

## **Foreign Language Week Activities: Your Ideas To Share!**

Compiled by: Kenneth I. Hughes  
Greenwich Jr/Sr High School

In the Spring of 2007, NYSAFLT encouraged members to submit information via it's website to find out how they celebrated National Foreign Language Week (March 5-12, 2007). NYSAFLT received hundreds of responses from members all across New York State! We hope that you enjoy reading through some of those answers. Our hope is that you find something that sparks a new idea for you or re-energizes an idea you currently implement. We have included the name and the school district of the author so that if you want more information, you may contact them directly. Thanks to all who took time to share their love of languages!

**Name: Mary Leptak**

**School: Eastchester Central School**

Middle school teachers have students prepare and sample dishes from the target culture. (The other teachers love to visit our classes, of course, during this week.) Some teachers show videos or teach songs this week. One of the high school teachers even offered to teach salsa to some middle and high school classes! This year, we also had a poster contest.

**Name: Liliana Policano**

**School: Oyster Bay-East Norwich CSD**

We decided to celebrate the entire month with the following activities:

- LILT Posters Competition: "Languages Link us together"
- AP Spanish students teaching two FLES lessons.
- Around the school Posters: "Popular French Expressions in the English Language"
- French 1A: "Scholonopoly" Week long project/game creation.
- French 1B: Puppet Show (Cross-curricular long week project with Home Economics.)
- French Jeopardy: Jeopardy Game regarding French Culture and other games created.
- Cooking Experiences: French Crêpes, Chocolate con Churros, Fajitas and Quesadillas
- Banners and Multicultural Music
- Labeling the 3rd floor classes with bilingual signs in French and Spanish
- Decorating our main Lobby Showcase
- A Cultural Mosaic Workshop for the upper grades, in conjunction with Briarcliff College
- Argentinean Dance Group "Ballet Los Pampas"

**Name: Cheryl Benken**

**School: Webutuck Middle/High School**

The French classes extended the language week celebration in both directions: we just kept the momentum going from the Great Mardi Gras Bead sale. The French III & IV classes took their first SCUBA lessons, preparatory to our trip to Martinique during Spring Break. The 8th grade class competed in a French Scavenger Hunt for 3 hours at a local grocery store (we received lots of newspaper coverage on this). The 7th grade attended the performance of "Belle et la Bête" at a neighboring school. The French IV class attended "Medieval Times" in New Jersey for an on-site test of their Middle Ages unit of study. Finally, we left for the Antilles at the end of the month. This is a wonderful, pro-active immersion trip with the emphasis on ecology (rain forest & mangroves), water sports and, of course volcano climbing

**Name: Lynne Lenhart**

**School: Ticonderoga Central School**

We did daily announcements over the intercom in 5 different languages. We also had a Spanish or French trivia question each day over the intercom. Wednesday of the week, we held an international dinner for French and Spanish student with dishes from many countries, music videos in French and Spanish and a quiz bowl of French verses Spanish brains. Friday was an ethnic costume contest held throughout the school. The building was decorated with posters

promoting foreign language study. Language classes devoted a day to examining career options available to language students.

**Name: Rita Schaffer**

**School: South Orangetown Middle School**

Each year, I tape five different teachers or staff members in my school speaking a foreign language. We include Spanish, Italian and French, the languages taught in our district, along with two less-recognizable languages. Each day of Foreign Language Week, during our morning announcements, a voice is played twice. The students are instructed to figure out who the person is who is speaking, what the language is and what the message is. We always include a clue in the message to help the students with their guesses. There are specially printed forms that the homeroom teachers have to give to the students who would like to guess. A winner is chosen at random at the end of the day from all the correct answers. The prize each day is a \$10 gift certificate to our Book Fair in the spring.

**Name: Paula Daunt-Wagoner**

**School: Fox Lane Middle School**

We had a poster contest. A successful poster illustrated an idiomatic expression and had visual clues for the expression in both French and English incorporated creatively into the poster. For example: "se noyer dans un verre d'eau" and the English equivalent "to make a mountain out of a molehill" were expressed visually to express both the English idiom as well as the French idiom. The posters were then posted in the main lobby where all students could view and match the English idiomatic expression with the correct French poster.

**Name: Susan Frost**

**School: Lake George High School**

Students were encouraged to dress in the colors of the French and Spanish flags. We also had a poster contest with "thank you" in thirteen different languages. Students submitted entries with the names of the languages. All correct entries were put together and one was drawn for a prize. We hold a very successful French and Spanish lip sync event called "Bravo!". Classes performed French and Spanish music on stage complete with costumes, props, and choreography. Judging and prizes were based on lip sync, choreography, costumes, and best overall.

**Name: Linda Forman**

**School: Carmel High School**

At Carmel High School, we had the menu written in French, Spanish and Italian with typical foods, thanks to the cooperation of the district's Food Services. There were morning announcements made by several foreign exchange students in the building. Posters were made by students and posted throughout the building. As a culminating activity, the Spanish Club sponsored their annual "International Dinner" which included many clubs in our school. The students prepared amazing cuisine representing many nationalities. Irish dancers, our dance squad and the "Steppers" performed, as well as Spanish singers.

**Name: Janice Bays**

**School: Sherburne-Earlville Central School**

Our school broadcasts morning announcements to all classrooms. Students from French 4 and Spanish 4 classes took turns presenting the announcements in the target language. All LOTE students had an opportunity to participate in a "Trivia Contest" in the library with a prize awarded to the French/Spanish student who submitted first, the most correct answers. French Club members participated in their annual "Dinner and a Movie". Our local theatre in Hamilton graciously offers this service free of charge. We share a French meal at the Hamilton Inn.

**Name: Gina Palasciano**

**School: Deer Park High School**

As part of our week-long celebration, Deer Park High School senior French, Italian and Spanish students visited the May Moore Elementary School in our district and created LOTE lessons for a

day of Language Exploration. The high school seniors had been video conferencing with these elementary students prior to their visit. While video conferencing, students introduced numbers, animals, colors and songs to these elementary students. National Foreign Language Week allowed the high school students the opportunity to finally meet their elementary buddies face to face. The high school students created all visuals, characters and costumes. Lessons were in the target language and were designed by the senior level students.

**Name: Erin Reukauf**

**School: 14 Holy Helpers**

- 5th grade - we researched Mexican food (after studying a unit on food) and made a Mexican cookbook.
- 6th grade - we watched the "Chronicles of Narnia" (in Spanish) and then talked about the experience of watching a "foreign language" film.
- 7th grade - I had a contest for the students where they had to research the newspaper and the Internet to find the most jobs that would require a foreign language in their employment. The winner got a prize.
- 8th grade - we talked about the importance of a foreign language in careers today. I had them each write an essay where they talked about the second language that interests them the most (and why), the career that interests them the most (and why), and how they could use their second language in their career. I got some very informative and interesting essays.

**Name: Sara Gorlewski**

**School: Newfane Middle School**

All of the foreign language teachers participated in a language swap day on the Friday of Foreign language week. The Spanish teachers in the building taught Spanish to the French students, as the French teachers taught French to the Spanish students. As the students entered their regular classrooms, a different teacher from a different subject area greeted them. The students were taught basic phrases and vocabulary in a 3rd language, as well as cultural facts from the countries that speak those languages.

**Name: Jennifer Michel**

**School: Peekskill Central School**

On Monday through Wednesday after school we had a foreign film festival (Monday: "The Road Home" (China), Tuesday: "Children of Heaven" (Iran), Wednesday: "The Rabbit-Proof Fence" (Australia). On Thursday after school we had an International Food Festival. On Friday we had an international dance workshop after school. Students had to take part in at least 4 activities for a quiz grade. Other activities that they could do were to create a poster about FL week, wear a traditional costume from an international culture on Friday, write a poem in Spanish or French or about the activities of the week, find a current event about a foreign country & write a summary about it in English, interview a foreign person, create a poster about a country with 10 interesting facts or write a research/reflection paper about the importance of learning a Foreign Language. Next year we also want to do a talent contest using influences from international cultures.

**Name: Donna Zehr**

**School: Copenhagen Central School**

The middle school students created posters for a contest that were judged by the Spanish 4 classes after they set up rubrics for judging. Spanish 1-3 did posters also. Spanish 1 and 2 had a cooking lesson on making tortillas de papas (potato omelets from Spain) and did crafts. I always show Abbot and Costellos' "Who's On First" skit for discussions about communications. Spanish 4 classes created displays in the main showcase and several walls, labeled the rooms in 3 languages, and created slides that were shown on the TV in the main hall and cafeteria.

**Name: Angela Bruno**

**School: Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School**

We had trivia contests and the pledge of allegiance read in various languages each day. We also

had an "Identify the Flag" contest as well as a door decorating contest called "Open the door to language!" in which each homeroom decorates their door based on a particular country. We had salsa dancing lessons after school and a Spanish Club vs. French Club volleyball match. Lastly, we had both clubs post various fliers and posters around the school about various languages and cultures for students and staff to view during the week.

**Name: Phil Wax**

**School: SUNY Purchase**

The Partnership at our local state university (Purchase College) sponsored a Hispanic Cultural Day on the SUNY campus. During each of the two morning sessions, students chose to attend one venue from among several choices including activities such as Flamenco dance, Salsa dance, Santería, Hispanic food, Hispanic music, and a Picasso workshop. During lunch, SUNY Purchase student musicians provided entertainment. In the afternoon, students heard a musical presentation by the Latin Jazz Band "Syotos." Columbia Professor Chris Washburne, who heads the band, gave students a history of the influences on Latin music while the band provided examples of each type of music.

**Name: Annamaria Martin**

**School: Sayville Middle School**

- Parents & other teachers were invited to speak to the classes about their own heritages. One of our teachers, who is first generation German shared her German heritage with our LOTE classes. A wonderful parent came in to share her Philippine culture with the LOTE students. She also treated the students to Mango candy from the Philippines.
- The ESL students along with their teacher were invited to have breakfast with the French and Spanish 8th grade students. One ESL student shared his Japanese culture and another shared her Indian heritage with fellow students.

**Name: Phil Hunter**

**School: Lowville Academy**

- Fr/Sp videos during lunch periods.
- Exchange students talked to our classes.
- Upper level students volunteer to speak Fr/Sp all day in all classes.
- International Smorgasbord where students make all foods and bring them in. Paella prepared by local chef.
- All language students are identified by wearing pins/tags for a day.
- All classrooms throughout school are labeled in Fr/Sp.
- Exchange students introduce themselves and say a few lines in their native language on morning announcements all week.
- Croissants with jam and butter for our faculty at a special free coffee hour.
- Main hallways decorated with flags, posters, and a 25-foot banner made by the Art Dept. advertising Foreign Language Week.
- Last year we hosted The Alex Torres band for a concert during school and their group members came all day to provide Meringue and Salsa dance lessons every period in the gym for language classes. It was a very popular event enjoyed by staff and students.

**Name: Dr. M. A. Niemczura**

**School: Cicero-North Syracuse High School**

My German 3R, 4, 5 and college credit classes all did a cultural project pertaining to Germany and/or a German-speaking country. The high point of the week and year for the German 4-5 classes was a live video conference with the Albert Schweitzer Gymnasium in Gundelfingen, Germany. Approximately 80 students were involved with the two hour video conference on both sides of the Atlantic. The teacher in Germany had her students prepare songs, speeches and questions to ask. The students from my school emailed questions to Germany. Both sides of the Atlantic spoke in both German and English and got to meet one another, practice their language and learn about their cultures. Administrators from the US and Germany also spoke words of praise and encouragement for this worthy project during the conference. My project "Hands

Across the Ocean" began about 9 years ago with email and snail mail exchanges.

**Name: Linda Stone**

**School: West Hempstead M.S. & H.S.**

- Professional Flamenco Dancers and Musicians performed in auditorium (w/audience participation)
- Daily Language Trivia Contest over the announcements
- Surveyed staff and made posters for lobby (languages spoken, languages studied, countries in the world they visited, ever been an exchange student or hosted one, etc.)
- Daily announcements by students who are native speakers of LOTE (in their native language)
- Daily announcements with motivational info about the importance of LOTE study
- Raised over \$300 for family of a student who recently lost their home to a fire by selling churros, French & Italian pastries in cafeteria during lunch periods and after school
- In classrooms: International Food Festivals, Mola designs, illustrating Spanish Proverbs, Projects w/Presentations, lessons by native speaking students in a LOTE other than the one being studied, Pinata celebration, Scavenger Hunt, Tarentela lessons, and more.

**Name: Adriana Aloia**

**School: Westlake HS**

- Watched "El norte" and used the "Filmarobics" lesson plans with a writing task at end of movie with the junior Spanish level.
- Went to a Mexican restaurant with the AP Spanish students, ordered and chatted in Spanish. Also, students requested a variety of Spanish songs to be played by the guitarist/singer at the restaurant. Students tasted flan, tamales and chimichangas for the first time!
- The Italian ninth graders prepared authentic Italian sweets or bought Italian products (Nutella, cannoli, etc.) for an Italian breakfast.
- A bulletin board was set up on "Art of the Hispanic World" with student hand drawn and painted works by Goya, El Greco, Kahlo, Picasso and Dali.
- Announcements were given in a different language each day for 10 days at the middle school by the students who speak foreign languages (Tagalog, German, Croatian, French, Portuguese, etc.)
- Music was played at the beginning and at the end of my Spanish and Italian classes to show variety. Some dancing went on too!

**Name: Debra Harris**

**School: Tupper Lake Middle/High School**

I try to spend this week focusing on the cultural aspects that go along with the language we are learning. In my 8th grade Spanish classes, I spent 3 days on the Carnaval de Cadiz. I had posters with pictures from this year's Carnaval, which I had printed from the web, as well as information explaining what Carnaval is and why it is celebrated. After we had talked about Carnaval, had a question and answer period, I had the students make crafts to commemorate Carnaval. Female students made a mascara (mask), while male students made a sombrero de bufon (jester's hat). The kids loved it, they thought it was fun, and on the last day we took pictures of the students wearing their crafts for the yearbook.

In my Spanish IV class, I spent the week on a Spanish Cuisine Unit. It includes a webquest, making a cooking booklet, and culminates with students bringing in a Spanish food that they had researched and made for the class to share. This is also a fun activity because students get to see what they originally thought was "Spanish" food (they usually name Mexican things!), then they get an idea of what is truly Spanish, and a chance to try a few dishes!

I also put trivia questions on the announcements in the morning, so Middle School and High School students have a chance to win something each day. Examples of questions are:

- What Spanish actress was nominated for an Oscar for Best Actress this year? (Penelope

- Cruz)
- Where can you find the tomb of Christopher Columbus? (In the Cathedral in Seville)
- What older Spanish singer was once the goalkeeper for one of Madrid's professional soccer teams? (Julio Iglesias)

Prizes have included bags of Chupa Chups, bags of Sugus, and gift cards to local places.

**Name: Alison Harrington**  
**School: Avon Central School**

Middle School and High School French students had the opportunity to attend a "virtual field trip" in our distance learning lab called "Voyageur Songs and Dance." This program allowed us to see and talk with an authentically clad voyageur from the fur trade era. We learned some new French words, some songs, and some dances, all done by the early French settlers in Quebec. French and Spanish IV students also traveled to Nazareth College (in Rochester) to see a play put on by their Foreign Language Department call "Peau d'ane-Donkey Skin: A Furry Tale." On the way back, we stopped at "Simply Crêpes" (a crêpe restaurant), for a delicious French breakfast!

**Name: Sandra Krolik**  
**School: East Hampton HS**

We had the cafeteria highlight various cuisines each day (Mexican, French, Greek, Italian, Caribbean). The Spanish 1 classes made posters of the daily menus. French and Spanish students did announcements in different languages each day. Paragraphs from the Governor's proclamation were made into colorful, attractive posters and displayed around the building. Spanish classes learned French, Italian, ASL, etc. I use the current unit's vocabulary to introduce the other languages. We have a deaf student who came to my classes to assist me with ASL. Some French students went into the Spanish 1 class to teach some vocabulary. Pro-language learning posters were made and displayed. Computer presenters were used to go to online language-learning sites to hear and see German, Japanese, etc. Some classes heard current music from various other cultures (Italian rap, etc.).

**Name: Melissa Rosenberger**  
**School: Carthage Middle School**

We surveyed the staff about their language experience. We asked questions such as:

- Do you speak another language fluently?
- Where have you traveled?
- Were you an exchange student?
- Any interesting foreign culture stories to share?
- Do you have any interesting souvenirs from foreign countries you would loan?

Then we created 5 trivia questions from surveys with interesting answers. We had one read each day of foreign language week. Students could take a guess during homeroom and prizes were awarded to winning guesses. We assembled all the loaned objects in display cases in the main hall. We numbered them and posted a list of countries they came from. Language teachers took their students to visit the display and make guesses about the countries of origin. The top guessers were awarded prizes. We also had the cafeteria participate by offering "foreign foods". They had a German (hotdog) day, a Hispanic (quesadilla) day, an Italian (pasta) day, and a French (croissant sandwich) day.

**Name: Jane Friedland**  
**School: Haviland Middle School**

We had our first LOTE Night. Our two cafeterias were full of students, families and community. Each visitor was given a "passport" and advised to find the areas that gave out stamps. We had tables to make Mardi Gras masks and tables to create a personalized foreign language t-shirt. The Multi-Cultural Club labeled areas of the school and created dioramas and tri-fold displays on many countries. Those in costume attracted quite a crowd. The 6th grade teachers were asked to display this year's best country reports. The after-school program exhibited examples of Maya Math and paper huipiles. The walls were decorated with flags of the UN Nations - especially the newer ones.

A bulletin board in the hallway displayed Governor Spitzer's proclamation and a copy of the winning NYSAFLT poster along with how to say "Welcome!" in 15 different languages. One lucky family won a door prize donated by a local market.

Each team with a LOTE teacher ran a scavenger hunt for the week giving daily prizes to the students who could match their teachers up to culture-language oriented questions.

**Name: Sue Bellor**

**School: Massena High School**

My classes participated in an all day Immersion Day with games, skits, dances, and auctions. I planned an outing with all my students to a local Mexican restaurant with the help of parent drivers. We pre-planned for menu and all. Our Spanish National Honor Society celebrated with our annual induction and awards ceremony for veteran members and inductees. The officers also made daily announcements in Spanish to the school. One of my classes also published a Spanish/English newspaper, which was distributed to the faculty. The Spanish Honor Society also distributed complimentary Globe lollipops to faculty mailboxes.

**Name: Katherine E. Meierjurgen**

**School: Watkins Glen High School**

I create in my classroom a mini-plaza in Madrid, with stores, a café/quiosco and a bank. The students work on projects of their choosing which focus on cultural aspects of Spanish-speaking culture as well as developing their language skills. They make passports to come into "Señoralandia" and must speak all in Spanish or they will be fined! We have used Spanish Monopoly money for many years but this year have transitioned to Euros. We will culminate our month with an International Day Fair in which the students will display their works, we will host several foreign exchange students from other schools and we invite other classes to display student work as well. For example, the health classes prepared display boards of health concerns in various nations.

**Name: Pat Woodruff**

**School: Port Jervis Middle School**

- Day 1 - Game Day - Students played Spanish Monopoly and Scrabble.
- Day 2 - Craft Day - Students made Ojos de Dios.
- Day 3 - Visit from Foreign Exchange Students from the High School. The local cable TV station came and did a story for the news that evening.
- Day 4 - Salsa - Students helped make homemade salsa.
- Day 5 - Salsa Dancing - Two students from Puerto Rico did a demonstration and then taught students how to salsa dance.

**Name: Karen Hamm**

**School: Mill Middle School**

We held a school wide tongue twister contest in Spanish and French. We offered two tongue twisters in the target language with their translations. The kids practiced in class and then we held a contest where the French students were in one room and Spanish in another. We also had some typical French and Spanish snacks. We had "guest judges" who used a simple 25-point rubric. The students could read the paper and they had to say it 3 times as fast as possible.

I also took my Spanish students to a local restaurant, "Solé", for a lunch. This was also a culminating activity for our food unit. I typed up about 15-20 different/easy/typical recipes from Hispanic countries. I put them all on the board taped up and the students get to choose which recipe they want to make. On top of the recipes it states for one person or two (paella would be a two person one). They sign up for the following week. In the past I had the kids bring in the food all on the same day...too much food. So, I spread it out over the whole week. Each day, we sample about 3-4 different foods that the students bring in. The kids have to make the food with adults help. They don't like everything but they get to try tortilla española, paella, flan, tostones,

non-alcoholic sangría, horchata and many other foods.

I also bring in saffron and show them on line, especially at Latienda.com, what some of the foods look like and why azafrán is so expensive. Last year we taught the kids Latin dancing. We do the meringue, salsa and bachata. Some kids at first are shy but once they get going, they ask for more dancing.

**Name: Steven Giusto, Chaiperson**

**School: Christ the King Regional High School**

- World Cup Day -- All the Foreign Language Classes met in the gymnasium and the students played soccer against each other each period of the day. There were 2 teams: Italy vs. Latin America.
- Students in each class brought in ethnic food for classmates to sample. Students were encouraged to wear tee-shirts/shirts that displayed ethnic pride. This was a treat for them as our students wear uniforms.
- Fashion Show - Students were models in a fashion show featuring Spanish, French and Italian designers.
- Performing Arts Day - The students in the chorus along with the French classes sang the French National Anthem; Italian classes sang the Italian National Anthem and other Italian folk songs, and a group of Hispanic students danced the bachata and mermegue, cha-cha and salsa.
- The International Club sponsored the school's Internattional Talent Show.

Every morning the prayer was offered in Spanish, Italian, French, German and American Sign Language via the school's TV station. Each day a Foreign Language Class was featured during the homeroom announcements also via the TV station. A different ethnic meal was offered each day in the school's cafeteria.

**Name: Janet Picataggio**

**School: Smithtown High School**

We always have contests that tap the creativity of our students. I ordered 5 bags of 30 balloons each from ACTFL. They were blue and red and carried the "Discover Languages" motto. I gave one bag to the language teachers in each secondary building. Their challenge was to see which building could come up with the most creative way to promote languages. I asked them to take a photo and e-mail it to me. I received photos of bulletin board displays that the teachers created. All LOTE teachers in those designated buildings were presented with a prize and an article was forwarded to the District Central Office for publicity. This was a win-win for all: teachers worked together; students enjoyed some great bulletin boards to remind them of the importance of language study; and the Language Department and the District received publicity for promoting languages.