LinguaFolio Online Unit Planner Guide

C A S L S

Center for Applied Second Language Studies

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About CASLS

Improving the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages

The Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS), a National Foreign Language Resource Center and home to the Oregon Chinese Flagship Program, fosters innovation by providing research-based solutions to materials creation, implementation, and evaluation and assessment.

We are a diverse group of multilingual people working together toward a common goal: improving the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Our innovative solutions to language learning emanate from the creative recombination and application of ideas and technologies.

Core Values

- Everyone has the ability to learn a second language and should be provided with that opportunity.
- Meaningful communication is the purpose of language learning.
- Teachers and learners play a vital role in language learning.

Languages Resource Center

Language Resource Centers (LRCs) across the country promote the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Led by nationally and internationally recognized language professionals, LRCs create language learning and teaching materials, offer professional development opportunities, and conduct research on foreign language learning.

Purpose of this document

Innovative assessment is one of the cornerstones of CASLS. To fulfill our goal of giving educators the tools to engage in such assessment, we have created LinguaFolio Online (LFO), an electronic skills portfolio for students in which they upload evidence to prove mastery of the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements. As a compliment to LFO, we have recently added an app (iOS and Andriod), LFO to Go, so that students can more easily and organically create and upload evidence of achievement of the Can-Do Statements. It is our belief that LFO and LFO to Go will help transform the speed and ease with which teachers are able to give their students feedback.

To use LFO to its fullest potential, teachers need to use backwards design. We have created a unit planner to help teachers engage in this process, and this document is intended to provide clarity to teachers using the planner.

Given the reality of widespread district initiatives regarding certain documentation to be used for teacher planning, we do not suggest that this planner exist in lieu of other mandated approaches. However, it can exist in concert with one these approaches and is designed to give teachers the tools needed to blend the planning necessary to use LFO with the different approaches to planning nationwide.

While the unit planner was developed to take into account a majority of current planning approaches, it is possible that something does not align well. If a component of this unit planner does not align, feel free to adapt it to your needs. Although founded on best practices, it is not prescriptive in and of itself. The unit planner is intended to be a tool that is helpful to educators and not overly dogmatic or unbending.

How to use this document

In the following section of the document, you will see a copy of the blank unit planner. Look it over before reading the subsequent explanation to heighten your understanding of how to implement the document and to marry it with the current planning approach implemented at your school.

The explanation of the unit planner is intended to be read in concert with the last section of the document, an example unit planner. The explanation walks educators through each step of the unit planner by giving instructions and making recommendations for implementation. At the end of each section, a chart exists that connects each component to popular approaches using backwards design. The intent with this chart is to help you blend this tool with those that you are already using.

Step 1: Logistics

Unit title: _____	Unit duration: _____
Author(s): _____	Proficiency level(s): _____

Step 2: Begin with the end in mind.
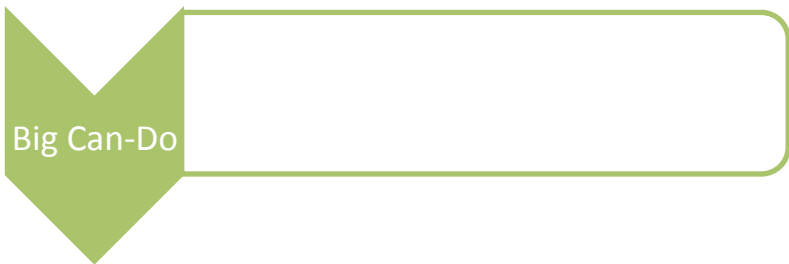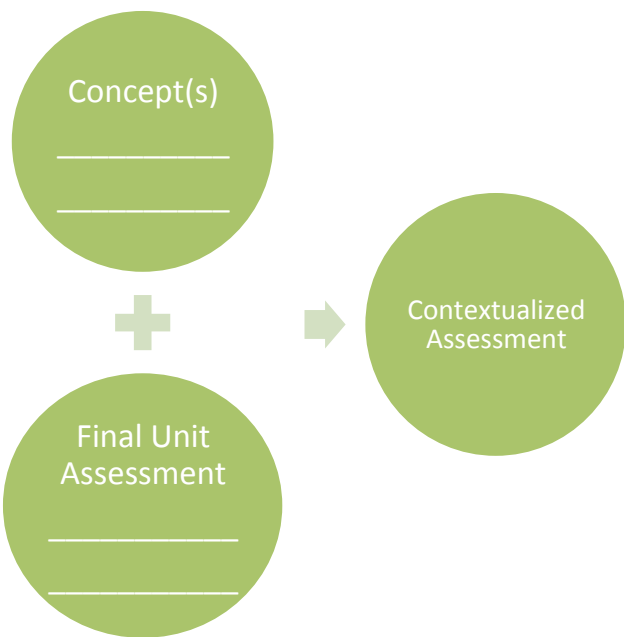
Concept(s)

_____

_____

Final Unit
Assessment

_____

_____

Contextualized
Assessment

Big Can-Do

Connection between concept(s) and assessment:

How will students be inspired to care more about communication than vocabulary and grammar acquisition?

_____

_____

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_____

Step 3: Plan questions to guide thinking.[1]

Level 1 (Gathering information)	
Level 2 (Processing information)	
Level 3 (Applying information)	

Step 4: The day-to-day

Big Can-Do:				
Content:				
Ongoing Assessment				
Day/Date	Can-Do Statement(s)	Student task(s)	Connection to final assessment (rubric criterion, appropriate descriptor)	Feedback tool(s)

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[1] Level titles taken from *Costa's Levls of Inquiry/Questioning/Thinking*

Step 5: Reflection

How do you define success for this particular unit of study?

Did your students achieve success? What concrete proof do you have?

How will what your students learned in this unit of study inform your next unit of study?

What are three things that you did well in this unit?

What are one to two things that you would like to improve upon next time?

Step 1: Logistics

This step is easy! Simply put in the appropriate information. Note that you may have a variety of proficiency levels in your classroom working on different Can-Do Statements. That's okay. This planner can account for that situation.

Undoubtedly, great planning comes from meaningful collaboration. Take advantage of the opportunity to fill out this unit planner with another teacher. Do not be confined by the language that you teach! It is refreshing to reach out to teachers of other languages because thinking through the practice of teaching can provide some wonderful perspectives.

Step 2: Begin with the end in mind.

In completing Step 2 and Step 3, you are essentially creating a snapshot of the entire unit. These steps are designed to engage you in thoughtful backwards design.

Concept(s)

As Erikson (2012) outlines, long-term retention, high-order thinking, and interdisciplinary transfer are achieved when students are able to organize sometimes seemingly disparate facts into concepts. Teaching at a conceptual level has a separate benefit for world language teachers; it makes the classroom more focused on communicative output than the memorization of vocabulary lists and verb conjugations. Structure is important, but if it drives teaching, students will likely struggle with transfer of meaning and the ability to use their knowledge in real-world contexts.

While concepts are not necessarily ground-breaking, they can be difficult to discern when motived first by content rather than by the functions that language serves. For example, if a teacher sets his or her sights solely on teaching about adjective agreement, he or she might completely miss the bigger idea of the interplay between perception and reality that could be used to teach adjective agreement. This idea is one that is simply more motivating to students than the governance of syntax. It is personally relevant and leads students to use language to achieve concrete communication goals rather than to use language because the teacher is insistent that certain material be memorized.

It would be impossible to create an exhaustive list of concepts to use, but some other examples are change, balance, relationships, community, and power. If you are like many language teachers and are very motivated by how fascinating the rules of syntax can be, seeing an overarching concept might be difficult for you. If this situation resonates, it is recommended that you discuss your content and the functions of the language that you are teaching with someone from a different subject area to bring clarity to a possible concept. Also, for many educators, teaching

two concepts as a generalization (e.g., balance affects relationships) is more concrete and salient than teaching an individual concept during a unit of study.

Where do I see this in other common approaches to planning?	
Understanding by design	Stage 1 > Meaning > Understandings; Stage 1 > Transfer
Project-based learning	Not explicitly mentioned, though used to create an inciting incident/entry document
International Baccalaureate MYP	'Statement of Inquiry' and all of its components (key and related concepts, global contexts)

Assessment

When learning a language, there is no such thing as a summative assessment. While there might be a final assessment for a given unit of study, the assessment should inform the next unit. Thus, all assessments are essentially formative. However, giving quality feedback on a variety of communicative skills is imperative, and a great time to schedule some of this feedback is at the end of a unit of study. For this reason, we use the words 'final unit assessment' instead of 'summative assessment.'

This unit planner does not prescribe a specific assessment method, but the assessment must be skill-based rather than focused solely on the acquisition of disparate grammar points by learners.

When crafting your assessment, remember that assessments are increasingly more reflective of the fact that communicative skills do not exist exclusively of one another. For example, it is very common for people to talk about something that they read or write about something that they heard. Thus, assessing more than one skill simultaneously is encouraged.

Where do I see this in other unit planners?	
Understanding by design	Stage 2 > Assessment evidence > Performance task(s)
Project-based learning	Project
International Baccalaureate MYP	Summative assessment

Big Can-Do

In any given unit, you will definitely have more than one Can-Do Statement that your students achieve. These Can-Do Statements will be spread across and within multiple modes of communication. However, there will likely be an overarching Can-Do

Statement that you want your students to achieve by the end of a course of study. If one isn't enough, feel free to include more.

Connection between concept(s) and assessment

This box is included so that educators can crystalize why a concept is relevant to a unit's final assessment. If such a task is undertaken, one can be certain that students will be more focused on appropriate output than on memorization of content. While there are certainly ways to create a meaningful final assessment without considering an overarching concept, it is guaranteed that an assessment will be meaningful if one such concept is taken into account.

Where do I see this in other unit planners?	
Understanding by design	Not explicitly mentioned, though achieved by linking Stage 1 (Desired Results) to Stage 2 (Evidence)
Project-based learning	Not explicitly mentioned, though should be discussed with students as they collect artifacts
International Baccalaureate MYP	Summative assessment > Relationship between summative assessment task(s) and statement of inquiry

Step 3: Plan questions to guide thinking.

Increasingly, district personnel, administrators, and other persons with evaluative power are looking at teachers' classrooms for evidence of questions used to guide student thinking. Certainly, this focus has merit; providing such questions essentially gets all learners started down the appropriate path towards acquisition of knowledge. However, less attention is paid to the quality of these questions than should be in many instances, and the questions oftentimes remain focused on the acquisition of basic knowledge instead of the application of knowledge. When this situation occurs in a world language classroom, the functions of language are essentially lost. Thus, it is important to remember when creating these questions to consistently push beyond the textbook and to think about real-world application. If doing so is difficult, it might help to think of one big question and make sub-questions that are more related to syntax.

Where do I see this in other unit planners?	
Understanding by design	Stage 1 > Meaning > Essential questions
Project-based learning	Driving question
International Baccalaureate MYP	Inquiry questions

Step 4: The day-to-day

This step is where all of the thought that was put into unit design really meets practice. The 'Big Can-Do' is the overarching Can-Do Statement that students should be able to achieve by the end of the unit. The Can-Do Statement chosen in our example unit planner is for presentational writing, but any mode of communication is appropriate to use. Also, please note that this section of the unit planner is the first and only time that you are required to list the specific content being taught. Remember that content is the means to the end of language acquisition and not the end itself.

It is also important to emphasize that teachers should not be limited by the mode of communication of the 'Big Can-Do'. For example, there are smaller, sub Can-Do Statements that students have to be able to master to fully achieve the Big Can-Do. Also, as has already been mentioned, communicative skills do not exist independently of one another. Thus, Can-Do Statements from other modes of communication can and should appear throughout the unit.

Where do I see this in other unit planners?	
Understanding by design	Combination of 'Stage 3-Learning Plan' and 'Stage 2-Evidence'
Project-based learning	Products and artifacts
International Baccalaureate	Action: Teaching and learning through inquiry < Learning process

Step 5: Reflection

Reflection is important to a continued cycle of improvement. It is recommended that teachers answer these questions as soon as a unit of study is completed so that ideas for improvement and ideas regarding strengths are preserved for subsequent school years. Also, it is worthwhile to read these questions before writing the unit to ignite thinking.

Where do I see this in other unit planners?	
Understanding by design	Not explicitly mentioned for teachers in the unit planner, but encouraged
Project-based learning	Not explicitly mentioned for teachers in the unit planner, but encouraged
International Baccalaureate	Reflection: Considering the planning, process, and impact of the inquiry < After teaching the unit

Step 1: Logistics

Unit title: Appearances are not always as they seem.   Unit duration 3-4 weeks (9 1.5 hour class periods) Author(s): Stephanie Knight   Proficiency Level(s): Novice-Mid and Novice-High

Step 2: Begin with the end in mind.

Concept(s)
Interplay of perception and reality

+

Final Unit Assessment
Students create anonymous social media profiles-one real, one fake. They pick a friend based on the profile and email that friend an itroductory letter.

→

Contextualized Assessment

Big Can-Do
• I can write information about my daily life in a letter, blog, discussion board, or email message.

Connection between concept(s) and assessment:

How will students be inspired to care more about communication than vocabulary and grammar acquisition?

In order to explore the interplay of perception and reality, students will learn how to describe themselves and others and how to make comparisons. They will make two social media profiles with fake names; one will be real, and one will be fake. The class will get to choose a friend to write to based on those profiles and will compose a letter. After this exercise is completed, the class will review which profiles drew the most interest and what lessons about appearances can be learned.

Step 3: Plan questions to guide thinking.[2]

Level 1 (Gathering information)	*What words are used for description? Is the placement of these words important?*
Level 2 (Processing information)	*How are descriptions different in my native language than they are in my target language? How does the way that I describe someone impact the perception of that person? How does word placement affect the tone of a description?*
Level 3 (Applying information)	*To what extent is perception more important than reality? To what extent is reality more important than a first impression?*

Step 4: The day-to-day

Big Can-Do: I can write information about my daily life in a letter, blog, discussion board, or email message.				
Content: Adjective agreement, personality traits and physical descriptors, 'to be,' and comparisons				
Ongoing Assessment				
Day/Date	Can-Do Statement(s)	Student task(s)	Connection to final assessment (rubric criterion, appropriate descriptor)	Feedback tool(s)
21/9	*-I can introduce myself.* *-I can fill out a form with my name, address, phone number, birthdate, and nationality.* *-I can understand basic familiar information from an ad.*	*-Class review of social media profiles from around the world to infer rules governing adjectives* *-Students begin real and fake social media profiles by filling out basic information only.*	*-Varies depending on rubric.*	*-Teacher reviews profile for accuracy as student create.* *-Students link examples to LFO.*
22/9	*-I can say what I look like.* *-I can say what I am like.* *-I can ask and respond to simple questions.*	*-Students are given a variety of photos of suspects. Students are then each assigned a secret identity as a suspect. Students interview one another with the goal of matching*	*-Varies depending on rubric.*	*-Students record conversations on mobile device to upload to LFO.* *-Teacher hands Post-it notes to students with notes for improvement as they speak.* *-Classroom review based on common errors.*

[2] Level titles taken from *Costa's Levels of Inquiry/Questioning/Thinking*

		each student with the appropriate suspect on the list		
23/9	-I can describe my family and friends. -I can say what someone looks like. -I can say what someone is like.	-Students make a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting different family members. -Students present their Venn Diagrams to a fellow student for feedback. -Students write short paragraph about diagram.	-Varies depending on rubric.	-LFO conversation uploaded to be reviewed by teacher, peer review sheet -Direct written feedback on paragraph
25/9	-I can introduce myself. -I can describe what I do (revisit free-time activities and gustar from previous unit).	-Students fill in narrative information on the real social media profile and the fake social media profile. -Students prepare informational cards about their real and fake identities.	-Varies depending on rubric.	-Teacher feedback as students write in the class, students link samples to LFO
27/9	-I can introduce myself. -I can describe my family and friends. -I can describe what I do (revisit free-time activities and gustar from previous unit). -I can ask and respond to simple questions.	-Students peer review informational cards from day before. -Students engage in speed-dating activity using both real and fake identities.	-Varies depending on rubric.	-Peer review sheet -Mobile recording uploaded to LFO to Go -Teacher gives individual feedback with Post-it notes. -Teacher gives global feedback to class on trends via class discussion.
30/9	-I can describe my family and friends.	-Students add to both narratives on social media profiles and describe important people in their lives.	-Varies depending on rubric.	-Self-review checklist for students -Upload paragraphs to LFO to Go. -Teacher monitors during class to give individual feedback.
2/10	-I can understand	-Students look at social	-Varies depending on	-Uploads brief explanation to LFO to Go

	basic familiar information from an ad.	*media profiles for the entire class and pick one profile as a person to reach out to in order to strike up a new friendship.* *-Students write brief explanation of what that person was selected.*	*rubric.*	
4/10	*-I can write information about my daily life in a letter, blog, discussion board, or email message.* *-I can introduce myself.* *-I can describe my family and friends.* *-I can describe what I do.* *-I can ask basic questions.*	*-Students compose email to the person whose profile they selected the previous day.*	*-Varies depending on rubric.*	*-Teacher feedback on the letter, relative sections uploaded to LFO*
7/10	*-I can write information about my daily life in a letter, blog, discussion board, or email message.* *-I can introduce myself.* *-I can describe my family and friends.* *-I can describe what I do.* *-I can ask basic questions.*	*-Class discussion: Students reveal which profiles they picked, class discusses implications for appearances vs. reality*	*-N/A*	*-N/A, though students should be instructed to record some of the discussion should any pieces of evidence arise that could be uploaded to LFO.*

Step 5: Reflection

How do you define success for this particular unit of study?

Success is all students being able to achieve the overarching Can-Do Statement with limited to no help.

Did your students achieve success? What concrete proof do you have?

Most of my students achieved success. Eight-three percent of them were able to prove mastery of the Big Can-Do, and of the remaining 17 percent, the students can do the work with help.

How will what your students learned in this unit of study inform your next unit of study?

I noted that using social media provided great personal relevance for the students, something that seemed to motivate them. I hope to use blogging in my next unit to see if that has the same desired effect.

I also noticed that while my students did acquire great knowledge for writing descriptions, they seemed to have lost their knowledge of 'gustar' from a few units ago. I need to make sure that I incorporate 'gustar' and similar verbs more often into the classroom so that the students become accustomed to using them.

Lastly, the social media profiles best suited to the unit's goals were those found on dating sites and Facebook. I know that the kids don't like Facebook as much as they did five years ago (and none of them are old enough to use dating websites yet), so I hope to find something that includes a bit more narrative than something like Instagram that the kids really use on a daily basis.

What are three things that you did well in this unit?

1) *High school students are obsessed with appearance! The concept that I chose was perfect.*
2) *I really loved our discussion to wrap-up everything. The kids were shocked that they usually found the real profiles to be more interesting. They think it's because the real profiles are more relatable.*
3) *Using social media profiles from around the world was awesome because the kids got to see how other people use SMS. That was fascinating to them.*

What are one to two things that you would like to improve upon next time?

1) *I would like to give feedback on writing in a timelier manner. I had to wait a couple of class periods, and I don't think that it was as meaningful as it could have been.*
2) *Find examples from different, more relevant types of social media.*

References

Costa's Levels of Inquiry/Questioning/Thinking. University of Pittsburg. Retrieved from http://www.pitt.edu/~elw51 Leadership_in_Curriculum_&_Instructional_Development_files/handout.pdf.

Erikson, H.L. (2012). Concept-based teaching and learning. IB position paper. Retrieved from http://www.ibmidatlantic.org/oncept_Based_Teaching_Learning.pdf

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