Destinations USA!

Using Thematic Units to Teach English to Speakers of Other Languages

By

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ABSTRACT

This Independent Professional Project (IPP) explores the process of creating a thematic unit, or content-based method of instruction, and applying the unit for practical use within a classroom. To illustrate the process of creating and implementing such a thematic unit, an example unit previously taught to adult ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) students is described in detail. The example unit focuses on learning English in the context of traveling to US tourist destinations and uses a cooperative teaching approach to facilitate it. This IPP is designed for immediate use. Therefore, a teacher can use one of the unit lessons described with little preparation. It also seeks to encourage teachers to develop other content-based units for use within their own classrooms.

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INTRODUCTION

This Independent Professional Project (IPP) explores the process of creating a thematic unit, or content-based method of instruction, and applying the unit for practical use within a classroom. The objective of a thematic unit is to enable students to learn a language as a whole process, as opposed to the more traditional method of compartmentalizing (Taylor 1997), or sorting out a language to learn unconnected parts. To illustrate the process of creating and implementing such a thematic unit, an example unit previously taught to adult ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) students is described in detail. The example unit focuses on learning English in the context of traveling to US tourist destinations. This IPP is designed for immediate use. Therefore, a teacher can use one of the unit lessons described with little preparation. It also seeks to encourage teachers to develop other content-based units for use within their own classrooms.

The thematic unit that is the subject of this paper was developed by two adult ESOL teachers, and myself, from an urban public school in Cleveland, Ohio, who, exhausted from a long academic year, sought out a different approach with new ideas to spice up their summer term. Our goal for using a content-based unit was to: 1. Promote the use of all four skills - reading, writing, listening, and speaking; 2. Incorporate structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, and mechanics to establish a whole learning environment; 3. Explore American culture; 4. Create multilevel student interaction; and finally, 5. Provide enjoyment for the learner and the teacher.
We created a thematic unit called “Destinations USA” which involved “virtual” traveling throughout the USA as a means to focus on American culture. We used team teaching in order to facilitate multilevel student interaction and generate enthusiasm for studying. This method worked well for both teachers and students. In fact, students became captivated with the content and eagerly awaited each new topic.

There were three separate classes: a low intermediate, a high intermediate, and a low and high advanced level class. Each class was comprised of roughly 20 adult immigrants and refugees diverse in race, culture and gender. They came from near and far: China, Romania, Ukraine, Brazil, Vietnam, Palestine and the Sudan, to name just a few. The adult learners also ranged in age from 18 to 65, but their goals were similar. They enrolled in intensive, survival English classes to improve their English language skills. Traditionally, the students had seldom interacted with members of other classes except at the coffee pot during break time. Therefore, this cooperative learning adventure gave all a chance to become a real learning community without the artificial divisions of levels.

The classes met three days a week, three hours a day for six weeks. During the 9-hour class week the teachers managed to take their students on a simulated tour around the US without leaving the classroom. With Cleveland as the home base, they packed their bags and headed out to New York City, Washington, DC, New Orleans, and finally, Arizona’s Grand Canyon.

Throughout each week, each class was responsible for researching and reporting on one aspect of that week’s tourist destination: the low-intermediate class concentrated on weather; the high-intermediate class explored the cost of living; and the advanced class focused on news and current events. The computer lab provided a vital tool to incorporate
many aspects of the destination into class. Grammatical structures were included according to the week’s topic. We carefully chose and touched upon various other aspects of American culture pertinent to the specific destinations such as, American idioms, food, and dialects.

The six-week course consisted of one week for preparation, which focused on the hometown, four weeks that highlighted a different destination each week, and also a week for final assessments. For the end of each week, except the last, we planned and led a 1.5-hour multilevel culminating activity for our three classes. In New York City, students took virtual tours of various landmarks and wrote postcards describing them to a friend. On their trip to Washington the students studied the election process and came together to elect a student body representative for the year. In New Orleans, each class worked separately on similar activities, such as restaurant menus, recipes, and jazz and blues music. Finally, in the Grand Canyon, a guest-speaker demonstrated practical tips for hiking and camping.

The teachers kept track of student progress weekly through student-generated learning logs and journals. As a final assessment, students wrote about their favorite destination, including what they learned about the destination and why they liked it. They were also able to plan a trip of their own out West, which they enjoyed very much.

Students seemed to enjoy the multilevel interaction and challenging activities while improving their English skills along the way. We enjoyed and learned by observing the interaction and using a cooperative teaching approach to lesson planning. The project was deemed successful as some of the students headed out during a two-week break before fall semester resumed on a real trip to visit some of the cities studied in class. The election process captivated students even more than we imagined. Students were thrilled to be able
to participate in the democratic process, which many cannot do in the US, being non-citizens. In fact, the Student Body Representative followed up on his own accord and wrote a letter to the director of the school on behalf of all the students with requests such as additional parking, a media lab, and even a thorough cleaning of the restrooms. All requests were fulfilled.

Students were genuinely excited about the summer travel course. Since many of them experience economic, physical, and/or language constraints that prohibit them from traveling and experiencing the various aspects of the US and its culture, this course eliminated those barriers enabling students to discover a new world. For many it was simply a confidence-builder. They expressed delight and pride in being more informed about the US destinations studied than many native speakers they encountered daily. They no longer felt a step behind in everything. What’s more, they had achieved their primary goal to improve their English skills.

So, climb aboard for an educational exploration of themes and thrills.

   ALL ABOARD! Destination USA...
CHAPTER 1

THEORY

This chapter consists of an explanation behind the theory of using thematic units and includes examples from the “Destinations USA” unit, which gives the theory validity.

The logic behind using a thematic unit is derived through the theory of “Whole Language” instruction. As explained by John Taylor in his journal, The Controversy between Whole Language verses Phonics (1997), whole language is a student-centered literature based approach, which serves to immerse the learner in real communication. The reasoning for this method is based on linguistics, pedagogy, and psychology. The following is a list of explanations for using this whole language method, including examples of its correlation to successful language acquisition using a thematic unit.

1. According to whole language instruction, language should be learned in entire context, not compartmentally, or separating a language where no piece is connected. Thematic units capture the essence of this principle. Thematic units allow for a whole process of learning a language because it contains themes and activities that focus on the whole story, instead of just one individual skill or piece of the language (Taylor 1997).

Grammatical structure provides a clear example of this principle. Structure can be explored and learned through context instead of as a single “grammar point”. It is one part of the whole context, which can be extracted and expanded into specific lessons for reinforcement. This part can then be reintegrated for application purposes such as discussions. Context provides a model for communicating outside the classroom. ESOL students want to be able to use the language they learn for communication purposes, not just to study or regurgitate textbook theory.
In “Destinations USA”, students learned more about gerunds and infinitives through the context of their study about the Grand Canyon topic. Students read about outdoor activities in the region and identified grammatical structure in these readings. We then taught specific grammar lessons on gerunds and infinitives for reinforcement. The structure was incorporated into a student project about the Grand Canyon. Therefore, students had a model, practiced the structure, or one piece of it, and could build upon that model using their own ideas to make a presentation. Students gave an oral report on how they would spend time on a trip to the topic region. This project gave students real communication practice for using gerunds or infinitives, while remaining in context.

2. In thematic units, oral language accompanies reading and writing. Traditionally, reading and writing are taught together. However, in this literature-based approach to teaching, there is no skill independent of another. Therefore, during a reading or writing activity, students may engage in lively discussions. They can use oral language to build upon prior experiences, and essentially transform the classroom into a “talking classroom” (Taylor 1997).

During the culminating activity for the topic of New York City, the students were able to build upon what they had read and written during the week about New York. Students researched attractions on the Internet and read articles in their separate classes. Then, during the culminating activity, the students engaged in lively multilevel discussions with other students to explain and ask questions about the various landmarks and attractions that the destination has to offer. Students were eager to discuss the interesting attractions they had read about. Therefore, thematic units motivate interesting discussions, which coincide with reading and writing exercises, exactly as this theory suggests.

3. Thematic units generate student-centered learning (Kohl 1998). A unit appeals to students with exciting subcategories like topics and themes. This appeal triggers a feeling of empowerment and therefore, students want to take control of their learning (Taylor 1997).

This principle is illustrated within the culminating activity of the election for the “Destinations USA” topic of Washington, D.C. Many students were eager to learn more about the election process in the United States. Activities focused on the main concepts of an election, such as issues, platforms, political parties, grass-roots campaigns, and debates. Students accepted each activity as a challenge and worked together as a team to elect student candidates who wanted to solve issues that were troubling them, such as too few parking spaces on school grounds. While we had planned the event, it was the students who brought meaning to it. With each activity students were more engaged in the process as their work became personal. They were genuinely interested in each step toward electing a classmate who would represent them. They enjoyed working together and learned a great deal from each
other. This culminating activity proved to be meaningful for students because they took control over their learning, which is the essence of a student-centered activity.

4. Themes and units are integrated within whole language instruction (Taylor 1997). One thematic unit can have any number of subcategories, like topics, themes and lessons. Each subcategory provides ample opportunities for language acquisition. Categories can be expanded to discuss additional themes or ideas, and also split into specific lessons for student practice.

In the “Destinations USA” thematic unit, there was one overarching idea: tourist destinations in the United States. However, this broad category was narrowed down to four topics, one per week. The topics represented a specific tourist destination focusing on a city or region of the country. Each topic included 10 themes, another subcategory, which then could produce individual lessons. For example, the unit on US tourist destinations led to the topic of the well-known city of New Orleans, where food was one of themes addressed, and finally, led to a lesson on restaurant dining and etiquette. Within this one thematic unit there are many subcategories including themes that are all connected to one main idea.

5. Thematic units help create a learning community by tapping into prior knowledge, interest and relevancy (Kohl 1998). Language acquisition constantly builds upon prior knowledge, and students want to learn language that is relevant to them. Developing a sense of community within the classroom is essential to this learning process for an ESOL student. Though student backgrounds are diverse, ESOL students need a comfortable environment to help them achieve their goals. A learning community brings about such comfort and helps foster learning.

The “Destinations USA” culminating activity for the Grand Canyon is a prime example of this reasoning. A guest speaker was invited to speak about camping, its necessary equipment, and popular locations. Students were genuinely interested in this activity because many have enjoyed adventures in camping in their own country. Plus, they liked that it’s a cheaper way of traveling than staying in a fancy hotel. Students were introduced to the theme through sharing memories and stories about camping. Then, in small multilevel groups students had to identify familiar and unfamiliar terminology for camping through discussion. Students became comfortable working together, because they shared a common interest. Students expanded previous knowledge about camping by exploring it in English and learning new outdoor vocabulary through multilevel interaction. Therefore, students built a learning community through this culminating activity, which proved to be successful in helping students improve their language skills.
6. Sizer and Sizer stated that schools experience “community cohesion” and also an infusion of culture, often times existing simultaneously (1999). A thematic unit is a tool that produces both. As previously stated, community is vital to the learning process for an ESOL student. In addition, an ESOL classroom is a natural environment for learning and sharing cultures. The thematic unit on US tourist destinations saturates students with American culture, a fundamental ingredient for an ESOL student’s assimilation into that new culture.

During the topic of New York City, students played “Pit”, the Parker Brother’s game based on trading scenes from the early 19th Century American Corn Exchange (1964), to reinforce the culture of the New York Stock Exchange. Students read about the stock market in class, but were not fully impacted until they actively could engage in it. They were fascinated by the activity of the stock market, and the high energy it motivated, which gave them a real sense of the culture surrounding them. This post-reading drew students together to form a community, because they worked side by side to understand this cultural phenomenon. Plus, they had a great deal of fun. Therefore, we can understand how thematic units help students bond to form strong communities and experience much culture through the topics and themes.

7. “Thematic teaching is the natural way to integrate curriculum content areas” (Perry 1990). Curriculum is typically designed according to themes or topics, like health, finding a job, and American culture. Therefore, a thematic unit can be based on a theme or topic that the curriculum requires.

Let’s look at the curriculum topic of American Culture. “Destinations USA” is a thematic unit designed to incorporate the curriculum of American culture. The four topics of New York City, Washington, D.C., New Orleans and the Grand Canyon along with 10 themes such as idiomatic language, people, dialects and geography were combined to form one thematic unit. American culture is exploding out of each topic and theme. Presenting these ideas as a thematic unit, or whole process for learning the language, made it easier for students to comprehend. Students had a clear vision of the course goal and then worked toward developing language to achieve it. This thematic method of teaching also benefited the teachers by allowing them to organize and plan for class more efficiently by incorporating curriculum requirements.
CHAPTER 2
HOW TO CREATE A THEMATIC UNIT

The chapter details the organization of a thematic unit including the categorizing of all its parts, or subcategories. The chapter includes directions on how a teacher can create a unit in eight simple steps and contains tips and hints for producing a successful thematic unit.

Developing a thematic unit does not have to be difficult. In fact, it should be fun and exciting to plan. If the teacher is interested in the idea, generally the students will share the enthusiasm. Put yourself in the students’ shoes and select ideas that are valuable and interesting for the non-native speaker. Listed below are eight steps used to design a thematic unit.

1. Pick a topic (or specific tourist destination). The first step in creating a thematic unit is to select a topic that is appropriate for the teacher and the class. Therefore, it is important to consider the audience, length of time, resources, and the goals of the learner and teacher. It is also important to focus on the relevancy of the project to the learner. After all, learners join the class because they have their own individual needs to fulfill. Consider topics that lend themselves to numerous themes, but at the same time feasible. This will make it easier to expand ideas and will also make the lessons more interesting. Topics can range from cities, to holidays, historical events, people, or even an isolated idea, such as “freedom”. However, be careful of broad ideas in thematic units. The idea for a thematic unit on US tourist destinations was so general that we limited it to just the four destinations in order for it to have some benefit on students within a six-week course. The careful planning created an interesting unit that was manageable, and not overwhelming for the parties involved.

In our particular “Destinations USA” unit on tourist destinations described in this
paper, we chose four specific US tourist destinations as the topic of focus. We reached this decision based on the following evidence:

- First, we taught ESOL, not EFL (English as a Foreign Language), and the American culture would be an essential aspect to the project.

- Second, having worked hard all year with the existing curriculum, we were looking for new challenges for the upcoming summer course. We needed motivation to bring a new project to fruition and found an exciting and different approach to be the stimulus. We liked the idea of traveling to different destinations for a summer activity, so we decided to create a course that studied the English language using US tourist destinations as a tool, and essentially covering the curriculum content of American culture.

- Finally, the course would simulate travel throughout the US focusing on four specific regions: New York City, Washington, DC, New Orleans and the Grand Canyon. We chose four more popular destinations, or topics, that students might recognize and be interested in learning more about. Additionally, we selected themes to extract information about each topic, which would be useful for the students to know, as well as fulfill the curriculum standards. We then decided to use cooperative teaching to plan the project and secure our efforts towards achieving success.

2. Select Themes. What aspects of the topic are interesting or noteworthy? Pull out these details from the topic and use them for “themes” of the project. There are ten themes that were used to enhance the “Destinations USA” unit’s content, which were sought to further develop the topics, i.e. the four specific tourist destinations, chosen for the thematic unit: (1) Attractions and Sites, (2) Geography, (3) Culture/History, (4) Idioms, (5) Current Events/Entertainment, (6) Weather, (7) Food, (8) Dialects of the region, (9) Music, and (10) the Internet. However, it was not considered mandatory to use each theme listed above per topic. For example, the first theme “attractions and sites” are major aspects of relevancy for every tourist destination. Students studied about many tourist attractions or significant sites relating to the four main topics, or destinations chosen. Students were genuinely interested in learning about the sites and their significance within the destination. The various themes like “attractions and sites” helped make “Destinations USA” a solid thematic unit.

3. Find Related Readings. Readings are important for thematic units. They provide context and support the topic. A reading can be used to introduce a topic, and specific lessons can be based upon it. It can also support an idea, serving as a reference in order to expand it into more activities.
In “Destinations USA”, readings were chosen to explore the “attractions and sites” theme, as well as other significant aspects of a particular destination. For example, students read about the stock market during the week that focused on New York City. Students learned new vocabulary and grammatical structure from the reading. Later, students had a specific lesson on the structure. Finally, the theme dealing with stock market was expanded into a game of “Pit” (Parker Brothers Inc. 1964), which simulates the trading floor of the stock market exchange. Students were able to participate in the theme they had previously read about. As a result, students gained a deeper understanding of how the stock market truly works.

4. Introduce Supporting Grammar. No ESOL class is complete without structure taking the spotlight. Students have come to learn a language and typically, this means they want, and often need, structure practice.

Extract a grammar structure that is appropriate for the skill level but also coincides with the topic and context of the unit. In the “Destinations USA” unit, a different grammatical structure was addressed and practiced each week. For example, during the topic of the Grand Canyon, students read about and discussed activities offered at that destination, such as going hiking. Therefore, the structure focused on gerunds and infinitives. Students discovered and then reported on activities that they could participate in while traveling to the topic destination.

5. Focus on Idioms. It goes without saying that American English is unique to the United States. So teach it. Students don’t receive it upon entry to the country, as they would a stamp on their passport. Try to introduce idiomatic language that would help them complete a task according to context or topic. Student textbooks and content-rich readings can be used for determining idioms.

Since tourist destinations were the topics in “Destinations USA”, students learned idioms related to tourism and travel. Classes focused on terminology to help them complete, or survive as the case may be, a trip around the US. Idiomatic language like check-in, checkout, and globetrotting, to mention a few, can be useful in travel situations.

6. Create a Culminating Activity. This activity should tie the week’s events together and bring about closure to a topic. For this activity, the teacher should consider the elements of the topic and which are appropriate to explore in more detail for student-generated language acquisition. Activities that are authentic, interactive and fun are best for a culminating activity. Let your creativity soar and don’t hold back. This activity will assure a full classroom come Monday.

In “Destinations USA” each week there is one 1.5-hour follow up activity, which concludes the 9-hour week. It includes studies on a particular topic or tourist
destination and imposes multilevel student interaction. The culminating activities consisted of multilevel interactions, a fieldtrip, a guest speaker, a student election, and postcards from New York City. Students of all levels were highly involved in each activity. In addition, evaluations were stronger when the students enjoyed the activity.

7. Resources. Selecting resources can be very important to the learner’s understanding. As with any class text, skill level and relevancy to the students must be considered. In addition, topic appropriateness should be of the essence.

The Internet is an exceptional resource for this project. It can provide a complement to student textbooks by finding material not included in the book. In fact, information discovered on the Internet can be used to guide a teacher through the project. With so many modern advances, there are unlimited opportunities when developing such a unit. Resources are all around us, be your own best resource and discover them.

Fortunately for “Destinations USA”, geography lent itself to the topics chosen. Living in the US, we were easily able to find information about each topic. We searched through many materials and textbooks, plus readily used the Internet. Though it took time, the materials connected to the topics and themes and resulted in a well-formulated thematic unit. The extensive research and quality resources paid off.

Furthermore, it’s valuable for students to participate in the project as well. The Internet is a great tool for making that happen. Students can research an aspect of a topic and actively contribute to the unit. The Internet can also provide a means of assessment. In the US tourist destinations unit, the advanced students researched a landmark in New York City and then had to explain it to all three classes. Lower level classes researched the daily weather and the cost of living for each destination studied, and then gave a weekly report. Students enjoyed having an important role in the unit, and even sought the Internet outside of class for additional information about the four destinations and travel in general.

8. Don’t Forget Assessment! How does the teacher know it worked? What did the students learn? Ask them, test them, or have them complete a task and observe them. Authenticity is the key. Each activity should have an evaluation, and be assessed by the learner and the teacher. Within “Destinations USA”, students completed weekly and final assessments, such as planning their own trip, and writing about their favorite city. Therefore, we were able to monitor and record our students’ learning. In addition, this information helped us to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the activities and then adjust the unit accordingly.
As another example of how “themes” can be incorporated into a thematic unit, in a workshop given on thematic units, a group of instructors developed a unit on the Ohio Bicentennial and chose topics like famous inventors and US Presidents from Ohio to study as part of the unit.

In summary, following each step listed above will craft a thematic unit based upon an exciting and relevant topic. For “Destinations USA” we wanted to plan a fun and interesting activity that would be appropriate for any skill-level. We made sure not to plan the same kind of event each week. We also wanted to create an activity that culminated the week’s studies of a chosen destination. It was important for the activity to be student-centered. We hoped our students would take control of their learning, focus on practicing language skills, and learn a great deal from working together. While this was happening, we had an opportunity to observe the students and their language skills. We knew this culminating activity had to be the strongest part of the week. Therefore, we worked hard to plan an interesting activity that had relevancy to the topic and the lessons of the week. The following chapters of this paper detail the practical applications of the theory and the steps involved in creating a thematic unit that have been discussed here in chapter 2.
CHAPTER 3

SYNOPSIS OF “DESTINATIONS USA”

The subsequent chapters of this paper describe the practical applications for the thematic unit on US tourist destinations entitled “Destinations USA”. There is one chapter for each week of the unit that a different destination was studied, and also one for assessment. The chapters describe the objectives for the week, specific classroom activities, and the culminating activity. The chapter on assessment details the weekly and final assessments that students participated in. All activities were planned according to the 10 themes as detailed in Chapter 2. It’s important to note that each topic does not necessarily include all 10 themes. Additionally, some themes tend to overlap, where one theme includes an aspect of another theme. For example, the first reading about entertainment attractions contained relevant idioms that I then created a specific lesson on. This interconnectedness of two themes that relate to each other and the topic is the core of a thematic unit.

Chapters 4 through 9 describe the actual work of the advanced class because that is the class I was directly responsible for. The two other teachers worked with their high and low intermediate level classes on similar themes and lessons. The culminating activity for each topic, however, explains how all three levels participated together. Furthermore, this unit assumes there are three ESOL classes ranging in level from low intermediate to advanced, since the unit was originally piloted using these three levels of students. For teachers whose situation does not fit this scenario, please make the necessary adjustments.
DESTINATIONS USA!
ESOL CLASS ITINERARY

Learning English through Travel to Tourist Destinations

Week 1 – Introduction
Prepare for the unit.
Depart the hometown.

Week 2 – New York, NY
Send a postcard to another student about a Manhattan landmark.

Week 3 – Washington, D.C.
Explore the Nation’s Capital
Elect a Student Body Representative.

Week 4 – New Orleans, LA
Kick back with some Blues, Louisiana style!
Landmarks, landmarks, landmarks...

Week 5 – Grand Canyon, Arizona
Discover a great wonder of the world.
Pack a bag to head out West, and
Don’t forget your trail mix!

Week 6 – Assessments!
Plan a trip of your own.
Write about your favorite city.
Last week of class – see you next semester!
CHAPTER 4

HOME TOWN - PREPARATION FOR UNIT

Objectives

Teacher will introduce US tourist destinations unit to students, explain the overall responsibilities of each class, and describe the types of the activities the students will participate in. Students will learn idioms in the context of reading about entertainment events in their hometown and focus on the structure of two-word verbs and prepositions of direction. Students will also take a structure pre-Test, practice learning to read a map, visit a local farmers’ market to test their map reading skills, and interview local residents to practice using idioms from the reading.

Attractions and Sites

Students read an article about entertainment attractions in their hometown as a preview of the unit, in which they will study attractions about each topic destination. As a whole group, students identify unknown vocabulary and discuss the attractions. Teacher checks for comprehension. The article includes idioms expanded on later in specific lessons on idioms and phrasal verbs.

Idioms

Students identify idioms like check out and spice up from the reading on entertainment
attractions. As a whole group, students define the terms with teacher assistance. In pairs, students practice using idioms by interviewing a partner. Students ask each other teacher-generated questions like: “What do you like to check out in Cleveland? What is up-and-coming this summer? How can we spice up our English class?” Discus answers among the whole group for accuracy. Teacher presents a dictation to recycle the idioms and practice listening skills. Teacher then collects and assesses listening skills. For accountability, students write about a new place in the city that they want to check out, and why. Teacher collects and assesses accuracy.

Structure

Students take a pre-test (post-test taken at the end of the unit). Teacher collects and assesses for accuracy. The test is used as a means of tracking improvement, which is helpful for State-mandated documentation records. The test was adapted from student textbook.

Two Word Verbs/Phrasal Verbs

This lesson expands terms introduced and identified in the reading about entertainment attractions. Students identify phrasal verbs, then use exercises from their textbook to practice phrasal verbs in conversations and individual writing. Students practice phrasal verbs in games like concentration or tic tac toe. Students complete a fill-in the blank story that recycles the phrasal verbs and tests for meaning within a context. Teacher collects and assesses for accuracy.

Geography

As a large group, review prepositions of location by using a chain drill – “She put the
pen on the desk.” Circulating the pen around the room, each student provides a sentence with a different preposition for where the pen is, and then places it in a new location for the next student to answer.

Students identify the states focused on in the unit using US maps and continue to practice prepositions. Small groups of students ask questions such as: “Which state is above Kentucky? Name a state on the East Coast.”

Teacher introduces mapping skills with maps of the hometown. Students identify the location of the entertainment attractions from the reading. In pairs, students give directions to one of the locations, done orally or written. The other student follows the directions to determine the destination. Teacher observes.

Internet

Students individually research directions from their own homes to the farmers’ market using a website like MapQuest (MapQuest.com, Inc. 2004). Teacher monitors.

Culminating Activity

The whole class takes a fieldtrip to the local farmers’ market using the directions from the Internet. The goal is for students to locate the market, and then, interview locals to incorporate the idioms. For example students ask, “what’s up-and-coming in our hometown, what do you like to check out in the city, or where do you head when you’re leaving town?” Students report their findings back to the class for accountability. Teacher accompanies and observes.
CHAPTER 5
NEW YORK CITY

Objectives

Students will practice simple and perfect modals in preparation for a simulated trip to NYC. Students will learn about the stock market, travel idioms, regional dialects identified through film. Students will research a landmark using the Internet, and then write a postcard about one of the landmarks and exchange it with another student.

Attractions and Sites

A reading about the US Stock Market introduces students to New York City’s business sector and provides examples of modals. As a whole class, students identify unknown vocabulary, like securities, bull vs. bear market and trade. Then, small groups define through context. Students read individually, then discuss with the whole class. Teacher checks for comprehension. Students write using double entry, i.e. copying one phrase from the reading, and then describing its meaning in their own words. Teacher helps work on accuracy. For follow up, students participate in trading by playing the game of “Pit” (Parker Brother’s Inc. 1964), which simulates the stock exchange. Teacher observes.

Idioms

Students listen to a true story about a cement frog that visits tourist destinations.
The story, taken from a student textbook, introduces idiomatic language and also incorporates modals. Students identify idioms like *rip off* and *globetrotting*, then, practice idioms using exercises from the textbook. Incorporate modals and produce ideas about the stock market for application. For example, students produce, “I could have gotten ripped off when I traded stocks.” Teacher helps work on accuracy.

**Structure**

Students use an icebreaker to review simple modals like *should*, *could*, *may*/ *might*; for example, answering, “what should I bring for the trip to NYC?” Teacher then prompts students to determine the meaning of perfect modals *should have* and *could have* from the readings. Students practice structure in exercises from the textbook. Teacher reintegrates the structure back into the topic of NYC by using the Internet weather report from the low-intermediate class. Students practice perfect modals to answer the question, “What kind of things should I have brought for the trip?” Teacher assesses oral and written answers.

**Culture**

Students learn about different ways to get around NYC by focusing on methods of transportation like taxicabs, the subway, and carriage rides. Students can reference subway maps to better understand the city’s geography in association to the train system and routes. Students role-play a situation using a method of transportation in NYC, incorporating idioms and modals where appropriate. Teacher observes.
Internet

A different activity using the Internet is completed by each level and presented to every class. The low-intermediate class gives the weather report; the high-intermediate class reports the cost of living comparison between NYC and their hometown; and finally, the advanced class researches and reports on famous landmarks in NYC.

Dialects

Students watch a clip from a popular television series like “Seinfeld” (1990) to be exposed to dialects found in and around New York City. Students connect the idioms to this theme as well. Discuss film clip in large group. Teacher checks for comprehension.

Music

Frank Sinatra “starts spreading the news…” about “New York, New York” (Ebb and Kander 1980) before class, after and during breaks. Songs about the topic expose students to American culture, reinforce the week’s topic, and bring an element of fun into the classroom.

Culminating Activity

In small multilevel groups, the advanced class commences by reporting on the landmark they researched on the Internet. All students take notes about the site, writing down three significant points about each one. In their groups, students discuss which landmark they would like to visit, and why. Ask questions for clarification about a site, if necessary. Teacher observes.
Each student writes a postcard to another student using an example postcard provided by the teachers. In preparation, students practice writing a postcard. Each postcard contains information about which landmark the student visited, its significance, and a trivia question about NYC.

Students drop postcards into a basket and choose a different one to read and take home. Students try to answer the trivia question; lower levels get help from advanced students.

For assessment and evaluation of the culminating activity, students fill out a Language Learning Diary (Weinstein-Shr and Huizenga 1996) for the week’s lessons. The Diary provides information about what the student learned, how each skill was practiced, which new words were learned and what the student still wants to learn. There is also room to add suggestions and rate the culminating activity on a scale of 1 to 5. Teacher collects and assesses.
CHAPTER 6
WASHINGTON, DC

Objective

This topic explores the nation’s capital and the US democratic election process. Students will learn about famous monuments and memorials in the city, identify idioms coinciding to the topic, and elect one of their classmates as Student Body Representative.

Attractions and Sites

Students read about famous monuments and memorials like the “Capitol Building”, “Arlington Cemetery” and the “Vietnam Memorial Wall”. Students learn about the attractions through readings and brochures. Discuss significance of sites among whole class. Teacher checks for reading comprehension.

Idioms

Students listen to a true story from a student textbook about a family hitting the road for a trip around the world. The family runs into problems and experiences red tape. Students identify idioms. Teacher checks listening comprehension. Then, students use exercises in the textbook to practice idioms like hit the road, run into, and red tape. Students create sentences about the topic city to practice idioms. For example, “While visiting Washington, DC, I ran into the President of the United States.” Teacher works with the students on
accuracy.

Structure

Students identify the present perfect grammar structure from the readings. Students practice structure through guided exercises, and then apply it to writing an FBI “Wanted” report for criminals. First, the teacher serves as the class example. Together the whole class creates a reason why the teacher is wanted by the FBI, and states all the illegal things he or she has done. Then, in pairs, students write about another student in class. Present to whole class for accountability. Teacher observes and assesses accuracy. Preface activity with a brief discussion explaining the FBI and its responsibilities.

Internet

This week the students search the Internet to find entertainment events in Washington, D.C. Check out a city website to find what’s up-and-coming in the nation’s capital and then, report the findings to each class. Students listen to the intermediate level classes’ reports on the weather and the cost of living index for the topic city.

Music

Patriotic Songs emphasize the topic of the nation’s capital. Play before, after class and during break times. Students listen and enjoy.
Culmination Activity

All activities preceding the election simulate the stages of a real US election. Each level has responsibilities for different parts of the process. All students have an active role in this exercise on democracy.

In preparation, the advanced class focuses on the political process that a candidate experiences before an election. The class reads about US civics for background information on the election process. The preceding days’ activities include all levels of students selecting three issues currently affecting them at school, such as parking, a listening lab, and facility cleanliness. Advanced students form groups around each issue, resulting in three political parties, the blue, the green, and the yellow party. Then, the members of each party compose a platform. Finally, political parties choose a candidate to represent that platform. To commence the culminating activity, the three candidates of the advanced class present their platform of their respective political parties to the entire student audience.

The low-intermediate class conducts an opinion poll on the high-intermediate class using questions about political parties, student issues, candidates and demographics. In the meantime, advanced students prepare for the grass roots campaign. They create paraphernalia to advertise their candidate and issue using colored index cards, representative of the political party. Preparation is done while intermediate level classes are conducting the public opinion poll. Afterwards, advanced students circulate throughout the room handing out materials and shaking hands with intermediate classes to persuade them to vote for their candidate and issue.

After tabulating poll results, teachers report results to everyone. In a real public opinion poll votes are chosen based upon a favorite candidate not only the issue represented
by that candidate.

Next, students hold a debate with questions from voters. Intermediate level students generate questions for the candidates early in the week. Then, the three candidates discuss their platforms and field questions from students to simulate a true debate. One teacher moderates.

The last step is the secret ballot. Students cast votes by secret ballot. Ballots include candidates’ names and issues. Teachers collect and tally votes.

At the end of the activity, the three classes review everything that they learned that week, what materials have been used, and how things might have been done more effectively. Teachers write comments on the board but make no attempt to edit them. Individually, students reflect on what they learned that week. Then, record information in Language Learning Diaries (Weinstein-Shr and Huizenga 1996), and include suggestions for future activities.

Finally, a teacher announces the winning issue and candidate. The candidate makes an acceptance speech and accepts student congratulations. The director of the program offers his congratulations as well. As follow up, the class keeps a suggestion box for students’ comments. The Student Body Representative writes a letter to the director requesting student issues be resolved.
CHAPTER 7
NEW ORLEANS

Objectives

Students will learn about landmarks in New Orleans, explore the jazz culture, practice present and past perfect structures, and take a fieldtrip to a New Orleans-style restaurant.

Attractions and Sites

Students read in jigsaw style. Small groups each read about a different landmark in New Orleans. The groups split and form new groups where each student has read about a different landmark. The students explain their landmark and the group composes a tour of the city including the landmarks. In pairs from their group, students discuss what they have seen (or would have seen) on the tour and any important events that had already occurred. This activity incorporates present and past perfect tenses. Finally, students write a paragraph about the discussion had with their partner. Teacher assesses accuracy of structure.

Culture

Carolyn Graham’s Jazz Chants (1993) introduce perfect tense using speaking and listening skills. Students listen to a model chant and then practice speaking, or chanting, in groups and then pairs. Teacher helps work on pronunciation. Students write a Jazz Chant
incorporating the structure, and then teach it to the class for practice. Teacher observes.

Structure

For warm up and review, teacher drills students to practice past participles. Small groups of students create an entire city park, such as the “Louis Armstrong Park” in New Orleans, from a ½-finished park. Students practice past perfect structures by stating what had already been in the park. Students draw a picture, or another visual to illustrate the park. Students present the finished park to the class. Teacher assesses for accuracy.

Internet

Students search for information on a jazz performer with origins in New Orleans. Teacher monitors. Students must report findings to each class. Students listen to reports on the weather and cost of living index. Teacher observes.

Culminating Activity

Students take a fieldtrip to a New Orleans-style restaurant. In preparation, teacher introduces an example of New Orleans cuisine, such as Jambalaya. Whole group discusses ingredients. In small groups, students role-play ordering in a restaurant and inquiring about menu items they don’t understand. Teacher observes and helps work on accuracy.

Students visit the authentic restaurant to experience New Orleans-style food and practice life skills, such as ordering from a menu in an American restaurant. Students sit at multicultural tables to compel all-English discussion. Discuss jazz performers or attractions that interest students. Complete Language Learning Diaries (Weinstein-Shr and Huizenga 1996) for weekly assessment and evaluation. Teacher collects and assesses.
CHAPTER 8
GRAND CANYON

Objectives

Students will learn about the geography and environment of the Grand Canyon, identify travel idioms, and practice using gerunds and infinitives. A guest speaker will present information and demonstrate equipment for going camping.

Geography

Students read about the geography and environment of the Grand Canyon. Identify unknown vocabulary. Teacher checks reading and vocabulary comprehension. In small groups, students discuss environmental challenges faced in the region, and then make a list of ways to improve and maintain the region. Teacher observes and collects list for accountability.

Idioms

Students listen to a story from student textbook about a unique hotel located at the bottom of an ocean where guests have to go scuba diving to enter. Students identify idioms like one-of-a-kind, check in, and have a ball. Students practice idioms with exercises in the textbook, and then create sentences or dialogs incorporating the week’s study on gerunds and infinitives. Teacher presents dictation to recycle idioms. Students practice listening skills. Teacher collects and assesses for listening comprehension.
Structure

Students start with an icebreaker. Pantomime or act out gerunds for the whole group, while others try to guess (Woodward, 1997). Then, students write sentence on the board. Students also identify gerunds and infinitives from the reading. Then, practice verbs that require gerunds and/or infinitives through textbook exercises and authentic activities. Students differentiate the changes in meaning between a gerund and an infinitive when using certain verbs. Students give short speeches about vacationing in the Grand Canyon to practice structure. Teacher helps work on accuracy.

Internet

This week students visit the topic destination virtually! Students discover activities in the Grand Canyon. Teacher monitors. Students report findings to all classes. Students again listen to the intermediate level reports on the weather and the cost of living comparison.

Music and Culture

Play Country Western songs during the break and teach students to square dance or line dance.

Culminating Activity

A guest speaker from a local outdoor adventure store provides information about camping, and also demonstrates equipment.

In preparation, students are given a list of vocabulary words related to camping, such as flashlight, lantern, and bandana. Individually, students determine unknown words. Then,
find another student to explain the word or check a dictionary for meaning.

Guest speaker demonstrates and explains camping gear to the whole group; students try out gear. Speaker provides more camping information including the best camping locations in the hometown region. Teacher writes information on the board for students to copy. Students ask questions. Teacher observes.

As follow up, in multilevel groups students decide and write the “10 most important things to bring on a camping trip”. Students share stories of past camping trips and note which items on list were absolutely necessary. Students complete Language Learning Diary (Weinstein-Shr and Huizenga 1996) to evaluate the week’s lessons and learning.
CHAPTER 9
ASSESSMENT

Weekly Assessment and Evaluation

Students record what they learned in class on the Language Learning Diary (Weinstein-Shr and Huizenga 1996). This assessment is done on a weekly basis. The Language Learning Diary is a structured self-evaluation form. The form provides information about what students learned, how each skill was practiced, the new words identified and what the student still wants to learn. Students add suggestions and rate the culminating activity on a scale from 1 to 5. Teachers collect and assess student learning and activity value.

Plan a trip

In this final assessment activity, students plan their own trip during the last week of classes. They begin at the Grand Canyon, the last topic studied, and decide where to go and what to do within the time and monetary restrictions designated by the teacher.

In pairs, students discuss places they have and have not visited in the US. Students use the structure of “Jahari Window” to determine where they would like to visit on their trip. For example, in pairs two students, “A” and “B”, record various places. The method of recording is done in a system of four areas: “Only A visited, Only B visited, A AND B both visited, and Neither A nor B visited.”
Then, two pairs form one group of four to design a trip. Students' roles include a secretary, a treasurer, a mileage recorder, and a timekeeper. Teacher designates parameters of the project: one week for the entire journey, $1000 spending money, and a rental car with 100 miles a day (20 cents for each mile over). Students use a special map that includes mileage and driving time for the Western half of the United States to organize the journey. Finally, students present their trip to the class, displaying adherence to the guidelines. Teacher observes.

Essay on a Favorite Destination

Another final assessment for the unit is an essay. Individually, students write about the destination they liked best. For warm up, students review destinations and what they learned. Pass a ball around and each student reveals one thing they learned and enjoyed in class.

Teachers write a brief outline on the board based upon students' answers. Students write down two destinations in a notebook and discuss with a partner. Students then choose one to write about. First, create an outline containing: information students learned about the destination, significant attractions and sites, reason for interest, plans to visit, and any remaining questions. Then, write a draft essay about the content. Teacher works with students on accuracy. Students consult a partner for editing. After revisions, students write a final draft. Teacher collects and assesses.

Structure post-test

A post-test is taken individually to assess student comprehension of structure.
practiced during the thematic unit. The test is the same as the pre-test, therefore
directly shows improvement. Teacher collects and assesses for improvement.

Idioms

Teacher presents comprehensive dictation to whole class to recycle idioms and
practice listening. Play games in small groups to practice using idioms. Teacher observes
and assesses idiom comprehension.
CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Overall, the thematic unit “Destinations USA” was a great success considering this was the first time the two teachers and I had planned and implemented a project of this nature. Students were able to improve Basic English skills through content-rich lessons, achieving their primary goal upon entering the ESOL class. In addition, students were interested in the unit. They were excited to participate in the authentic activities that the unit offered. They were thrilled to focus on American culture and read about the many landmarks and attractions that each destination offered. Some of the activities proved to be more valuable and therefore, were more enjoyable for the students.

The first week was full of trial and error because we had previously not planned a multilevel activity of this magnitude. Despite our uncertainty, the popularity of New York City helped arouse student interest and involvement. Students learned about many popular landmarks during that week. Most of the landmarks were familiar, and therefore, students were intrigued to learn facts about the sites they had only known as American symbols. For instance, the stock market was very memorable for the advanced class. In addition to reading and studying key vocabulary, students were able to participate in a simulation of the stock exchange through playing a trading game. This high-energy activity enthralled students, and therefore, was very meaningful for them. As a result, students engaged in forming learning communities that intensified as the unit proceeded.
The next week, students were very curious to discover what teachers had planned for the next topic. In general, students were interested in Washington, DC because it's the nation's capital. In fact, the election for student body representative became the most successful culminating activity of the unit. In particular, the teachers and I spent extra time planning this topic and culminating activity with carefully timed events, in order to avoid any miscalculations. Therefore, we felt confident and excited for the week. Students quickly adopted our enthusiasm. Therefore, our preparation paid off and the students benefited a great deal. They loved campaigning for a real situation that affected them directly. They worked hard throughout the entire election process. During this activity, students were able to practice their English and learn about the US government while their attention focused on electing a representative to serve the student body.

Surprisingly, the grass roots campaign was perhaps the single most enjoyed activity. Using prior knowledge of persuasion and politics, the advanced class prepared campaign materials in English in small groups to be handed out to the intermediate classes. The preparation came so naturally to many of the students. They seemed excited to be able to voice their opinion democratically. The multilevel interaction and exchange that occurred during the distribution of materials astonished the teachers who had previously experienced a group of students hesitant to interact with those of a different proficiency level. Boundaries were overcome, communities converged, and democracy was at work.

After the success of the election, students were eager to begin another topic. Students knew little about New Orleans and wanted to learn. However, this week the school was holding events outside the program that involved many of the summer school students. Mindful of this interruption to classes, the teachers and I felt there were too many events for
the students to maintain their concentration on the topic destination during the short 9-hour week. Thus, we minimized activities and emphasis on the destination city. Despite the reduced focus students were quite intrigued with the city and its history. In fact, they were disappointed there was not more time in class to spend on the topic. Ironically, students remained motivated to study the topic of New Orleans. In addition, a couple students included the city on a trip they planned for the end of the semester so that they could finish learning about the city in person.

Another positive attribute for the summer course was the inclusion of the Grand Canyon as the last tourist destination, or topic, to be studied. The West was virtually unknown to most of the student population since they have mostly lived in the Midwest and Eastern United States. Students embraced the week’s lessons of practicing gerunds through learning and discussing activities that can be experienced in and around the Grand Canyon. Students often confused and misused these grammatical structures. Fortunately, this topic provided them with a real situation for practicing the structure. Students were proud to be able to apply the week’s lessons for a final report about how they would spend a vacation in the Grand Canyon.

The last culminating activity included a guest speaker from a local outdoor adventure store to discuss camping and camping equipment. Students were captivated by the equipment and information. Ironically, the speaker suggested a “grand canyon” in a nearby state for local camping. Needless to say, students were thrilled to learn there’s a canyon much closer to home than Arizona. He also brought many eye pleasing visuals, such as a sleeping bag, tent, and backpack. Students reacted to these like children in a candy store and thoroughly enjoyed trying out the equipment. However, students received a harsh reality
check when they learned the high prices of the equipment, though they quickly realized that much of the equipment was not completely necessary for camping in the US. As a result of the speech's impact on the students, teachers made certain to have a post-discussion with their individual classes about camping and equipment that may or may not be necessary. Students were eager to use the new and practical outdoor vocabulary they had learned. This follow up and attention to students' concerns provided a constructive closure for the culminating activity.

In addition to culminating activities, the different levels interacted through weekly Internet reports. These Internet activities proved to be an excellent resource for the unit and also a valuable tool for allowing students autonomy in their learning. What's more, students had a greater motivation for completing their work because every class was responsible for researching and reporting on a different aspect of a destination. Students specifically enjoyed comparing their hometown to the weekly destination. Therefore, the cost of living comparison given by the high-intermediate class was the biggest hit. It provoked lively conversation about living costs in students' country of origin. The weather report fulfilled a general curiosity and students equated it to a news report. However, it had the greatest meaning for the low-intermediate students because they were able to complete the research and report it to all levels. The advanced class liked the freedom of researching a topic destination. In the beginning, their presentation was not suitable for lower levels; however, the topic was later changed to accommodate all levels.

While student feedback on the summer course was very positive, there were some lessons that could have gone more smoothly. For example, the culminating activity for New York City left students questioning the value of the activity. After the week's studies,
students had high expectations for the culminating activity. During the activity, advanced students gave an oral presentation of a landmark that they had researched on the Internet to the low and high intermediate classes in small groups. Though the information was solid and all students were genuinely interested in the landmarks, the low-intermediate class did not understand all of the details. In addition, the advanced class presented their Internet report of the news, which overwhelmed the intermediate levels with more details. As a result, the teachers and I decided that advanced students would give a much shorter presentation of "entertainment" news for future culminating activities. Entertainment was chosen, because various students had requested this information in the Language Learning Diary. We felt confident this change would improve the activity by making it more meaningful for all students.

The postcard exchange was another part of the culminating activity for New York City. Students loved the idea of creating a postcard about a landmark they studied in class and then giving, or pretending to send, it to another student. However, writing the postcard took longer than we had allotted. Students were rushed and there was little time for a formal exchange. Nevertheless, students were pleased to be able to read the English postcard about New York City and take it home. Despite the students' continued enthusiasm, the teachers and I believed we had planned too much for this brief period of time. Therefore, we decided to narrow the focus and lengthen the time together for the next culminating activity.

When planning "Destinations USA" the teachers and I were not sure what to expect since we had never taught an entire course using a thematic unit, nor had we cooperated so closely on a project before. Regardless, results were favorable based on assessments and evaluations. Weekly assessments according to the Language Learning Diary (Weinstein-Shr
and Huizenga 1996) documented that students were learning, and also enjoying the activities. This information was a valuable resource for the teachers and me. The Diary provided essential feedback that we used for planning future activities. For example, a couple students commented, “I want to learn more about entertainment in the city.” This suggestion was incorporated into the advanced class’ weekly, Internet research and report. Interestingly, it worked. We found that all levels were more interested and therefore, understood a report about one entertainment activity happening in the topic destination.

In general, the Language Learning Diary (Weinstein-Shr and Huizenga 1996) assessment and evaluation was challenging for low intermediate students, but certainly attainable. These students were able to record phrases or simple sentences, while more advanced students produced sentences with complete thoughts. The teachers and I concluded that the assessment activity was useful, but needs preparation and additional time for lower leveled students.

We also concluded that final assessments were more meaningful for students than the weekly ones. The assessment activity where students planned their own trip was most powerful because we found students extremely engaged and committed to the project. Regardless of level, students were completely focused and interested in being in control of their destination. They worked hard to create a realistic itinerary with all the necessary preparations, and still they had a great deal of fun. Though it was a group activity, each member had a responsibility to fulfill. There was a secretary, a treasurer, a mileage recorder, and a timekeeper. Students were confident about their work. I believe that if a vacation were feasible, each student would have taken the trip they designed. In fact, two students
planned and coordinated a trip for their two-week break that included some of the destinations studied in class.

Perhaps the most constructive assessment in the eyes of a teacher was the essay writing about the student’s favorite destination of the unit. It may seem traditional, but this served as a direct means of accountability for student documentation. It seems a person usually remembers more about what they liked or enjoyed doing. Ironically, the majority of students found it difficult to write about just one destination, and therefore, included information about other destinations of interest. The teachers and I were very impressed with the details of the essays. Students were attracted to each topic and learned so much during the unit. And finally, many students made future plans to visit their favorite destination.

The evidence stated above confirms the unit’s success. Students achieved their primary goal of improving their basic language skills for learning English as a Second Language. What’s more, students reported they enjoyed the unit’s activities. They were thrilled to learn more than just English language skills from a textbook. They embraced their newfound familiarity with American culture, and were pleasantly surprised by their how much their knowledge of the United States had expanded. In fact during breaks and after class, students began to study maps more and engage in English-only discussions about their many experiences with culture and travel.

The success of the students triggered a sense of gratification for the teachers and me. Overall, we were very pleased with the students’ results. Additionally, we also met our original goals, though at times these proposed challenges for us. Through careful planning students were able to use the four skills, while exploring American culture within a whole
learning environment. They also had a chance to participate in multilevel interaction and began to look forward to it, even though they originally showed opposition.

However, there was a long road toward the success. The unit required much planning time and hard work. The teachers and I met several times before the semester began to strategize and outline the unit. We also met at the beginning of each week to confirm events for the new topic, and then debriefed at the end of the week after the culminating activity. In addition to our group meetings, we prepared individually. Nevertheless, the teachers and I enjoyed the process very much, especially the results. We really benefited from working together and implementing a different teaching idea like the thematic unit on US tourist destinations. Therefore, creating this thematic unit to increase our motivation for a summer semester worked like a charm. In fact, the teachers and I became genuinely enthused about the idea and have tried to continue it as part of our general curriculum. The following year, we created another unit about our home state in honor of its bicentennial.

Thematic instruction proved to be a viable method of instruction for this summer course. As a teacher in the course, I learned the power of content-based instruction, and the significance of the whole process of learning. In addition, I am thankful for the opportunity to cooperate with my colleagues on an authentic project. I now frequently consult them for support when implementing new activities. “Destinations USA” has greatly influenced my personal methods of teaching. Therefore, I plan to include thematic studies in my classes for all the reasons previously stated.
 SOURCES CONSULTED


