Implementation Guide

Programs Utilizing Computer Labs

Pulsar is a digital language learning portfolio based on the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements and adapted to STARTALK needs. This guide shows teachers how to implement *Pulsar* in a computer lab.

Frequency of Interaction: Computer Labs

Pulsar promotes increased learner outcomes and self-regulated learning when students regularly identify goals, upload evidence that showcases progress towards their goals, reflect on their growth, and respond to teacher feedback. We recommend using *Pulsar* at least four times during your program or once a week (whichever is higher). Use the table below to determine the minimum frequency that is right for you.

Program Length	Number of Pulsar Uses	When?*
2 weeks	4	Week 1: T, R Week 2: W, F
3 weeks	4	Week 1: F Week 2: F Week 3: W, F
4 weeks +	Once a week	The end of the week

* These are only suggestions. Please pick the days that best correspond to your program.

Approach to Computer Lab Use

To facilitate *Pulsar* interaction in a computer lab, there are two important factors to consider:

1) Integration of evidence collection with classroom experiences
2) Efficient use of lab time

Integration with Classroom Experiences

- **Connect evidence to learning outcomes**: During class, point out the evidence that learners are creating (such as posters, recordings of in-class interactions, and essays or diagrams that can be photographed). Direct learners to think about what Can-Do Statement(s) their work reflects.
- **Collect evidence for learners**: Photograph, audio record, or video record learners using the target language throughout class and provide this evidence to learners during *Pulsar* sessions. Consider a platform such as a shared

Google Drive folder or a thumb drive that is passed around the lab for sharing these resources.

- **Use file folders**: Learners may maintain short-term paper portfolios that they build during class and carry with them to the lab for scanning and upload to *Pulsar*.

Efficient Use of Lab Time

- **Lab reflection:** Consider having students use some of their lab time to discuss learning goals and the evidence they have created to prove mastery of those goals with other students. These conversations can even be recorded and uploaded as evidence for targeted Can-Do Statements! For help facilitating this discussion, please see our Student Reflection Guide.
- **Model:** Create a student account for yourself. Use a projector to share your screen as you lead students through these steps on the *Pulsar* student platform: 1) Moving the slider for Can-Do Statements to reflect performance; 2) Deciding the best evidence to upload for a given Can-Do Statement; 3) Adding reflection (see previous bullet point) as evidence for a Can-Do Statement; and 4) Responding to teacher feedback.
- **Rotate groups:** Rotate small groups of learners through the upload process. The other learners not uploading could use that time to complete additional work and/or reflect on the evidence they have collected.
- **Set the stage/Wrap up:** Focus learners' attention by articulating the Can-Do Statements for which they have created evidence before and after the upload process. Doing so beforehand will help them more quickly find the statements for which they are uploading evidence. Doing so afterwards will facilitate a group discussion of the classroom experiences they have found to be most meaningful, relevant, and beneficial.

Pro Tips

- **Protect time for *Pulsar*:** Most programs choose to begin and/or end a day's lesson with a whole-class reflection and an evidence upload session using *Pulsar.* If you want to integrate extended reflection and responses to teacher feedback, plan on using at least 30 minutes of classtime.
- **Experiment:** Create your own student account and experience the platform from a student's perspective. Play around with it. Practice uploading all types of evidence. It will really help with trouble shooting if problems arise!

- **Peer presentations:** Have learners present their *Pulsar* accounts in small groups. That way, students can learn and get ideas from peers.
- **Provide feedback:** *Pulsar* is designed so that teachers can provide timely feedback on evidence. Use lab time to have learners read your feedback.
- **Bandwidth limitations:** Take advantage of bandwidth limitations to rotate groups of students through the lab (see previous section). Also, opt for audio recordings over video to limit file size and increase upload speeds.
- **Focus learners' attention:** As you teach, draw your learners' attention back to the Can-Do Statements that relate to their learning tasks at various times. Ask them which Can-Do Statements apply to the evidence they are creating in class.
- **Improve formative practices:** Formative self-assessment is new to many learners. Just as language acquistion is an ongoing developmental process, so is the ability to meaningfully reflect. Be patient and have confidence that your learners will keep improving!
- **Variety of evidence:** Take advantage of the variety of evidence types that *Pulsar* supports. Students could upload a poster to showcase their presentational writing skills, an audio recording of interpersonal communication with a peer, or even link to a video they created or a comment they left in an online forum. Encourage learners to capture language in the way they would use it in their daily lives.

Want to know more?

Check out some of these great resources related to language learning and portfolios!

Learning and Memory Strategies
Forrest, L. (2017, November 13). Learning and Memory Strategies. CASLS InterCom. Available from http://caslsintercom.uoregon.edu/content/24104.

Goal Setting and Student Achievement
Moeller, A., Theiler, J., & Wu, C. (2012). Goal setting and student achievement: A longitudinal study. The Modern Language Journal. 96 (2). 153-169.

Self-Regulated Learning
Ziegler, N. and Moeller, A. (2012). Increasing Self-Regulated Learning Through the LinguaFolio. Foreign Language Annals 45(3), 330-348.