Advanced Technologies for Life-long Learning

Activity Designs for SLS 680P

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"*In our view, the kind of learning that will define the 21st century is not taking place in a classroom – at least not in today's classroom. Rather, it is happening all around us, everywhere, and it is powerful."*

- Douglas Thomas & John Seely Brown (2011)

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Introduction

In the near future, a person will wear glasses that can augment reality and enliven their surroundings in infinite ways. An American traveler with these glasses might travel to China on holiday and see subtitled translations appearing in the air above the heads of the people who are speaking. This American might give an extra pair of these glasses to a Chinese interlocutor, and they can have a normal conversation while speaking in different native tongues.

This kind of technology would seem to obviate the need for foreign language learning, but at the same time, new technologies like these can also serve a powerful language learning purpose. Indeed, the cross-cultural interaction above might serve as a language learning opportunity, and the same hardware and software could be used by the traveler when he returns home, to produce a floating Chinese language lesson above the heads of family and friends as they speak in English.

We believe that language learning will always have value, and we are inspired by advanced technologies as we work to design the best possible learning environments and activities for future language learners. The design of our activities and learning environments are motivated and shaped by five important principles, and technology plays an important role in all of them: (1) Advanced technologies promote the agency of language learners; (2) Learning activities are more fruitful when students create something real – something connected to the real world; (3) Good language learning promotes the learners' realization of individual values, group values, and community values; (4) A caring atmosphere promotes better learning outcomes; (5) Students must join the new culture of learning and acquire the habits of life-long learning.

We believe that advanced technologies promote the agency of language learners, inspiring them to pursue a more meaningful language learning experience. We agree with Young, Barab, and Garett, who say that "motivation, like problem solving, can best be described as an interaction arising from an intentionally driven agent perceiving and acting within an information-rich ecosystem" (2000, p. 165). We think that instructors have a responsibility to provide environments for students where numerous actions are possible, information is abundant, and progress toward short and long-term goals is manifest by countless affordances. In our opinion, advanced technologies are indispensable in providing motivational environments for students. Technology is fun.

We believe that language learning activities are more fruitful when they are connected to the real world, and students make something real. We are inspired by Hay and Barab's exploration (2001) of constructivist learning environments that show the benefits of apprenticeship and other forms of learning by creating something real. When students create an "artifact or shareable product," (Hay and Barab, 2001, p.283) they invest more energy, care, and thought into its design and final form. Hay and Barab say that technology serves as a "cognitive medium" (2001, p. 283) for the sharing and exploration of ideas in the group work that produces these artifacts. In this way, technology is an ideal tool for apprenticeship or constructivist learning because ideas can be explored, changed, deleted, saved, manipulated, copied, colored, duplicated, remixed, saved, photoshopped, and co-created ad infinitum.

We believe that good language learning environments help learners to realize their individual values, their group values, and the values of their community. And at the same time, these learners and their teachers work to create an ecosystem where everyone cares for one another. Language learning is a social activity, and language learners are part of a community with values

and needs that both promote and constrain actions. If students fail to get along, they fail to communicate: “Speaking and listening thus demand an ongoing commitment to directing others and being directed by them to alter one’s attention and action, so that movement from lesser goods (i.e., one’s present position, achievement, or goal) to greater goods (i.e., values) is realized” (Hodges, 2007, p.599).

Finally, we believe that language learning activities should help the students assimilate into the new culture of learning. Thomas and Brown have thoroughly described this pervasive new culture of learning (2011), and have warned that we might fail to appreciate it because it differs so substantially from our previous culture of learning from books, schools, and teachers. And yet, though almost invisible, this new culture of learning is radically transforming the way that people learn: “The new culture of learning actually comprises two elements. The first is a massive information network that provides almost unlimited access and resources to learn about anything. The second is a bounded and structured environment that allows for unlimited agency to build and experiment with things within those boundaries” (Thomas & Brown, 2011, p. 19). When these two elements are combined in the right way, a powerful learning is possible, and no student should be left out.

Activities 1-18

Activity Ideas 1-2: FaceTime Adventures:
(1. "Capture the Flag", 2. "Wizard Quest")

Locations: Classroom and University Campus.
Participants: 8-16 students, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: 2-4 iPads,
2-4 iPhones,
2-4 sets of different coloured paper,
2-4 small flags (each of a different colour),
1 large (sorting) hat.
Requirements: Access to Wi-Fi.
Duration: 45 minutes.
Objectives: Negotiating directions in the real world / Collaborative problem-solving / Co-authoring the content of a game in L2.

Instructions:

In activity 1 ("Capture the Flag"), the students are divided into teams of at least 4-5 students by the teacher, and each team is assigned a name from the Chinese zodiac using a list customised by the teacher and a random generator website (e.g. http://primaryschoolict.com/random-name-selector/). Each team is also provided with a different coloured flag and asked to draw their team zodiac symbol on the flag (this can often be a source of fun and amusement, and can help get things rolling in a positive direction).

For the first half of this activity, teams need to hide their flag on a different part of campus from each other, ensuring that the other team does not see them and that the flag is not so visible that someone might pick it up out of curiosity. Each team also needs to write a clue together describing where the flag can be found. The clue needs to be open-ended, similar to a riddle, and not reveal the explicit location of the flag, but still contain enough implicit information for their classmates to find and retrieve the flag. Once the flags have been hidden, and the clues written and reviewed by the teacher, each team swaps their clue for one from another team, and chooses two of its members to act as *adventurers* and leave the classroom with one iPhone between them. This commences the second half of the activity, where the adventurers for each team act as the scouts or key avatars in a video game, and are guided by their team members back in the classroom through interactive dialogue in L2.

The team members use FaceTime (http://www.apple.com/ios/facetime/) to communicate with their adventurers and to see their environment. That is to say, one of the adventurers holds the iPhone so that their team members in the classroom can see where they are going (adventurers can take turns holding the iPhone). The adventurers also regularly report back on what they experience and see, and share any ideas they might have about the location of the flag, whilst their support team members in the classroom brainstorm over the clue, and suggest where the

adventurers should go, using the Internet or a map to guide and navigate their colleagues in the wild. This way the whole team collaborates in problem-solving, using the affordances at hand, and shares in the search for and the developing ideas over the whereabouts of the flag in a distributed fashion. The first team to capture another team's flag and return it to the classroom wins.

Activity 2 ("Wizard Quest") extends on activity 1 in both narrative scope and the formation of team identities. In terms of forming teams, the teacher initially fills a hat with several pieces of folded paper, each one concealing the name of 1 of 4 Houses from the Harry Potter series (e.g. Gryffindor; Hufflepuff; Ravenclaw; Slytherin), and then invites each student to come up and pull out a piece of paper from the teacher's "*sorting hat*". Once the sorting hat allocated team *houses*, the teacher provide 4 pieces of paper for each team to write their clues on, ideally all of the same colour affiliated with each team's particular house (i.e. Gryffindor = red; Hufflepuff = yellow; Ravenclaw = blue; Slytherin = green). Each team can also be encouraged to draw an emblem for their *house* on the back of their clues, to add a further fun element to the game and emphasise the identity of each group.

In terms of extending narrative, the students are provided with richer opportunities to develop the game from the perspective of both authors and players. In activity 2, each team is asked to write and conceal a *series* of 4 clues about campus in the same implicit open-ended style, rather than just write and hide one clue as before. Each clue then leads the competing band of adventurers on to the location of the next concealed clue, and then the next and so on, until the competing team finally uncovers the location of the coveted team flag (or some small treasure determined by the group who placed it there). This leads on from Activity 1 in scope and encourages students to think a little more creatively about narrative structure and flow, and perhaps how other teams might react to connected plot points within the game.

The teacher tries to ensure that problem-solving and navigation is maintained in L2 throughout both activities, and that all members within each team are engaged in active dialogue with one another and form a part of the collaborative problem-solving process. The students in the classroom can also watch how other teams respond and go about solving the clues they wrote (often much to each other team's amusement), whilst the adventurers improve their group listening skills outside the classroom through keeping in synchronous contact with their other team members through their iPhones, connecting online guidance in L2 with real offline discovery.

A fun tv series from the 1980s called "Treasure Hunt", and a clip from popular television talk show Ellen, illustrate some of the interesting features of this type of activity.

Activity Idea 3: Adventure Game Series ("I want to be a pirate!")

Location: Classroom.
Participants: 4 or more students, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: 4 computers / iPads,
At least 2 copies of any Monkey Island computer game
(or an educational license for multiple users in the classroom).
Requirements: Internet and Google Translate (and a sense of humour).
Duration: This activity can be easily spread over several classes.
Objectives: Collaborative Reading and Gameplay / Situated Translation
(game is in the English language) / Co-constructing a walkthrough guide.

Instructions:

The teacher arranges to have any one of several Monkey Island series adventure games installed on 2 or more computers / iPads in the classroom. The students are then given a number to remember by the teacher, and split into groups of at least 2 people per team (ideally 3) based on this number. Each team then spends the lesson playing the adventure game together, taking turns to click on a series of possible dialogue responses in various scenes throughout the game, whilst establishing rapport with the plot and environment. Each team member can take turns in navigating the main character (the wannabe pirate *Guybrush Threepwood*) around the fantasy world in search of useful artifacts and solutions to the myriad of puzzles that need to be solved with lateral thinking. At the same time, another member can search for unknown words and phrases in Google Translate from the game dialogue, and negotiate translations with the team to help out in the overall decision-making process about how to respond within each dialogue, what to try, where to go next, and how to solve the puzzles.

Throughout the session, the class is encouraged by the teacher to share their ideas and gradually build a "Walkthrough Guide" together for the game using Google Drive. This can include screenshots from the game, sketches of maps or artefacts, copied dialogues, and written instructions in L2. In this way, the students not only collaborate in their groups and as a whole class to translate the rich dialogue within the game and solve the many puzzles, but they also get an opportunity to co-construct a useful guide for present and future players who might be stuck on a particular section of the game. This can even be uploaded as a link to one of the many online forums and websites for fans of Monkey Island.

This activity can be great fun for students of any age, as the Monkey Island adventure game series contains lots of humour and interesting characters, along with thousands of lines of engaging English dialogue and the opportunity to take part in challenging conversations and solve problems creatively together through the language. The additional hope here is that this experience will be so enjoyable, and ignite enough curiosity in some members of the class, that they will go home and keep playing the game, and benefit from all the additional input in a fun and relaxed environment.

Tomasz Szynalski, founder of *Antimoon: How to Learn English Effectively*, fondly recalls how games like Monkey Island proved to be an excellent resource for improving his English:

"...adventure games were the first source of English input that I used outside of English classes. These games showed me how much fun I could have with English and opened my eyes to the power of reading..."

Activity Idea 4: Online Writing Communities

Location: Classroom.
Participants: Students of any level, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: Mobile Computers or smart phones with an Internet connection.
Duration: 1 hour.
Objectives: Writing a public personal response / New media literacy / Connecting to online L2 communities and encouraging life-long learning.

Instructions:

Each student in the class in assigned a number and split into groups of 3 on the basis of their matching number. Each group then discusses the topic of "online English writing resources" for 15 minutes, and is free to use their mobile computer or smart phone to look up as many different websites as they can find or demonstrate how they already use software to others in the group. The aim here is for each group to think about how they can practice their writing skills outside class in a sympathetic and nurturing community of peers who share common interests. After brainstorming and searching the Internet for online writing resources, as well as discussing their own particular English writing practices outside class, each group writes down their ideas in a section partitioned earlier by the teacher on the blackboard/whiteboard. Different colour pens or chalk is encouraged to more clearly identify each group, and all members are free to get out of their chairs and write down ideas in their allocated section on the board.

The teacher then discusses the class' ideas on the board for 15 minutes, and asks different students how they use or could use each website. It can also be useful here to relate software or websites in English to their counterparts in other countries (e.g. China, Russia, Japan). This helps establish a link and identify similarities between L2 websites and more culturally familiar paradigms. The teacher not only learns what her students are currently using, or not using, but can also add some suggestions of her own that can help students with life-long learning beyond the class environment (e.g. Facebook, Blogs, IM, Twitter, Lang-8, Fitocracy, Wikipedia, Song lyric sites, TED talks, Fanfiction, Google Pages, Forums, etc). The teacher can also explain how these websites or software can be used to practice writing as a fun byproduct of connecting and sharing ideas and interests with other writers around the world.

The teacher concludes the lesson by asking each student to write a personal review of either i) a product they bought online (e.g. on amazon.com), ii) a film they watched (e.g. imdb.com), or iii) a restaurant or café they visited recently (e.g. yelp.com). The students need to register on one of the respective websites listed above first of all, then read through some of the reviews for their chosen product, film, or eating-out experience. After reading through a few reviews, the students need to *write their own considered review* and post this on the website, explaining what they

liked or disliked, and backing up their opinions with at least one example and one concluding recommendation. The teacher allocates 30 minutes for this task, and checks on each student to facilitate the process and help with any questions they may have. Everyone's review should be printed out and brought to the next class, so that the teacher can again reinforce how their ideas are important to other online readers. Their contributions are finally posted up on one of the walls of the classroom (or better still, an online cyberwall on the Internet), as a display of the power of the class' written opinions in global L2 cyberspace.

Activity Idea 5: Second Life (SL): Creating a New Identity

Location: Classroom (online activity).
Participants: Intermediate/Advanced level students, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: Several computers with a fast Internet connection (ideally a computer room equipped with enough computers to accommodate all students).
Duration: 2 hours (perhaps distributed over more than one lesson).
Objectives: Tinkering and peripheral learning / Collaborative investigation and sharing of ideas / Increasing agency and negotiating identity in an online L2 community.

Instructions:

Everyone in the class initially signs up online for a Second Life (SL) account, and chooses a default avatar, with help and guidance from the teacher at the beginning where needed. Once all the students have been able to log in successfully and can control their avatars in SL, they need to meet up at a central online location (i.e. HQ: headquarters) specified by the teacher.

Although SL offers a vast universe of locations to explore and play in, along with thousands of other online members to meet along the way, the goal of this activity is to help each student get started and customise the appearance of their avatar, familiarising themselves with some of the key features in the interface during the process.

After meeting up at the designated HQ, the students need to find out how to customise their avatars and coordinate strategies as a group for collecting useful information to achieve this. The teacher suggests exploring other parts of the world and asking established members for guidance. Other suggestions can include using video guides on YouTube, looking for beginner guides on the Internet written in L2 using Google search, and simply playing with the controls and interface to try and change the look and feel of their avatars (i.e. tinkering). The students are also asked to return to HQ at a specific time, so that they can share what they found out or learnt from others with the group later.

Many newcomers to SL (aka "newbies") experience a steep learning curve, and feel a little lost in the beginning, especially when attempting to shape their identity and become more comfortable and familiar with their surroundings. This can be facilitated through initial distributed learning in a caring group bonded by a shared newcomer's experience. Developing new skills in this online environment empowers students to immerse more fully in the environment and feel more comfortable interacting with others in L2 from the start. The virtual world platform provides the students with lots of rich opportunities to play with identity, talk to other members in L2 to

collect useful information, and then share these findings with their group later. Using the Internet in tandem is also encouraged by the teacher.

The teacher's role throughout is to offer tips and guidance on where to find information when asked, and to encourage the group to share their discoveries with each other in the session. The students are free to develop their own identities and paths to solving problems, as well as realise any emerging group identities and norms (e.g. a common greeting; a shared article of clothing, accessory, colour, etc). Developing an online identity helps them immerse better in the L2 environment, and find their place in the world as well as understand their relation to other groups or societies in SL, and it is hoped that this may further capture the imagination of some of the students and extend to further immersion and interaction with L2 speakers outside and beyond class.

Activity Idea 6: Google Drive (GD): Publishing a Newbie's Avatar Guide

Location: Classroom (online activity).
Participants: Intermediate/Advanced level students, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: Screen, overhead projector, or whiteboard connected to one computer; Several computers with a fast Internet connection (ideally a computer room equipped with enough computers to accommodate all students).
Duration: 2 hours (perhaps distributed over more than one lesson).
Objectives: New media literacy / Co-constructing meaning in a written artefact / Linking group investigation to public online communities.

Instructions:

The teacher creates a new shared presentation on Google Drive (GD), and invites all the students to work on a document together. Once everyone has successfully logged in using their email invites, the students are encouraged to have a little play in order to discover the functionality of the interface for themselves and interact with one another via chat or comments. After this initial session of tinkering, the teacher briefly reviews the basic functionality of the interface, then asks the class to recall what they learnt in the previous lesson whilst customising their avatars (see Activity [8]), and to now present this information together in presentation slides within the document.

The main goal of this activity is for the class to co-construct a "newbie's guide" to customising their avatar in Second Life. The class is split into pairs, or groups of 3, and each group is asked to co-author at least 2 slides each within the whole presentation. They can use the text chat in the given interface, discuss ideas together in the classroom outside the online environment, develop ideas together through interactive whiteboard sketches and messages, and bring in links or multimedia from other areas of the Internet to help explain their ideas and make this a part of the document (e.g. Google Image search).

The group needs to think about what they learned in the previous activity together, and explain their learning in the document. Once all slides have been completed, the class can watch the whole presentation together on a large whiteboard or overhead projector / screen connected to one of the students' computers. At the end, they can discuss how to structure and organise the document better, and then spend some more time editing a final copy together. Once the final draft is finished, the teacher will post the document live on a thread in the Second Life forum, so that other newcomers interested in customising their avatars can learn from the group, and so that designers and moderators of the game can understand some of the difficulties and practices of members new to this virtual world.

In the process of documenting their distributed learning, the students gain a clearer understanding of the dynamics of negotiating structure and content as a team. The teacher's role in all this is to keep the group focused on the activity, to advise on interface functionality to facilitate group communication, and encourage students to discuss their findings. The activity also reveals how people both inside and outside the group can benefit from their shared experiences, in the hope that each student will grow in confidence in their ability to contribute within the community and help others in their own learning. Google Drive is particularly useful as a collaborative tool in this respect, in that it allows students to coordinate their writing and include media, permits visible back-channelling that can be viewed by the teacher, and the finished document can be posted publicly to demonstrate the real usefulness of shared group learning.

Activity Idea 7: WordPress (WP): Planting a Website

Location: Classroom (online activity).
Participants: Intermediate/Advanced level exchange students who have recently arrived in a new country, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: Cameras, (smart) phones with cameras, or iPads to initially take photos; Several computers with a fast Internet connection (ideally a computer room equipped with enough computers to accommodate all students).
Duration: 2 hours (perhaps distributed over more than one lesson).
Objectives: New media literacy / Realising group values and discoveries / Coordinating designs and organising content as a team.

Instructions:

Students prepare for the lesson during the week beforehand by taking photos of anything that they found surprising, interesting, or simply different in the culture of the new country they arrive in, using their smart phones, digital cameras, iPads, etc. They can then email these to their own email or cloud accounts, save them on their computer/smart phone, or bring them to class on a USB memory stick. Alternatively, the students can find photos on the Internet that illustrate an interesting cultural difference that they experienced since moving here, and email these to themselves or save the link on their smart phone or computer too.

The students are split into groups of 4-6, and each group is asked to set up a basic WordPress site. One member of the group will act as the Administrator for the website (i.e. only 1 is permitted per site anyway), who will then invite the other members to join them in creating a website together as "Authors" (i.e. power users who can create, edit, and delete their own posts, and add these to the website). The teacher can offer guidance on how to sign up and activate a WordPress account, and how to assign new users and invite other members of the team. However the students should be allowed to try and find this out for themselves in each group first before approaching the teacher.

The main goal of this activity is to realise both independent and group values, and share cultural discoveries and surprises about a new country using multimedia and personal writing. After the students have successfully signed in to each group's website, they can start uploading their photos to the Media Library (i.e. a shared repository of images that can be used in the website). Each student will then post at least one page on their group's website, inserting their photos in their pages and adding a short body of text to explain what cultural aspect or differences the photos illustrate. The teacher can also give further guidance on the concept of WordPress "menus" and "labels" to the group, and recommended that the students try and organise their posts into different sections using this functionality. This will entail each Administrator selecting

a theme in consensus with the other members of the group, and creating a menu with all the labels used in the website. The other members need to ensure that they create appropriate labels and link these to their own post(s). Once the session is completed, each administrator makes sure that all the posts on their group's website are visible to the public (i.e. the website goes live and can be viewed by all members of the class).

A common anecdotal saying is that "two heads are better than one", and this activity tries to underscore this in terms of both collecting interesting resources together (i.e. photos) and sharing opinions in a collective forum. Each website then hopefully emerges as something more than the sum of its parts, in that it shapes its own identity in terms of common experiences, as well as a diversity of intercultural expectations that resonate within the group. WordPress makes this easier to set up and implement on the fly, as it already has structures in-built to organise and group posts, and can package ideas and media attractively together.

The teacher can help students with functional aspects like uploading media and setting up menus or themes, when the group reaches a road-block, as well as offer further tips on design if the students experience difficulties with the interface or themes. The students in turn make a real online website together, learn to compare and group emerging ideas into a coherent whole, and develop new media skills that may be used again to write further blogs in L2 to facilitate future friendships and life-long learning.

Activity Idea 8: WordPress (WP): Encouraging a New Website to Grow

Location: Classroom (online activity).
Participants: Intermediate/Advanced level students, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: Several computers with a fast Internet connection (ideally a computer room equipped with enough computers to accommodate all students).
Duration: 1 hour.
Objective: Writing a public personal response / New media literacy / Encouraging life-long, distributed learning.

Instructions:

Following on from Activity [10], where subgroups within the class co-authored WordPress websites about their cultural experiences in a new country, the key goal here is to further encourage the class to learn in a distributed fashion from their peers' responses and contributions in the other groups, and to get them into the habit of actively contributing as part of a community of shared interests or practices (with the hope of continuing this beyond the classroom).

The students are asked to read through content from other groups in class (and perhaps any other additional feedback from the public), as well as enjoy all the collected media, and leave at least one comment/response on each group's website (including their own). This is then followed by a big class discussion where we compare, contrast, and share all our new cultural experiences and findings, and try to write down some of the common themes that occur across groups and our emerging values as a class on a whiteboard.

This activity builds on the co-creation of new media, and links subgroups in the class together into a larger whole. Reading other's posts, and sharing comments, helps both the students and the teacher see similar new experiences from differing cultural perspectives, and learn some interesting facts along the way about a new shared environment (i.e. it offers more eyes and ears on recurrent issues). This helps students shape their own position within a larger group, and define a common group identity that may lead to further collaboration in the future or outside class (maybe even with other members of the public).

Building sites together in WordPress is the first step in creating new knowledge networks; following it up by commenting on each other's threads is the next step in activating and developing this knowledge further. Contributing even a short comment, a link to a resource, or simply providing some positive feedback can help both the author of the original post and the reader engage in new dynamic movement around an idea in terms of continuing dialogue, and encourage new friendships with L2 writers.

The teacher plays an equal part in this activity by leaving comments on the groups' WordPress websites as well, and can help students by sharing his or her own cultural surprises and perspectives as a member of the community. The students start to recognise the usefulness of *active* online contribution, and establish common ground with others in the class. This opens up new channels of support and understanding, whilst giving each member a forum to voice their own cultural perspectives, which can be very fascinating for others in the group.

Activity Idea 9: Aurasma Scavenger Hunt with Photographs

Location: Classroom & Home & Cyberspace
Participants: Students, and 1 Teacher.
Materials: Mobile Computers that support Aurasma Software.
Duration: 1 Hour of Homework; 1 Hour of Class Time.
Objectives: Values Realizing, Caring, Listening and Speaking Skills, Current Events, Tinkering.

Instructions:

Each student in the class creates an Aurasma scavenger hunt for another student in the class. First, for homework, each student goes to the *New York Times* Lens Blog, chooses 12 meaningful photographs, and prints them out. Among these 12 photographs, each student chooses 10 that are especially meaningful, and 1 that is the most meaningful. Next, using Aurasma software, each student makes an *aura* for each photograph and uses the photographs as triggers for the *auras*. The *auras* should be videos that the student makes for each photograph. In these videos, the student will explain why the photograph is meaningful to him or her, and at the end, give clues to help another student to find the next photograph among the ten.

When the students arrive to class, they tape all 12 of their photographs at random places on the walls of the classroom, including the 10 with *auras*. After the students have done this, the walls should be covered with more than a hundred photographs. Next, the teacher chooses partners using Primary Technology's random name selector. The partners describe their first photographs to each other, trade iPads (or other mobile computers), and begin their hunt for their partner's photographs. When they find a likely photograph, they view the aura, listen carefully to the explanation, take notes about their partner's feelings and values, listen to the clues for the next photograph, and begin the search for this new one. Eventually, the students will find the last photograph in the scavenger hunt. For this photograph, the one that was chosen as the most meaningful, the students will listen to a somewhat longer explanation about its meaningfulness. After the activity is finished, the students can then give a short report where they explain their partner's values and reasons for caring about these particular photographs.

This same activity can be implemented using 2D surfaces in the real world. In other words, the students can use any 2D surfaces (such as pictures) on the walls or buildings at their school's campus, or local place to create scavenger hunts for their classmates. The students can choose 10 locations on campus, creating auras that give clues to the next locations, etc. In addition, the teacher can create these auras and assign homework that requires the students to find the final location, and describe it in English.

In this activity, the students learn about the values that are shared among their classmates, and students and teacher promote an atmosphere of caring. These values can then be used as information for other activities during the term. Therefore, this makes a great activity for the first week of classes in a term.

Activity Ideas 10-11: Making a Textbook (Making Textbook Chapters)

Locations: School & Home & Cyberspace
Participants: Students and Teacher and Community
Materials: iBooks Author, iPads, and Apple Computers (alternatively, Presentation Software, Adobe Acrobat Pro, and other similar software can be used) Internet
Duration: 1 Semester
Objectives: The class creates a digital textbook with a theme;
The teacher facilitates and the students collaborate.
The students create something real, and publish it.
Tinkering, Values-Realizing, Caring, Making Something Real, Remixing, Co-Creating, Co-Problem Solving.

Instructions:

Using iBooks Author, the class creates its own textbook as the main project for a term. The students use iBooks Author, but presentation software or Adobe Acrobat Pro can also be used to create the digital textbook – this project can be implemented using various technological support. For example, Adobe PDFs can be read on Kindle reader software. Also, Internet resources such as Quizlet, YouTube, Wordpress, Voicethread, Pinterest, and others can be incorporated into the textbook design via hyperlinks.

At the beginning of the term, the teacher creates a skeleton textbook design that contains only the desired learning outcomes for the course. Essentially, the skeleton textbook is the syllabus for the course. An example for an intermediate level academic writing course might look like this:

Part 1: Good Sentences

Section 1: 4 Sentence Types
Section 2: Singular-Plural Agreement
Section 3: Subject-Verb Agreement
Section 4: Articles, Prepositions, and Word Order
Section 5: Punctuation

Part 2: Good Paragraphs

Section 1: Topic Sentences
Section 2: Supporting Sentences
Section 3: RENNS
Section 4: Coherence & Unity
Section 5: Parallelism

Part 3: Good Essays.

Section 1: Essay Structure
Section 2: Common Rhetorical Patterns
Subsection 1: Comparison-Contrast Essay
Subsection 2: Argument Essay
Subsection 3: Narrative Essay
Subsection 4: Process Essay
Subsection 5: Summary Essay

This skeleton is a suggestion, and the students are encouraged to add sections, rename sections, and even delete sections (with permission from the instructor). The textbook belongs to the class, and it should be constructed by the class and for the class. Students work together to decide the final content of each section and chapter, arguing and voting to decide the full contents of the book.

The whole class makes one digital textbook (Activity 1), but small groups are formed to work on each of the chapters of the textbook (Activity 2). The textbook, and each of the chapters must have a theme, such as "World Peace," "Making Friends," or "Protecting the Environment." These themes are decided by the groups, and the textbook theme is decided by the class as a whole.

The teacher facilitates as the class works in groups to produce the content of the textbook. Videos are made, explanations are written, examples are found from the Internet and conversations, Internet resources are utilized, animations for explanations are created, and all of these activities are carried out by students as agents, while teachers ensure that they have access to rich information and affordances that allow for short-term and long-term goals to be met.

The digital textbook is something real, and is published to Apple's iBookstore.

Activity Idea 12: Discovering Grammar

Locations: Classroom & Home & Cyberspace
Participants: Small Groups
Materials: iBooks Author, iPads, and Apple Computers (alternatively, Presentation Software, Adobe Acrobat Pro, or any other similar software can be used)
Duration: 1 Semester
Objectives: Languaging, Co-Problem Solving, Students realize agency.

Instructions:

As part of the larger activity of making a digital textbook, small groups are formed to discover the rules that govern different grammatical problems, and these groups are different from the groups that work on each of the different chapters, that way, providing even more opportunities for shared experiences, collaborative learning, and co-problem solving. The students explore their grammatical problems throughout the term, brainstorm and develop ideas, and create a section for the class's textbook that explains their discoveries and provides information, practice, and other resources for understanding the grammatical problem. The students discover language by observing language as something that people do, and not as a set of rules that people follow when the want to communicate something.

The teacher helps the students to find authentic texts with good examples of the grammatical idea or ideas, encourages the students to observe and use the grammar when speaking and listening, and offer other assistance to ensure that the students are not interpreting the grammatical problem in a way that is too distinct from the standard understanding.

This idea comes from Leo van Lier's ideas about action-based learning and teaching, in which language is viewed as a form of action and less as a set of rules. See this video for an excellent example (minute 37:05): Apple 2012 video, Leo van Lier

Activity Idea 13: WordPress : Distributed Peer-Editing

Locations: Cyberspace
Participants: Students and Teacher
Materials: Wordpress.com accounts & Computers
Duration: 1 Semester
Objectives: Mastering Academic Writing with Specializations in Peer-Editing, Making and Joining a Community of Practice.

Instructions:

Each student is given a specialization in academic writing. 2 or 3 students will specialize in *agreement*, 2 or 3 students will specialize in *articles*, 2 or 3 students will specialize in the *4 sentence types*, 2 or 3 students will specialize in *coherence*, and other students will have other specializations. The teacher gives each student some handouts and other materials for learning their specialty, and works hard during the first weeks of the term to make sure that the students are mastering their specialty. Eventually, the students will begin to write essays.

The students will create Wordpress.com accounts and use these accounts to share their essays and provide peer-editing support for each other. For example, if a class of 20 students has 4 coherence specialists, each of these specialists will need to edit 5 essays for coherence strengths and weaknesses. The teacher helps to choose which students will edit which student's papers. Using the Wordpress.com feedback function, the students send their rough drafts to various specialist peers.

Using this system, the students are able to write more, and see more feedback. The teacher regularly checks the feedback to make sure that it is accurate, and serves as a specialist himself or herself. In higher level writing classes, each student might specialize in two areas. With longer academic terms, the students might change specialties after mid-term. This system is expected to be especially useful for classes with numerous writing students.

When students are responsible for each other's education and improvement, they learn to care for each other, creating a rich environment that is more comfortable and healthy, and more conducive to stronger learning.

Also, the students create a community of practice, and other students at the school and future students will join this community of practice. This idea comes from Lave and Wenger's research and discoveries about communities of practice.

Activity Idea 14: Making a Digital Children's Book

Locations: Classroom, Home, and Cyberspace
Participants: Groups of 4
Materials: iBooks Author, iPads, and Apple Computers (alternatively, Presentation Software, Adobe Acrobat Pro, or other similar software can be used)
Duration: All Term
Objectives: Values Realizing, Co-Creating & Co-Designing, Learning by Making Something Real, Remixing, Tinkering.

Instructions:

In groups of 4, students decide a value (the theme of the story) that is important for them, and create a children's book with a story that creatively communicates the importance of this value. The students use iBooks Author to create the book, and are encouraged to use Internet resources and remixing to create it. The students will need to record their voices for audio parts, create animations and drawings, learn to use the iBooks Author software or other software, and of course, they will need to write the story.

The teacher facilitates by providing numerous suggestions for locating resources. Also, the teacher serves as a technology specialist, showing the students how to use the various supporting technologies for the project.

Alternatively, the students can create an instructional, non-fiction text for children, teaching them about an important value in society, such as "recycling to protect the environment," or "stopping bullying."

The values are real, and the digital children's book is something real too, and is published to Apple's iBookstore where real children can download it, enjoy it, and learn something important.

Activity Ideas 15-16: Designing an App (and Selling It)

Locations: Classroom & Home & Cyberspace
Participants: Groups of 4
Materials: Computers, Internet, Projector, Presentation Software, iPads or other app using device.
Duration: One Week
Objectives: Designing something real, Co-creating, Values-Realizing, Tinkering.

Instructions:

Groups are chosen using Primary Technology's random name selector. These groups begin work on designing an app for a tablet computer or smart phone, and they do so without the constraints of worrying about the actual coding or other intricacies of producing an actual app – they need only to design it, explain how it works, explain how it will change the world, and give a presentation that simulates the selling of their app idea to a company that might fund the development of such an app. The students work together to decide the nature of the app, the positive influence that such an app would have on society (the problem in the world that the app might help to alleviate), and decide the means for convincing the class that such an app is a good investment. The students will also find the vocabulary and grammar needed for this project, and document the English vocabulary and grammar that they discover while doing the project.

The first activity is the designing of the app, and the second activity is the selling of the app to the class, pretending that their classmates are board members for a venture capital firm.

The teacher facilitates by suggesting websites and other resources that will help the groups to find a societal problem (or other daily frustration) that is meaningful to them. The teacher is a resource and motivator, and helps to explain how to use the supporting technologies to create mockups and simulations for the app idea. The students can create a video for their demonstration, and several other resources.

Activity Idea 17: $1,000 Dollars, Please

Locations: Classroom
Participants: Groups of 3
Materials: Internet, Computers, Projector, Kickstarter
Duration: One Week
Objectives: Values Realizing, Team Work, Creating Something Real.

Instructions:

Students are put into groups using Primary Technology's random name selector, and they search the Internet to find a place in the world, or search within there local community to find an area, town, or organization where monetary aid can be of great help. The team decides how to use $1,000 for this region, and every dollar is accounted for. The groups give presentations in class, and make a video to be posted on Kickstarter.

The students realize their agency when searching for a area in their community or place in the world where they are moved by the struggles or problems of the people living there. The teacher encourages them to invest emotion into the project and work hard to convince others that this place in the world, more than others, is deserving of monetary aid.

Each group creates a video for Kickstarter where they can raise money for their cause. The Kickstarter account is a real thing, and the students are responsible for donating any money raised to the area they are trying to help. Values are realized, a real thing is created, and language is learned through team work and a helpful teacher.

Activity Idea 18: New Literacies Extensive Reading Program

Locations: Cyberspace
Participants: High-Level Students and Teacher
Materials: Internet, Computers, Extensive Reading Foundation's Guide to Extensive Reading, Group Blog or Social Network
Duration: All Term
Objectives: Students design and complete an Extensive Reading program using Internet reading materials, and practice caring by using each other to manage the Extensive Reading Program. Foremost, they create a community of practice for themselves and for others to join.

Instructions:

This activity is simple. High-level English students use the Extensive Reading Foundation's Guide to Extensive Reading in order to design an extensive reading program for the class, using reading materials from the Internet, and using social networks or blogs to manage and peer review each other's reading accomplishments. Good reading materials are discovered and shared, students write reviews on a blog or social network posting, and everyone works to ensure that extensive reading practices are well implemented. Students learn to care for each other.

This activity is inspired by new literacy studies. The teacher participates. He or she joins discussion blogs, suggests interesting reading materials, and checks the students' progress at the same time. The students create a community of practice, and eventually, new students join this community. The main goal of this activity is to create a community of practice for extensive reading where members use Internet resources to govern and manage the community, and reading materials are found online. These ideas come from Lave and Wenger's research and discoveries about communities of practice.

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