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French Vocabulary and VoiceThread lesson
March 20, 2013

Lesson Plan

French II

Grade: 9-12

Content Topic: French clothing and accessory vocabulary plus review of making opinion statements, using color and cost terms.

Estimated Lesson Time: 60 minutes

AASL Standard(s) and Indicator(s):

1.1.6 Read, view and listen for information presented in any format to make inferences and gather meaning.

1.3.4 Contribute to the exchange of ideas within the learning community.

1.4.4 Seek appropriate help when it is needed.

2.1.5 Collaborate with others to exchange ideas, develop new understanding, make decisions and solve problems.

2.1.6 Use the writing process, media and visual literacy and technology skills to create products that express new understandings.

2.2.4 Demonstrate personal productivity by completing projects to express learning.

3.1.2 Participate and collaborate as members of a social and intellectual network of leaners.

3.1.3 Use writing and speaking skills to communicate new understandings effectively.

3.1.4 Use technology and other information tools to organize and display knowledge and understanding in ways that others can view, use and assess.

3.2.1 Demonstrate leadership and confidence by presenting ideas to others in both formal and informal situations.

3.2.2 Show social responsibility by participating actively with others in learning situations.

3.2.3 Demonstrate teamwork by working productively with others.

3.3.5 Contribute to the exchange of ideas within and beyond the learning community.

3.41 Assess the process by which learning was achieved in order to revise strategies and learn more effectively in the future.

3.4.2 Assess the quality and effectiveness of the learning product.

4.3.1 Participate in the social exchange of ideas, both electronically and in person.

Library Media Objectives in behavioral terms (local standards):

LM 30.02 Record and organize information

LM 30.02.a. Record information using a variety of organizational strategies (organizational charts and tables, KWL charts, concept mapping, outlines, note cards, highlighting, graphic organizer, spreadsheets and databases)

LM 30.02.b. Record only succinct and relevant information

LM 30.02.c. Avoid plagiarism (direct quotations, keeping track of sources used for information, paraphrasing

LM 50.01 Select the most appropriate format and technologies to communicate facts or creative ideas for an identified need

50.01.a. Design a product for intended and/or diverse audience (multimedia presentations, written documents, oral presentations, blogs, wikis, visual displays, audiovisual presentations)

50.01.b. Present findings/conclusions using technology in a variety of formats (computers, mp3 devices, document cameras, microphone and speaker, data projector)

50.01.d Individually or collaboratively share an information product to contribute to a learning community

50.01.e. Practice digital etiquette when sharing findings and conclusions

Content Standards and Objectives:

- Review and practice vocabulary for colors and giving opinions

- Describe examples of fashion in Francophone countries in print media or the internet.

- Ask for and give opinions and advice.

- Exchange information pertaining to clothes and shopping.

- Write and deliver short presentations in the present tense and in the passé composé about familiar topics such as fashion.

Materials needed (print/non-print/technology):

- Computer lab!

- Computers with Internet access

- Headsets with microphones (simple ones)

- Planning and storyboard packets

- Common opinion phrases in French reminders

- VoiceThread directions

- Warm-Up

- Project assessment evaluation

- Foreign language rubric

Provisions for Differentiation and Learning Styles:

- Chunking of assignment and project

- Use of visuals and photos to connect to content

- Direction sheet includes screen shots and information is presented in multiple ways

- Collaborative partners

- Information is collected both in written and verbal form (commenting)

- Modeling is done through both visual and auditory means

- Use of linear checklist

- Multimedia options available through recording, text, videotaping, etc.

- Assignment can be easily modified to incorporate more or less images and comments

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MI
+ Verbal/Linguistic
+ Musical/Rhythmic
+ Logical/Mathematical
+  Visual/Spatial
+ Body/Kinesthetic
+    Intrapersonal
+    Interpersonal
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Engagement (interest hook): Preview and demonstration of a completed VoiceThread project. My feeble attempt at speaking French may generate some laughter.

Pre-assessment of prior knowledge: Planning and storyboard activity completed the day before demonstrates understanding of the French content and project directions. Review of sheets help identify weak areas of planning and missing information. Previous observation of students in the lab reveal computer skill levels. Informal survey shows that none of the students have used VoiceThread before this activity.

Direct instruction/Model:

Activity #1 Students create their checklist/steps on the direction sheet as they watch me set up the VoiceThread. The steps I will model are as follows:

Step 1: Log into VoiceThread.

Step 2: Create VoiceThread

Step 3: Upload images (they collected these yesterday)

Step 4: Title images

Step 5: Upload title page (they collected these yesterday)

Independent Practice:

Students work in partners to complete steps 1 through 5 independently. They create their VoiceThread framework.

While students are completing steps 1 through 5, we are passing out the assigned headsets.

Students begin uploading and labeling their images.

Direct instruction/Model:

Activity #2 Students create their checklist/steps on the direction sheet as they watch me set up the VoiceThread. The steps I will model are as follows:

Step 6: Record scripts using the commenting tool (I may move this up into the first activity). Students created scripts yesterday.

Step 7: Set Publishing options

Step 8: Check checklist and rubrics. Did you upload a document with where you obtained your images?

Step 9: Visit French 2 and select two other VoiceThreads to view

Step 10: Leave appropriate French opinion comments on two other VoiceThreads

Independent Practice:

Students work in partners to complete steps 6 through 10. They finish and "publish" their VoiceThreads and make comments on others using French.

Sharing and reflecting: Students will review at least two other VoiceThreads and demonstrate their ability to use French opinion vocabulary to comment on the images. Students will evaluate the use of VoiceThread as a tool to practice and engage in foreign language learning.

Assessment (formative and/or summative): Teacher and I will evaluate the VoiceThreads using the presentation checklist and foreign language oral assessment rubric.

Students will provide feedback and evaluation on the exit survey.

Evaluation of lesson:

Students will complete an exit survey to answer the guiding questions:

1. What types of activities are necessary for improving your world language (second language) skills?

2. How can VoiceThread help you improve your world language (second language) skills?

I am interested in evaluating how effective the directions were and how effective VoiceThread is as a tool to help students practice and improve their second language development. Is it worth the instructional time to set up? Also, can these types

of activities help build appropriate social networking relationships? Were we able to engage students in a learning activity that allowed them to practice and use their knowledge in a meaningful way?

Post-Lesson Evaluation

We ended up breaking this lesson into two days. The French teacher was able to book the lab for 45 minutes the next day. During the second day, we completed the verbal descriptions and students added their comments to other VoiceThread. On this second day, they completed the evaluation survey.

The first part of this lesson went as smoothly as I could hope, considering this was a new technology, and I was set up in an unfamiliar lab with a class and teacher I had never worked with before this project. It was interesting being in a French class because the teacher spoke mostly French to her students so I didn't always understand what she was saying. This also made it difficult for me to help with certain parts of the project, such as the French scripting. Students followed directions and were able to upload their photos into VoiceThread. One of the challenges I had with VoiceThread was determining how to set up the student accounts. I thought setting up individual accounts would be best, however, with students working in partners, this made it more challenging for the students to work together on the same VoiceThread at once. Instead they had to take turns at one computer. In the future, I would set up the accounts as partners, use the identities feature or have students complete the project individually first.

Also, I should have had students create a checklist for themselves that they would turn in at the end of activity 1 and activity 2. This way we could monitor their progress and make sure they didn't forget any of the steps. We found that on the second day, a few students were further behind because they didn't create a title page or save the photos in the correct location. If I would have included a question regarding progress on their impromptu exit slip, I would found out this information ahead of time. Because we adjusted our lesson to span over two days, I didn't have an "official" exit slip to informally assess progress. We did create one back in the classroom on which students recorded any questions, concerns and issues with directions, the program or the project in general.

On the second day, we had a lot more technology issues because of the complex microphone/headset combinations. These headsets, combined with the lab being set up for special foreign language needs, made it difficult to troubleshoot problems. Was it the USB port? Was it microphone setting on the computer? Was it the mic setting on the headphones? Was it the other listening/speaking program used by foreign language? Was the headset even turned on? In the future, I would use a basic computer lab with which I am more familiar and I would use regular headphones and a separate microphone. Regardless of the mic problems, the students and I were able to problem-solve by using the text feature in VoiceThread, which allows them to write their comments in French.

Based on feedback from the first day, the students wanted to know more about the "identities" options. This is something I should have broken down more. I think in the future, I may have students start with this feature as a way for two people to add their voices to the one account. Students need to practice switching back and forth on the computer as each one records. Although I am pretty familiar with this program (especially now!), I realize that there is quite a lot to consider when setting up a project. For first-time users, like these students, I probably should have created a single VoiceThread with the French teacher and sent that out to students. Students could then practice commenting on this single VoiceThread. That would help isolate some of the critical skills needed for smoothly working with this program.

Student Success

Based on the student projects and evaluations, the students reflected a high level of engagement and found the project very motivating. All students completed a VoiceThread and recorded descriptions of their photos. Not everyone was able to make comments on other VoiceThreads. Some of this was because of absences, poor time management and faulty equipment. Students can easily make this up, depending upon the discretion of the teacher. As evidenced by the recordings and student evaluations, the students valued the activity as a way to practice both writing and speaking their

French. They pointed out that the recording required them to practice several times in order to "get it right." One student said the difficulty for him was "practicing enough so I could remember what I needed to say when I was recording." Students had to practice the vocabulary and sentences enough times to commit it to short-term memory. Because this lesson spanned several days, students actually practiced over multiple days, thus helping further commit it to memory. It would be interesting to see how students performed on a more traditional summative assessment (test) based on the work they completed with this project. Although the French teacher has not graded the projects yet, I looked and listened to them. Despite not knowing French, I could tell who had soother delivery, followed directions and responded. In the future, the French teacher and I should work together to create a rubric that includes not just the French language component but also the VoiceThread expectations. This would make assessment easier and clearer for both of us, and the students as well!

Students also reported that the directions were clear, but some had problems following them. For example one person realized she had saved the photos in the wrong location and had problems finding them again. Another student thought he had saved photos, but didn't. They also made the suggestion regarding identities and finding a better way for partners to work together. They commented on the difficulties with the headsets and microphones. Despite these challenges, I was impressed with their favorable comments and their ability to persevere in the lab when problems arose. I also noticed that some explored additional tools in VoiceThread, such as the drawing tool. They used this to draw attention to a particular feature in the photo. The students enjoyed working with partners they selected, which helped them feel more comfortable when practicing. The sociolinguistic theory clearly demonstrated here!