mixing styles of shows. Each student presented one aspect of the subject. This time, in order to make it easy to submit the project, some groups used a YouTube platform, so people could access them easily. I found important and new information even for me as students were doing their projects. At the end of the semester, students had a forum where they displayed all activities completed during the semester. Boxing was the most mentioned subject along with the opportunity to meet Steve Salazar Ramírez and knowing intimately a subject that they never had heard about.

My interest and passion for boxing has been a journey. Besides learning the name of the basic hits, equipment, routines, combinations, etc. I have learned directly from the authors of books about boxing, professional and amateur boxers – women and men, coaches, promoters, businesspeople, journalists, educators, nutritionists, physicians, and all the people that are in a boxer's corner (boxer's team name). I attended a training course to be an amateur boxing trainer from WBC, (World Boxing Council) to gain a deeper understanding of this show-sport. All sports have an anthropological side, and I am fairly sure that if we go to a party or just to the park, we can play some of them, but to put on boxing gloves

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/EnLaEntradaDeLaArena/posts/1548327445327550>

and fight in some of these places would be uncommon. To understand why some people choose to have this sport as a profession can be fascinating. The first boxing book that I read in English was *On Boxing* by Joyce Carol Oates. I was so inspired that I wanted to keep reading and learning all the languages that are involved in this adventure. Famous writers of literary fiction have some titles about boxing. Even some famous writers have practiced it. I am still practicing in the private spot of my garage where I keep learning. There is something special about boxing. When you first feel your fist hit the boxing bag, you can receive more than energy. Boxing is a language with a Knock Out (KO).

See you next time with more boxing and language.

Jorge Allen, our former MaFLA President, invited Adriana Perez CANDia to contribute an article on Motivation for this issue of the Newsletter. Adriana uses boxing to engage and motivate her students. Adriana is a Spanish Associate Lecturer of Global Culture and Languages at the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse.

A. CANDia

“Ser, Estar y Hacer”

Spanish Associate Lecturer

Global Cultures and Languages

University of Wisconsin La Crosse

Office: 608 785 8331

302 C Graff Main Hall

aperezcandia@uwlax.edu



Photographs by Nami Sakamoto, Fall 2020.

Advantages Of Being Bilingual

Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

When I first started my career, the common answer to the question “Why should I study French?” was “If you go to France, you’ll be able to order a meal.” Today, however, because the ultimate goal of L2 teachers is to produce bilingual students for their future, the answer would most likely be “to succeed in our global economy.” Thankfully, the grammar-translation methodology which produced very few bilingual students has been replaced by the communicative language approach which should make it easier to foster bilingualism.

But what does “to be bilingual” mean? This article will attempt to define bilingualism, its extent in the world, and its advantages.

Definition

According to the Miriam-Webster Dictionary, bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages, the frequent use (as by a community) of two languages, or the political or institutional recognition of two languages. There are two ways for someone to become bilingual:

1. Natural acquisition: A child is born into a family where the parents both speak two languages or a child moves from one language environment into one that speaks a different language from the one spoken at home. When the languages are acquired simultaneously, this is called compound bilingualism.

2. Guided acquisition: A person learns a second language by means of instruction in an academic environment i.e., a school, a book, a cassette, the internet, etc. Because the two languages are not acquired simultaneously, the mother tongue usually dominates and the person is much less proficient in the second language. This is called subordinate bilingualism. If, on the other hand, both languages are used equally, this is called coordinate bilingualism.

The Bilingual World

English is the most popular second language throughout the world. Consequently, English-speaking Americans tend to be monolingual because they feel no urgency to learn a second language. But the fact is that the rest of the world tends to be bilingual. Much of the information below can be found on-line at the following site: Chen & Padillo. “Role of Bilingualism and Biculturalism as Assets in Positive Psychology: Conceptual Dynamic GEAR Model.” Graduate School of Education, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, United States. 2019.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.o2122>

1. Around 60% to 75% of the world is bilingual and according to the Associated Press, up to 66% of the world’s children are raised bilingual. (1) The University of Ottawa lists 55 nations as being bi/multi lingual. (2) Bilingualism is on the rise and in most places of the world it is becoming more and more common.
2. In a survey conducted by the European Commission in 2006, 56 percent of respondents reported being able to speak in a language other than their mother tongue. In many countries that percentage is even higher—for instance, 99 percent of Luxembourgers and 95 percent of Latvians speak more than one language. (3)
3. Approximately half of the world’s 7.4 billion people are bilingual. For thousands of years, people have been

migrating among the world’s 197 countries speaking 7011 languages and so it is only natural and logical that many people across the globe would find it necessary to speak another language. According to the European Commission 2006, 56% of Europeans surveyed in 25 different countries reported that they could use another language besides their mother tongue to communicate. (4)

4. Although some countries have only one official national language, they may have a considerable number of bilingual speakers i.e., France and Germany. Because of the close proximity of so many of the world’s countries to one another, the opportunity to learn and to use another language is an important motivation to becoming bilingual. Close proximity is not a factor in the United States. Of the 50 states, only Louisiana has two official languages: English and French.

A closer examination of the United States reveals that it is by no means a monolingual country. Because of the vast number of immigrants from South America choosing to live here, Spanish has become our second language if not de jure but de facto. Because of the vast number of immigrants from the world over, according to the 2010 Census, “over 350 languages are spoken in US households in addition to English. Consequently, over 20 percent of US households speak a language besides English at home, or have a mother tongue besides English. That number is rising every year, and as a result, the number of bilingual children is also rising. One-fifth of those over the age of five reported speaking a language other than English at home in 2007, an increase of 140 percent since 1980.” (5)

However, English-speaking Americans tend to be monolingual. A recent Gallup poll states that only one in four American adults now reports being conversationally proficient in another language. Although the children of immigrants tend to be bilingual, their grandchildren often become English-speaking monolinguals.



Advantages Of Being Bilingual

Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

Callahan suggests that it might be time to rethink the emphasis on monolingualism in the US. (6) Mathews supports this view when in his article “Half the world is bilingual. What’s our problem?” he bemoans the fact that according to the U.S. Census Bureau, “only 20 percent of Americans can converse in two or more languages, compared with 56 percent of Europeans.”(7)

I am one of the 20%. So, how did I become bilingual? I grew up in a bilingual household and acquired the two languages simultaneously and naturally. At the age of five, I went to a bilingual French-English catholic elementary school where I received guided formal instruction about the grammar and the structure of each language. I learned the grammar i.e., the accuracy after I had acquired the fluency. Because I lived in an English-speaking environment, English became my stronger language until, at the age of 14, I went to a boarding school in Quebec for 5 years at which time French became my stronger language. I had complete mastery of both languages in the four skills. And so, I guess I am a compound/coordinate bilingual. I became a French teacher purely by accident and after listening to the cassettes that accompanied the textbook, I soon realized that I spoke with a Quebecois/Franco-American accent. After many hours of listening and practicing, I adopted a more standard accent, such that many French nationals after speaking with me would ask from which part of France I came from. All were astonished by my response that I had never been to France.

My bilingualism which was naturally acquired provided me with a wonderful career. Knowing the extent of bilingualism in the world and its advantages could be a powerful motivator for monolingual students to learn a second or even a third language.

Advantages of Bilingualism

World Language teachers are well-positioned to foster the importance of bilingualism by incorporating it as one of their primary goals. Their main task is convincing those in the monolingual world of the advantages of bilingualism. A quick internet search on bilingualism will reveal its

many advantages. I will illustrate each of them as they refer to me.

Cognitive: Studies show the numerous positive effects of bilingualism on the executive functions of the brain which are a set of mental skills controlled by an area of the brain called the frontal lobe that help you get things done. These mental skills coordinate such processes as:

1. Ability to focus: According to Willis, “every time a bilingual speaks, both languages are actually active, and the brain has to work to suppress one language while the other is being used.”(8) I have never mixed up the languages. In the four language skills, when in English I think only in English and when in French I think only in French. In fact, I sometimes dream in French.
2. Multitasking: According to Bialystok, “bilingual kids can switch from one activity to another faster and are better at doing multiple tasks at once than monolinguals.”(9) I can mix the language skills quite well, i.e., I can answer in English a question that is asked me in French, and I can readily translate into English a text that I am reading in French.
3. Problem solving: According to Machuso, “when someone knows multiple languages, both of those languages are active in the brain simultaneously, and they must mentally separate them when thinking or speaking. In order to operate in one language or another, bilingual individuals are accustomed to tasking their brain to switch back and forth between language systems. Because of this, multilingual kids tend to be better problem solvers.”(10) I can begin a conversation in French and finish it in English and vice versa.
4. Capacity for learning new concepts: According to Machuso, “children who know more than one language have a better capacity for learning new concepts quickly. If they are proficient in two more languages, children have

been shown to more easily grasp new ideas in other disciplines such as math and science.” (10)

5. Linguistic facilities: Studies indicate that being bilingual makes learning a third or fourth language easier because as you are constantly switching from one language to another you become accustomed to expressing yourself in a different way, using a different sound system and a different sentence structure. I did extremely well in learning to read in and listen to spoken Spanish in a college continuing education program. Sadly, not so well in speaking because the professor neglected that skill. At the boarding school in Quebec, I studied Latin and ancient Greek. After boarding school, I attended a minor seminary where all my philosophy textbooks were in Latin. Although I recall very little Greek, I remembered enough Latin to teach Latin 1 for two years at the high school level.
6. Intellectual Gymnastic: According to Bialystok, “learning another language stretches your mind intellectually. When you learn another language you have to focus on the structure of sentences, you have to recognize sound patterns and make inferences.”(9) My knowledge of French and Latin grammar has helped me to have a better understanding of English structure which has helped me be a better ESL teacher.

Social and emotional: To be able to communicate in the language of a family member whose primary language is different than that of the child’s is truly an advantage for both. If, for instance, one grandparent speaks only French and the other speaks only English, the child knowing both languages will be able to form a deeper bond with each grandparent. If as a child I had not been able to communicate with my great aunt who spoke mostly in French, I would never have known her as well as I did. In many situations immigrant children who are learning English will serve as translators for the family members who do not speak English.

Advantages Of Being Bilingual

Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

Economic: Education, government, business, and healthcare are just some of the areas in greatest need of employees who are able to communicate with others in other languages. Fluency in more than one language can open many doors to more job opportunities. I did not study French to become a French teacher; I became a French teacher because I was fluent in French. Being bilingual opened many doors for me: high school teacher, graduate school professor, textbook author, staff development and workshop leader, and translator.

Travel: Being fluent in more than one language creates opportunities for travel and gives one access to a larger world. When you learn a language you also learn the culture. This will help you navigate among people in a different cultural and linguistic context. Knowing the social codes will allow you to avoid mistakes that monolinguals make when traveling abroad. Obviously my travels to Quebec, France, Monaco, and Switzerland were successful because of my French which also came in very handy during my trips to Italy and Spain. Although not so helpful in interpreting what people were saying, I was often able to decipher the written language.

Cultural: Bilinguals have the ability to connect with others across multiple cultures in a way that monolinguals cannot because they can observe the culture directly, rather than just reading about it or being told about it. Being able to live in the culture will give them a real understanding of the culture. Being bilingual has enabled me to see the world through someone else's eye, to understand that there are various interpretations and visions of reality. It has also taught me to become more tolerant of other points of view. When I speak in French, I feel that I am a very different person in my tone of voice, my gestures, and in my mannerisms than when I speak in English. There is the French me and the English me and they are not at all the same.

Health: According to Bialystok, "learning another language stretches your mind intellectually.

When you learn another language you have to focus on the structure of sentences, you have to recognize sound patterns and make inferences. Research even shows that learning a language would help delay dementia and Alzheimers." (9) Fortunately this octogenarian shows no signs of dementia.

Deep understanding of the concept of "language": Bilinguals have a deeper appreciation of the nature of language. They know that there is more than one way to label a word and that a word can have different connotations. There is the linguistic interpretation, i.e., bread is *pain* and the cultural one, i.e., in America bread is sliced Wonder bread but in France *pain* is a baguette. Why are directional signals on a car called "blinkers" in English but "winkers" (*clignotants*) in French? To blink one closes both eyes, but to wink one closes one eye. Being bilingual has caused me to view each language from a logical point of view and to appreciate the differences.

Conclusion

Because we live in a bilingual world, world language teachers are encouraged to teach their monolingual students the advantages of knowing more than one language. They also need to be realistic about the type of bilingualism possible for their students to achieve. In a school setting, the best that the students can aspire to is subordinate bilingualism. Knowing that there are cognitive, social, economic, cultural, health, and travel benefits to bilingualism, and that most of the world is bilingual, will hopefully provide the students with the answer to the question "Why should I study French, or Spanish, or Russian, etc.?"

References

1. Associated Press. (2001). Some facts about the world's 6,800 tongues. Retrieved October 1, 2012, from http://articles.cnn.com/2001-06-19/us/language.glance_1_languages-origin-tongues?_s=PM:US
2. [The 55 bilingual countries in the world | Compendium of Language Management in Canada \(CLMC\) | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#)

3. European Commission Special Eurobarometer. (2006). Europeans and their languages. Retrieved October 1, 2012, from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_243_en.pdf
4. Marian & Shook. The Cognitive Benefits of Being Bilingual. <https://dana.org/article/the-cognitive-benefits-of-being-bilingual>
5. United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey. Retrieved October 1, 2012 from <http://www.census.gov/acs/www>
6. Callahan, Rebecca. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/03/the-advantages-of-speaking-two-languages>
7. Mathew, Jay. "Half the world is bilingual. What's our problem?" Education writer and columnist. Washington Post. April 25, 2019
8. Willis, Judy. "Bilingual Brains – Smarter & Faster: Better attention and cognition in children who grow up in bilingual settings." Psychology Today. 2012
9. Bialystok, Ellen. "Bilingual brains are more Healthy" [Ellen Bialystok: Bilingual brains are more healthy | Language | The Guardian](#)
10. Machuso, Megan. [Advantages of Bilingual Children Who Learn a Second Language Early in Life - WeHaveKids - Family](#)

About the author

Marcel LaVergne, Ed.D., retired, was a high school teacher of French, a Director of Foreign Languages, an adjunct professor of Foreign Language Methods, a textbook author, and a consultant on Foreign Language Teaching and Learning. He was associated with the National Capital Language Resource Center as the author of the Sound Bites for Better Teaching column and is a frequent contributor to the MaFLA Newsletter.

Elaine G. Batting Memorial Scholarship

MaFLA has established a \$500.00 scholarship to honor the memory of an outstanding teacher of Latin in Massachusetts. A long-time member of MaFLA, Elaine G. Batting served on MaFLA's Board of Directors from 1990 until her untimely death in 1994. During her tenure as a teacher of Latin, she received numerous fellowships for both intensive study and travel during the summer and encouraged others to apply for such scholarships by presenting workshops on how to apply for fellowships and grants. Her studies and experiences contributed significantly to the curriculum base in classical languages. It is expected that the recipient of the Memorial Scholarship will make similar contributions to the study of classical languages in the Commonwealth, including a 45-minute in-person or recorded video presentation at the MaFLA Conference and a 350 word article for the MaFLA Newsletter.

ELIGIBILITY

The applicant must be a member in good standing of MaFLA, be a full-time teacher in a public or private school K-12, and must carry a teaching load of at least 60% in classical languages/studies.

This form, completed, must be accompanied by:

1. an outline of a study project or study proposal
2. a summary of curricular outcome of the project or travel
3. a short essay on how the proposed study or travel will impact the applicant's future teaching
4. a recommendation from a fellow classics teacher/department chair concerning the candidate's previous work and potential benefit from the proposed project or travel

N.B. Those who have previously received a Batting Scholarship will be considered after first time submissions are considered.

2021 MaFLA Elaine G. Batting Memorial Scholarship Application

Name: _____ Email: _____

Home Address: _____ Phone: _____

School Name: _____ Phone: _____

School Address: _____

Classes taught in 2020-2021 _____

Years teaching - full time _____ part time _____ Latin/Greek/Classical Humanities

If awarded the scholarship, I agree to make a presentation at the annual MaFLA Conference and write a 350 word article for the MaFLA newsletter on my project.

Signature _____

This form and complete supporting materials must be submitted by March 31, 2021.

Send completed application packet to:

**Deb Heaton
80 School Street
Lexington, MA 02421**

Email: Dheaton@comcast.net

The successful applicant will be notified by April 30, 2021.

Helen G. Agbay New Teacher Graduate Study Scholarship

PURPOSE:

The Massachusetts Foreign Language Association has established a \$500.00 scholarship to honor the memory of Helen G. Agbay who was a founding member of MaFLA and served on the board for many years in numerous capacities. During her career as a foreign language educator and interpreter, Helen taught French and Spanish at the K-12 levels as well as at the post-secondary level. She was not only a foreign language educator, but also an advanced degree language student of Italian and Portuguese. To honor Helen and her passion and dedication for the teaching and learning of languages, this scholarship has been created to financially assist a current world language teacher who is in the process of earning a Master's degree in world language education.

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION:

For consideration the applicant is required to be:

- a member in good standing of MaFLA
- a full-time world language teacher (K-12) in a public or private school from 1-10 years
- matriculated in a graduate studies program in world language education

The application form (below) must be accompanied by:

- a copy of academic transcripts
- proof of matriculation in a graduate program
- two letters of recommendation from:
 - (1) current school principal or department chair
 - (2) additional administrator or fellow world language teacher
- personal statement of intent for use of scholarship (maximum one page)

2021 Helen G. Agbay New Teacher Graduate Study Scholarship Application Form

Name: _____ Email: _____

Home Address: _____ Phone: _____

School Name: _____ Phone: _____

School Address: _____

Classes taught in 2020-2021 _____

Years and languages taught: Full-time _____ Part-time _____

I am a full time teacher. Signature _____

This form and complete supporting materials must be submitted by June 1, 2021 to:

Michael Travers

Email: mtravers0202@gmail.com

Fill out and submit your form [HERE](#).

The successful applicant will be notified by June 15

MaFLA Past Presidents' Awards

Premise

Awards are given to high school students who have demonstrated excellence in world language study and service/leadership within their schools.

Criteria for Past Presidents' Award

1. Student must be a senior in high school who has completed the last sequence of that language.
2. Student must have studied a world language for a minimum of three sequential levels (Spanish I, II, III, for example). The only exception will be for students who study a critical language which has a program of only two years in scope (Chinese I, Chinese II, for example).
3. Student must be planning to continue world language study at the college level.
4. Student must have achieved a 90% average in the world language over the 3+ years of study.
5. Student must have demonstrated service to or leadership within the department, school and/or community. Some examples are language club officer, tutor, etc.
6. Student must be able to articulate in an essay of 250 words the importance of world language study. This topic may be treated either globally or personally. Some examples are:

The Importance of World Language Study in Today's Changing World

The Importance of World Language Study in My Life

7. Nominating teacher must be a member of MaFLA. Only one candidate per school should be submitted for consideration.

Application Must Be Submitted with PDF of the following:

1. Official high school student transcript (including first semester grades for current academic year).
2. Student essay of not more than 250 words on the importance of world language study (in English).
3. A single page letter of support from the nominating teacher which should include evidence of student's leadership/service to department, school and/or community.
4. A signed statement from the student indicating his/her intention to continue world language studies in college

Prizes

- MaFLA awards up to four awards of \$500.00 annually in honor of our past presidents.
- Winners will be honored at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
- All entrants will receive a notification of nomination and a letter of appreciation. In addition, letters of appreciation will be sent to the principal and superintendent of participating schools.
- Winners will be posted on MaFLA.org.

Contact

Joyce Beckwith

Email: mmejoyb@aol.com

Submit your nomination, along with supporting materials [HERE](#)

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY: APRIL 15, 2021.

New Teacher Commendation

FOR EXCELLENCE IN WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHING

Four Complimentary Three-Year Memberships to MaFLA Will Be Awarded

PURPOSE: MaFLA's mission encompasses the mentoring, support and professional growth of new teachers in the profession. This commendation and accompanying award recognize new teachers for demonstrated excellence. MaFLA wishes to welcome new teachers to the state organization and to offer multiple opportunities for professional development, support, networking, and collegiality through membership. Awardees will receive a complimentary three-year membership to the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA) and all accompanying benefits.

CRITERIA FOR RECOMMENDATION/APPLICATION:

New Teacher refers to a person who, at the time of being recommended or of applying for the award is:

1. New to the world language teaching profession within the past 5 years.
2. A full-time world language teacher in Massachusetts.

The nominating letter for the new teacher must show that (s)he demonstrates:

- Proficiency in the language(s) taught.
- Knowledge and application of current methodologies of world language teaching.
- Knowledge of the diverse learning styles of students.
- Successful communication skills with students and colleagues.
- A class atmosphere conducive to learning.
- Involvement in extra-curricular world language activities.
- Involvement in professional activities.
- Enthusiasm in his/her teaching and learning of world languages.

RECOMMENDATION/APPLICATION PROCESS:

Recommendations/applications for the commendation can be made by a school administrator, a colleague or the teacher him/herself. All applications must be sent to the MaFLA Board New Teacher Awards Committee Chairperson listed below by March 31, 2021.

New Teacher Commendation Application Form

Please print or type

Name: _____ Email: _____

Home Address: _____ Phone: _____

School Name: _____ Phone: _____

School Address: _____

Classes taught in 2020-2021 : _____

Years teaching: full time _____ part time _____ Years teaching World Language(s) _____

Submit the application form and supporting materials [HERE](#) by March 31, 2021.

Questions? Contact **Shannon Vigeant**

Email: smvigeant@msn.com

The successful applicants will be notified by April 30.

MaFLA Student Award Certificates

The MaFLA Board of Directors has established an awards program for students of world languages in public and private schools in Massachusetts. Award categories are:

1. One award for excellence for each language per school. This certificate is conferred upon the student who has demonstrated excellence (highest achievement) in the most advanced course of each language taught in each school.
2. One award per high school to a student who has distinguished him/herself for leadership in world language activities.

Any public or private school in Massachusetts wishing to recognize academic excellence and leadership in world language activities by awarding the MaFLA award certificates should complete the form provided and return it to the address on the form. Individual certificates, signed by a member of the Board of Directors of MaFLA, will be sent for presentation to students. Each school is eligible to make one award for excellence in each language taught (no ties, please). Each high school is eligible to make one award per school for leadership (no ties, please) in world language activities.

The Board of Directors has established the following criteria which each award recipient's school must meet:

- a. Nominees must be public or private school students in Massachusetts.
- b. Recipients of the Award for Excellence must be enrolled in the most advanced course offered in their school of the language for which they have been selected to receive the award.
- c. Recipients of the Award for Leadership for world language activities may be enrolled in any high school world language course but must demonstrate leadership in world language activities. No more than one award per high school per year will be granted for leadership.
- d. Recipients are to be selected by the world language faculty of their respective schools. Criteria for determining highest achievement shall be determined by the local school's world language department.
- e. Schools participating in the awards program must have at least one current MaFLA member on their world language staffs. Application for awards must be made through this member.
- f. The deadline for request for 2020-2021 certificates is **May 15, 2021**.

***** **MaFLA STUDENT AWARD FORM** *****

As a current member of MaFLA and the person representing my school's world language department, I nominate the students named below for MaFLA awards. I certify that the criteria outlined by the MaFLA Board of Directors have been met by the nominees and by their school.

MUST BE TYPED! (or submit online via mafla.org)

I. Awards for Excellence:

<i>Student(s) Nominated</i>	<i>Language(s)</i>	<i>Course(s)</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

II. Award for Leadership (High School):

<i>Student Nominated</i>	<i>Language(s)</i>	<i>Course(s)</i>
_____	_____	_____

Nominator's Name: _____ Membership Expires: _____
 School: _____ Phone: _____
 School Address: _____
 Email: _____ Signature: _____

Contact: **Nilma Dominique** Email: nilmadominique@gmail.com
 To submit online click [HERE](#).

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF NOMINATIONS: May 15, 2021

MaFLA Essay Contest

2021 Theme: We Got This!

Premise

MaFLA wants to raise students' awareness of the role that world languages play in the state, and to involve students and teachers more actively in that purpose. Students submitting these essays should consider what the theme means to them. How does it apply to your everyday experience with learning another language and how does it fit in with ultimate goals around language?

All world language teachers of Massachusetts are invited to get their students involved in celebrating the theme!

Summary

Students must demonstrate the ability to be effective communicators in the State of Massachusetts. MaFLA is pleased to offer this exciting opportunity for all students in public and private schools in Massachusetts to participate in our essay contest. We encourage MaFLA members to work in collaboration with their ELA teachers.

In each of the divisions outlined below students will have the opportunity to demonstrate in English how they understand and interpret the current theme of the year in order to raise awareness of the role that world languages play nationally and internationally.

Students may be entered in one of four specific categories corresponding to their grade level below.

Contest Guidelines

1. Each entry must be an original work of a current world language student (including students enrolled in an ESL class) whose teacher is currently a MaFLA member.
2. No group entries will be accepted. **NEW THIS YEAR** - LIMIT: TWO (2) entries per teacher per school. (e.g. a teacher who teaches in both a high school and a middle school will be able to submit up to four entries, two per building)
3. Teacher must submit the official entry via the Google Form below (including any PDFs or JPGs of items that require a signature with their entries as stated below).
4. All entries become the property of MaFLA.
5. Essays must be written in English. Essays must state theme and content must be relevant to the theme.
6. Essays must have a title, be typed/word processed (Times New Roman font at 12 points) and double spaced.
7. If outside sources are used, they must be cited appropriately. Plagiarism will be grounds for immediate disqualification.

Divisions and Corresponding Essay Lengths

Elementary School - Grades K-5: Maximum of 150 words

High School - Grades 9-12: Maximum of 350 words

Middle School - Grades 6-8: Maximum of 250 words

College or University - Grades 13-16: Maximum of 350 words

Judging Criteria

- Topic Development
- Organization
- Use of Language (English)
- Conventions

Prizes

- One essay will be selected as Essay of the Year; author will receive a check for \$50.00; The winning essay will be featured at the MaFLA Conference.
- There will be only one winner per division. For the division producing the Essay of the Year no division award will be given.
- Division winners for the contest will receive a check for \$25.00. These awards may be presented by a MaFLA Board Member at the student's school awards ceremony in the spring.
- Several Honorable Mention essays will be selected and featured at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of participation. A letter of appreciation will be sent to all MaFLA members whose students participate in the contests. In addition, letters of appreciation will be sent to the principal and superintendent of participating schools.
- Winners will be posted on mafla.org.

Contact - for any questions or concerns

Sheng-Chu Lu shengchulu@gmail.com

[Entry Form](#)

DEADLINE for submission: April 15

MaFLA Digital Art Contest

2021 Theme: We Got This!

Premise

In the state of Massachusetts, students need to demonstrate the ability to use technology for the purpose of communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. Consequently, through the use of a variety of media formats students develop technology skills that enable them to communicate effectively, to multiple audiences, a variety of information and ideas to satisfy both world language and technology standards.

Summary

This year we are introducing our first digital art contest! Similar to the Poster Contest, this is intended to allow students to demonstrate the effect that being multilingual and multicultural has in our global society through a digital art form! Students submitting these original images should consider what the theme means to them and the importance of being multilingual. How does it apply to your everyday experience with learning another language and how does it fit in with ultimate goals around language?

All world language teachers of Massachusetts are invited to get their students involved in celebrating the theme! Please, feel free to collaborate with your digital arts teachers as well!

Students may be entered in one of four specific categories corresponding to their grade level below.

Elementary School - Students in grades Pre-K-5

High School - Students in grades 9-12

Middle School - Students in grades 6-8

College or University - Grades 13-16

Prizes

- One entry will be selected as Digital Image of the Year; that artist will receive a check for \$50
- There will be only one winner per division. For the division producing the Image of the Year, no division award will be given.
- Division winners for the contest will receive a check for \$25.00. These awards may be presented by a MaFLA Board Member at the student's school awards ceremony in the spring.
- Several Honorable Mention images will be selected and featured at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of participation.

Contest Guidelines

1. Participation is limited to students attending public, charter, or private schools, who are enrolled in a Pre-K – 16 world language class at the time of submission.
2. Teachers will submit student entries, and must be members in good standing with MaFLA.
3. The format of the Digital Image should be a high quality JPG or PDF.
4. No group entries, one student per entry.
5. This should not be a scan of a drawn image, but rather a digitally created file.
6. Participating teachers need to fill out the Contest Entry Form to the contest chair Carlos-Luis Brown.
7. Submissions that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered.
8. Limit: Two (2) entries per Teacher (must be a current MaFLA member) per school. If a teacher teaches in two schools (e.g a middle school and a high school) he/she will be allowed to submit 4 entries, 2 per building.

Click [HERE](#) for a PDF of judging criteria.

Contact - for any questions or concerns

Carlos-Luis Brown - carlos-luis.brown@wpsk12.com

[Entry Form](#)

DEADLINE for submission: April 15

MaFLA Video Contest

2021 Theme: We Got This!

Premise

In the state of Massachusetts, students need to demonstrate the ability to use technology for the purpose of communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. Consequently, through the use of a variety of media formats, students develop technology skills that enable them to communicate effectively, to multiple audiences, a variety of information and ideas to satisfy both world language and technology standards.

Summary

Video production is a method of communication that is used more and more and it allows anyone to create video files and post them to the Internet for others to download and listen to/view at any time. MaFLA is pleased to offer an exciting opportunity for all students in public and private schools in Massachusetts to participate in a video contest. In a two-minute video, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate in English or a another world language how they understand and interpret the current theme of the year in order to raise awareness of the role that world languages play nationally and internationally.

Contest Guidelines

1. Participation is limited to students attending public or private schools who are enrolled in a Pre-K – 16 world language class at the time of submission.
2. Teachers will submit student entries, and must be members in good standing with MaFLA.
3. The total video length is not to exceed 2 minutes in English/world language.
4. A maximum of 2 students can perform on one video entry for 6-12.
5. K-5 teachers can submit a “Classroom” entry that demonstrates the Theme of the year. Please note, waivers must be signed for any/all students visible in the video.
6. Participating teachers need to fill out the Contest Entry Form to the contest chair Carlos-Luis Brown.
7. Note: all submissions must be a YouTube link (select Unlisted, not public or private).
8. Submissions that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered.
9. Limit: Two (2) entries per Teacher (must be a current MaFLA member) per school. If a teacher teaches in two schools (e.g a middle school and a high school) he/she will be allowed to submit 4 entries, 2 per building.

Divisions

Elementary School - Grades K-5

High School - Grades 9-12

Middle School - Grades 6-8

College or University - Ideal for students travelling abroad

Suggested Activities

A speech/soliloquy/address

An advertisement

A song (includes raps)

A poem

A public service announcement

A skit

For K-5 teachers, please consider demonstrating the theme in your elementary classrooms as an alternative to students creating their own videos.

Prizes

- A MaFLA committee will select one winner in each of the four divisions. The prize for the winner in each category will be \$50 awarded to the student creator of the video (to be split if there are 2 students).
- The videos of the winners, and the two runners-up from each category may be showcased in an area of the MaFLA website.
- Several honorable mention videos will be selected and featured at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of participation.
- A letter of appreciation will be sent to all MaFLA members whose students participate in the contest. In addition, letters of appreciation will be sent to the principal and superintendent of participating schools.
- Winners will be posted on mafla.org. Certificates and acknowledgments will be sent out at a later date.

Contact - for any questions or concerns

Carlos-Luis Brown - carlos-luis.brown@wpsk12.com

[Entry Form](#)

DEADLINE for submission: April 15

MaFLA Poster Contest

2021 Theme: We Got This!

Premise

MaFLA wants to raise students' awareness of the role that world languages play in the state, and to involve students and teachers more actively in that purpose. The Poster Contest is intended to allow students to demonstrate the effect that being multilingual and multicultural has in our global society. Students submitting these posters should consider what the theme means to them and the importance of being multilingual. How does it apply to your everyday experience with learning another language and how does it fit in with ultimate goals around language?

Summary

Students must demonstrate the ability to be effective communicators in the State of Massachusetts. MaFLA is pleased to offer this exciting opportunity for all students in public, charter and private schools in Massachusetts to participate in our Poster Contest. In each of the divisions outlined below students will have the opportunity to demonstrate via visual arts how they understand and interpret the current theme of the year in order to raise awareness of the role that world languages play nationally and internationally. Students may be entered in one of four specific categories corresponding to their grade level below.

Contest Guidelines

1. Each entry must be an original work of a current world language student (including students enrolled in an ESL class) whose teacher is currently a MaFLA member. No group entries will be accepted.
 2. Limit: Two (2) entries per teacher (must be a current MaFLA member) per school. If a teacher teaches in two schools (e.g. a middle school and a high school) he/she will be allowed to submit 4 entries, 2 per building.
 3. Teachers are required to put the requested information on the back of the poster securely.
 4. All entries become the property of MaFLA.
 5. All posters must incorporate the exact wording of the theme.
 6. Posters must measure the standard poster size of 22" x 28" and have a flat surface with no moving parts. No three-dimensional posters will be accepted.
 7. Use lightweight poster material. Posters should be mailed in a 3" or larger tube.
 8. Paints, markers, pencils, crayons, inks, gel pens may be used. Glitter, glue, charcoals, or tape on the front of the poster will not be accepted nor will computer generated posters.
 9. Illustrations must be used in addition to words and must be relevant to the theme.
 10. There must be a TWO inch margin on all sides free of design and lettering.
 11. No copyrighted figures such as Snoopy, Disney characters, Family Guy, Simpsons etc. may be used.
 12. Damaged posters will be disqualified.
 13. Teachers must submit a high quality picture of the poster with the entry.
 14. Teacher must fill out the conference entry from linked below, print out the completed form and mail it, with the poster, to the address on the form.
- Please note: Any posters that do not meet all of the above criteria will be disqualified.**

Divisions

Elementary School - Grades K-5
Middle School - Grades 6-8

High School - Grades 9-12
College or University - Grades 13-16

Prizes

- One poster will be selected as Poster of the Year; that artist will receive a check for \$50; poster will be displayed at the MaFLA Conference.
- There will be only one winner per division. For the division producing the Poster of the Year, no division award will be given).
- Divisional winners will receive a check for \$25. These awards may be presented by a MaFLA Board Member at the student's school awards ceremony in the spring.
- Several honorable mention posters will be selected and featured at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of participation.
- A letter of appreciation will be sent to all MaFLA members whose students participate in the contest. In addition, letters of appreciation will be sent to the principal and superintendent of participating schools.
- Winners will be posted on mafla.org. Certificates and acknowledgments will be sent out at a later date.

Contact - for any questions or concerns

[Teresa Benedetti - benedettiford@gmail.com](mailto:benedettiford@gmail.com)

[Entry Form and Instructions for Mailing](#)

DEADLINE for submission: April 15

Massachusetts Foreign Language Association

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1
Meet the New Board Members	3
Educator in the Spotlight	4
Gladys Lipton In Memoriam	8
MaFLA Conference 2021	9
ACTFL 2020 - A Different Take On PD	10
Staying Motivated Amidst Changing Conditions	11
What Keeps Us Motivated	13
A Language Of Knock Out	14
Advantages Of Being Bilingual	16
Elaine G. Batting Memorial Scholarship	19
Helen G. Agbay New Teacher Scholarship	20
MaFLA Past Presidents' Awards	21
New Teacher Commendation	22
MaFLA Student Award Certificates	23
MaFLA Essay Contest	24
MaFLA Digital Art Contest	25
MaFLA Video Contest	26
MaFLA Poster Contest	27

Our theme for the Spring Issue is –

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- How do you incorporate Social Emotional Learning into your curriculum?
- What does Social Emotional Learning look like?
- How do you teach Social Emotional Skills?
What are they? Why are they important?
- What are some strategies you use to promote Social Emotional Learning?

Send **YOUR** contribution to the next issue to:

Ronie R. Webster ronie@mafla.org

41 Glenn Drive

Wilbraham, MA 01095

Phone 413.596.9284

Deadline for the Spring Issue is March 5

