VIDEO 5

communication & **communities**

ABOUT COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITIES

Video 5 takes an in-depth look at the program goal of Communities. After a brief introduction and the eight-minute communication segment that is included in each of videos 2-5, this video shows footage of teachers and students using the target language in communities within and beyond the school walls. It also features several students reflecting on the value of learning LOTE for career development, as well as for personal enjoyment.

Learning a language can increase one's opportunities for participating in communities locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. When students use the LOTE they are learning in multiple, "real-world" contexts, they are more likely to understand the impact and importance that language proficiency has in today's society. Video 5 highlights teachers and students using the target language to reach out to multiple communities.

- A French teacher provides his student with an immersion-like experience by speaking almost exclusively in French, thus creating a classroom community that is bonded by its need for the target language from day one.

- German students reach out to the international community by communicating with "e-pals" in Germany to learn about the similarities and differences of their school systems.

- A Spanish III class pays a visit to a native-speaking community when they go to the local farmer's market and interview the Spanish-speaking vendors.

Language students also reach communities by using the target language for personal enrichment and career development. In Video 5, students of Spanish learn the value of knowing Spanish in the local healthcare community which is their city's largest industry. Students from around Texas talk about how knowing a LOTE will help them in future careers as well as for the pursuit of personal interests such as travel.

Episode Breakdown

(8:11 – 12:02)
I Within the School Setting

(12:03) – 20:30)
II Beyond the School Setting

(20:31 – end)
III Personal Enrichment & Career Development

Use Video 5: Communication & Communities to...

- Review the objectives of using the language in a variety of communities for a variety of reasons.

- Facilitate discussion about issues related to using the target language beyond the classroom and using the language for personal enrichment and career development.

- Show some innovative means of implementing the Communities program goal in the LOTE classroom.

- Deliver the message that using the language outside of typical classroom settings makes the target language more "real" for students and helps them to see how they might actually use it for work or pleasure.

COMMUNITIES PROGRAM GOAL AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The student participates in communities at home and around the world by using languages other than English.

The novice level student is expected to:

(A) use the language both within and beyond the school setting through activities such as participating in cultural events and using technology to communicate; and

(B) show evidence of becoming a lifelong learner by using the language for personal enrichment and career development.

The intermediate (advanced) level student is expected to:

(A) use the language at the intermediate (advanced) proficiency level both within and beyond the school setting through activities such as participating in cultural events and using technology to communicate; and

(B) show evidence of becoming a lifelong learner by using the language at the intermediate (advanced) proficiency level for personal enrichment and career development.

Questions Addressed in Video 5: Communication & Communities

LOTE Increase Access to Communities at Home and Around the World.

Students who know another language have increased opportunities to interact with their local, regional, national, and international communities.

How can you help students use the target language to access local communities? Do you know of ways to help them interact with regional, national, or international communities? If opportunities to participate "actively" are limited locally, how do you bring Communities into the classroom? What specific ways can technology be integrated into the curriculum to enable students to use the language in real-world contexts? How do you evaluate students' interactions with different communities?

Using LOTE Outside of the Classroom Makes the Target Language "Real."

When students use another langauge outside of the classroom setting, they experience first-hand its true utility and benefits.

Are students interested in using the target language outside of the classroom? Do they share anecdotes about communicating with native speakers or using the language outside of class in other ways? How do you encourage shy or reluctant students to communicate outside of the classroom? Do students see language proficiency as an asset that will help them function more successfully in their local, regional, national, and/or international communities?

LOTE Promote Lifelong Learning.

Students become lifelong learners when they use the target language for personal enrichment and career development.

How can you motivate students to pursue personal enrichment activities in the target language? Where prospects for target language enrichment are few locally, how do you provide learning activities that satisfy this need? Why is personal enrichment a part of this program goal? What resources can students use to discover how the target language might be used in various careers? Is it possible to assess "lifelong learning"?

Goals for Participants

- To review the Communities program goal in general and the subtopics of Communities within and beyond the classroom and using language for personal enrichment and career development specifically.

- To identify issues, concerns, or questions with regard to the implementation of the Communities program goal.

- To develop classroom activities and strategies that incorporate the program goal of Communities, e.g., expand the list of community resources, identify potential assessment opportunities, and devise activities based on real-life experiences.

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TO THE SESSION LEADER

*Use a variety of grouping and processing strategies to lead participants through the activities associated with the various segments of **Video 5: Communication & Communities**. Provide participants copies of the TEKS for LOTE and the worksheets referred to in the directions that follow, and gather any supplies needed to complete the activities.*

PREPARATION

Refer to worksheet 5.1 for the following activity.

Many educators find Communities to be an especially challenging standard.

- Begin to eliminate obstacles with regards to Communities by asking participants to list up to five specific obstacles they feel they face in implementing it in their classrooms.

- After a few minutes, have them work with a partner they don't know or who is from a different school or district. Ask them to compare their lists, offer advice to one another on the obstacles they do not have in common, and come up with strategies for dealing with those they do have in common.

OBSERVATION

Refer to worksheets 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 for the following activities.

I Within the School Setting (8:11–12:02)

In this segment, participants consider a variety of ways that Communities can be accessed using resources within the classroom.

- Ask participants to note the resources (including technology) that are mentioned or used in the video to facilitate access to different communities.

- Have the whole group brainstorm a resource list; write their suggestions on a flipchart or transparency and make sure they consider "living" resources as they brainstorm.

- Finally, take a poll. Go down the list and for each item on it, ask the participants to raise their hand if they feel it's feasible for them to obtain that resource for their classroom.

II Beyond the School Setting (12:03–20:30)

In this video segment, several anecdotes are shared that illustrate how students use other languages beyond the school walls, within their local communities. Spanish teacher, Elías Rodríguez, also takes his students out "shopping for native speakers." These experiences, when students try (sometimes for the first time) to understand and be understood by a native speaker, bring language to life.

- Ask participants to think about the students they saw and heard about in this segment, then to think about their own classrooms.

- Using the guiding questions on the worksheet, have them draw a picture or write down some thoughts about how some of their students would react and/or be changed by a "farmer's market"-type experience. Teachers whose students have already had such experiences can reflect on how they saw their students react.

- Ask volunteers to share and explain their drawings, or have all participants post their reflections around the room for everyone to see.

III Personal Enrichment and Career Development (20:31–end)

Using LOTE for personal enrichment or career development can make language learning interesting and pertinent to students, but how does one assess those goals?

- Provide an opportunity for participants to work in groups to brainstorm assessment ideas for the series of activities listed on worksheet 5.2.

- Allow several minutes, then ask a spokesperson from each group to share their ideas.

REFLECTION

Refer to worksheet 5.3 for this activity.

The Communities program goal brings realism, relevance, and consequence to the study of LOTE like no other "C" can.

- Ask the participants to think back on their first experiences using a language other than their mother tongue outside the classroom.

- Have them take some time to reflect and then create a new Communities-based learning activity for their students that is inspired by their own experience.

- After 20 minutes of working independently, ask participants to share both their experiences and their new activities with the group.

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For Investigating Further (follow-up) activities, remember to obtain copies of the suggested readings and distribute them to participants in advance of the workshop. Participants will need to have studied some or all of the chapters/articles in order to complete most of the Exploration and Expansion activities. Evaluation handouts should be provided at the end of the workshop.

EXPLORATION

Refer to worksheets 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 for this activity and readings for further study.

- Lead participants to work in pairs or brainstorm together to consider how well their current curriculum provides opportunities to use the target language both within and beyond the classroom and for personal enrichment and career development.

- Allow participants to analyze the reading by Haas and Reardon describing the development of a thematic unit on Chile which addresses Communities. Then examine the challenges in organizing the project and note the strategies used to address those problems.

- Finally, have participants read several learning scenarios and use them to spark ideas for target language resources and connections in their town or nearby that they might exploit through a learning scenario of their own.

EXPANSION

Refer to worksheets 5.5.1 and 5.5.2 for this activity and recommended readings.

This section provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on real world language use and how Communities can help them address issues of authenticity in language learning. Guide participants to read, reflect on, and discuss the teaching scenario.

- In the first task, ask them to weigh the relative benefits and drawbacks of two proposals for developing a standards-based curriculum, taking the Communities goal into consideration.

- In the second task, encourage them to share their personal experiences with curriculum development projects.

- Finally, guide them to consider how content-based instruction might help their district to implement Communities. In small groups, they share examples of authentic texts and tasks they have used in the last year that helped students meet the Communities standard.

EVALUATION

Appendix E is a self-assessment tool that teachers may use to evaluate their strengths and identify areas for growth with regards to helping their students meet the Communities program goal. Pass out photocopies of the *Teacher Competencies for Professional Development: Communities Strand*, and allow time for participants to complete it on their own at the end of the workshop, or encourage them to reflect on it and fill it in at home.
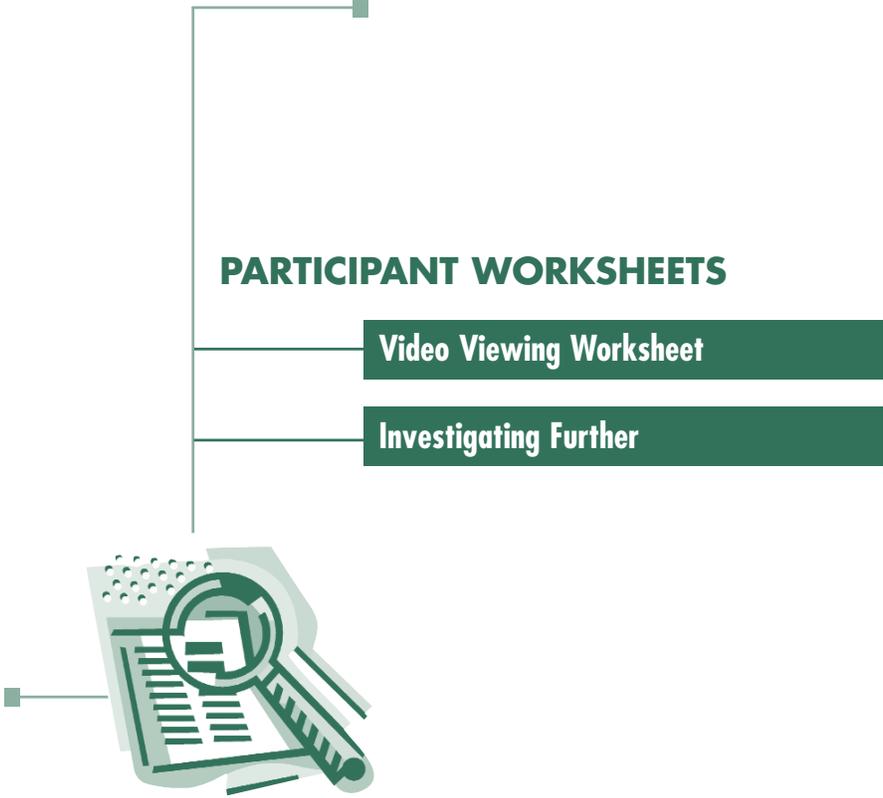
PARTICIPANT WORKSHEETS

Video Viewing Worksheet

Investigating Further

PREPARATION

Video 5 focuses on concepts related to the teaching and learning of the Communities program goal. Many educators find this goal to be especially challenging. What do you feel are the specific obstacles you face in implementing Communities? Take a few minutes to list up to five of them below.

Obstacles to Implementing Communities

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Now, choose a partner—someone you don't know or someone from a different school or district if possible—and compare your lists. Which items are similar? Which items are different? What experience or advice can you offer your partner to help him/her with the obstacles he/she listed? What strategies can you come up with together for dealing with obstacles you have in common?

COMMON OBSTACLES	DIFFERENT OBSTACLES	STRATEGIES/ADVICE

OBSERVATION

I Within the School Setting

Taking students on a field trip is not always an option, but there are multiple ways to bring communities into the classroom. As you watch this video segment, note the resources mentioned or used to access Communities within the school setting.

George Trauth
....
....
Heidi Kirby
....
....
Bobette Dunn
....
....

What other resources can be brought into the LOTE classroom to facilitate contact with different communities? Brainstorm a list with other participants, and consider which resources are feasible for your particular situation.

II Beyond the School Setting

In this video segment, several students share anecdotes illustrating how they use a LOTE beyond the school walls. Spanish teacher Elías Rodríguez takes his students out "shopping for native speakers." These experiences, when students try (sometimes for the first time) to understand and be understood by a native speaker, bring language to life and seem to empower learners.

Think about the students you saw and heard from in this segment. Then think about the language learners in your own classroom. Imagine them interacting with native speakers in an environment like the farmer's market you saw—or recall the experience if they have already had a similar one. How would (did) they prepare themselves? Would it be (was it) their first time talking to native speakers? How would (did) they behave? Would (Did) they actively engage or would they be (were they) reluctant? Most importantly, what would (did) they get out of the experience?

Using a blank piece of paper, draw a picture or write down some thoughts about how such an experience can change a language learner—confidence, attitude, motivation, etc.

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III Personal Enrichment and Career Development

Greg Foulds's Spanish II class discovers just how important and useful Spanish is in their community and that it is crucial to know Spanish in one of the city's top industries. Two students of LOTE discuss the personal benefits of knowing another language in life, whether it be for career advancement, increased interaction with their families, or travel.

Using LOTE for work and for fun is interesting and relevant to students, but how does one assess personal enrichment or career development? Come up with some assessment ideas for the tasks listed below, and share your ideas with other participants.

TASK	IDEAS FOR ASSESSMENT
Interview someone from a profession that requires use of the target language.	
Learn the rules of a sport that is popular in a target language country, and organize a game.	
Attend a cultural event or celebration associated with the target language.	
Write a letter to a company in a target language country requesting information about a career which sparks your interest.	
Use target language resources to develop a precise itinerary for a vacation in a target language country.	
Visit an art exhibit where artists from a target culture are featured.	
Listen to target language radio or television for 30 minutes.	
Contact a target language embassy or consulate to obtain information about working in that country.	
Visit a restaurant where the target language is spoken and use the language to order.	
See a target language movie.	

REFLECTION

The Communities program goal brings realism, relevance, and consequence to the study of LOTE like no other "C" can. Think back to your first experiences using a language other than your mother tongue outside the classroom. Reflect for a few minutes on how you felt interacting with the target language community and culture. Were you empowered? frightened? exhilarated? What about the experience would you want your students to share? How might you have been better prepared for those first encounters?

Using your own experience as inspiration, create a new Communities-based learning activity for your students. To begin, work independently on creating the task. Then be prepared to share both your experience and your activity!

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EXPLORATION

- Reflect on how well your current curriculum takes the Communities program goal into consideration. To begin, consider the following questions:

  – Do learners use the target language in the classroom for purposes other than practice exercises and activities from the textbook or workbook? Many learners feel using a LOTE to communicate with English-speaking classmates is not "real" communication. How to you organize your class to make it feel more like a target language "community"?

  – Do students in your program have an opportunity to communicate with native speakers of the language? How?

  – Are there cultural events, lectures, museum exhibits, television programming, etc. in your community through which learners in your program can participate in communities beyond the school? When this is not the case, are they afforded opportunities through technology to reach out to the target culture?

  – Do students in your classes use the target language for personal enrichment? In what ways? How do you know? How might you find out? Can/should learners be required to use the language for personal enrichment? How do you encourage your students to do so?

  – Do students in your program learn how the language they are studying can be used for career development? Are there specific opportunities in your region for using the language in summer or part-time jobs that students might have? Is there a more general career benefit to knowing the LOTE you teach?

- The chapter by Haas and Reardon (see below) describes the development of a thematic unit on Chile which addresses Communities. The lessons were a collaborative effort between a middle school teacher and a teacher educator from a nearby college. Read the chapter and identify all the issues that were addressed in accomplishing the unit.

  Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. Title the left-hand column "Challenges;" title the right-hand column "Resolutions." Fill in the chart as you read the chapter, then use your notes to discuss the resolutions with other participants. Were there any unresolved challenges in your Resolutions column? Can you think of a strategy to address the problem? If you were to implement such a thematic unit in your school, what obstacles would you face? What strategies can you imagine to address the issues unique to your district/region?

For Further Study

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (1999). *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century.* Lawrence, KS: Allen Press. In addition to describing the national standards for foreign languages, which closely resemble the TEKS for LOTE, this document contains language-specific standards for nine different languages and learning scenarios illustrating them. There are many more, but examples of scenarios implementing Communities can be found on the following pages: Spanish (74, 75, 459, 468), French (77, 83, 86, 231, 232, 239), German (85, 273), Japanese (353-359), Russian (96, 421, 429), Latin (170, 177, 186), and Italian (306, 308, 321).

Curtis, M. O., & Baskerville, J.J. (2001). Beyond the classroom: Service learning within the multilingual community. In R. Lavine (Ed.), *Beyond the boundaries: Changing contexts in language learning* (pp. 107-139). (Northeast Conference Reports) Boston: McGraw-Hill. Curtis and Baskerville describe two service-

learning projects in one district in which students of Spanish connect with native speakers in their communities. The first project involves high school students tutoring early learners at a local charter school; the second, working with "local Hispanic immigrants who are preparing to become U.S. citizens." In both cases, the service projects are connected to a course on service learning (including history, culture, and contributions of immigrants) and a course on "the Hispanic presence in the U.S.," respectively. In another district, students in any Level III course of the six languages offered can apply to be a Student Ambassador. Those chosen design a practicum in which they research and develop a product useful to the local community. For example, a student might produce an audio-taped guide in French for use by French-speaking visitors to a local museum or a handbook for Spanish-speaking staff at the botanical gardens.

Haas, M., & Reardon, M. (1997). Communities of learners: From New York to Chile. In J. K. Phillips (Ed.), *Collaborations: Meeting new goals, new realities* (pp. 213-241). (Northeast Conference Reports) Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company. This chapter describes the development of a thematic unit of study that focuses on Communities. Students of Spanish in a middle school in New York learn about Chile and connect to native speakers through e-mail communications, a guest speaker—a Chilean teacher and author whose story they read, and through a visit to a local Chilean bakery. The chapter describes the activities of this thematic unit in detail and provides illustrations of the e-mail correspondence and projects created by the students.

Languages Other Than English Center for Educator Development. (2001). *Great TEKSpectations: Innovative learning scenarios for languages other than English.* Austin, TX: Author. This document provides examples of learning scenarios implementing Communities including the ones on the following pages: Arabic (1), French (19, 23, 29), German (39, 43), Japanese (56, 63), Latin (67, 71), Spanish (93, 101, 111, 115).

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- The suggested readings contain not just single activities but also examples of learning scenarios focused on the Communities program goal. Read several of the examples and take notes on your reactions to them as you read. Then discuss with other workshop participants the ideas you found most stimulating.

What were some of your initial reactions as you read the examples? "But there isn't a local Chilean bakery (bird conservancy… Russian theater group… etc.) in our town!" is not an uncommon reaction. Even if obstacles come immediately to mind, the scenario descriptions are still engaging and stimulating. If you do not have a Chilean bakery or Russian theater troupe in your area, what do you have that could help you connect with a target language community?

Brainstorm with other participants the variety of target language resources and connections within or near your community that could be accessed through a learning scenario.

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EXPANSION

In Video 5, some comments are made about the dichotomy between language as it may occur in the foreign language classroom and language as it occurs in the community in real life. For example, one teacher says that "Language is a living thing. It's not something out of the textbook." Two language learners talk about having "an actual, real conversation" in the local market and contrast that experience with the classroom where "we just speak with each other." Other learners share experiences using the target language in shops and to help foreign tourists. Finally, a French teacher, a native speaker from Québec, says, "I tell the students accuracy is very important, but communication comes first."

Questions of authenticity in language learning—of using the target language in the community for real-world purposes—are increasingly important to students and to the profession. How do you feel about the quotations from the video?

Read the following teaching scenario and then reflect on the questions that follow and/or discuss your reactions with your group. The recommended readings should help you prepare your responses.

Teaching Scenario

Foreign language teachers in the local independent school district are meeting with their coordinator to discuss how they will ensure that students in the district are able to meet the goals outlined in the TEKS for LOTE. In addition, the state is currently undergoing a textbook adoption process in all languages. After some discussion, teachers generally fall into one of two camps: those who prefer to use the textbook as the curriculum and those who prefer to develop a district curriculum.

In the first category, some teachers quickly point out that publishers have already correlated their textbooks with the 5 Cs. Others in this group feel an in-depth analysis should also be conducted to identify areas that would need to be supplemented to ensure all goals are fully implemented. The other group of teachers suggests they collaborate to develop a curriculum unique to the district, one that uses content-based learning scenarios built around the 5 Cs. Units could be developed for all languages with specifics (such as authentic texts to be used, target language resources in the local community identified, and structures to be introduced and reviewed) being devised by teachers of the six languages taught. Textbooks would be used as a resource for introducing and practicing relevant structures, but the thematic units would be more stimulating and provide increased opportunities for authentic target language use.

Proponents of using the textbook as the curriculum ask, "Why reinvent the wheel?" They also fear that students' language skills will deteriorate without the systematic structure and practice provided by the textbook. Those who prefer to develop a content-based curriculum contend that the authenticity of language-use-in-context and increased exposure to native speakers in the community motivates students in a way that textbook activities never can and that the increased exposure to authentic texts and real-world language use actually *increases* language skills and accuracy.

1) With which of these groups of teachers would you most likely align yourself? Develop a list of pros for the opposite group's proposal. Include at least ten benefits of their proposal for foreign language learners in your district. Next, list all conditions or requirements not currently in place that would have to be met before the plan you favor could be implemented. Compare your reflections on the two proposals and discuss the relative benefits and drawbacks you outlined with the group.

2) Have you ever participated in a curriculum development project in your school or district? Compare the process with the new paradigm for instructional planning mentioned by Shrum and Glisan (see Recommended Readings). What kind of issues did you deal with, and how were the challenges resolved? How did the group (or did the group) reach consensus? Was authenticity of language use (e.g., using the language in the community) brought up for consideration as part of the discussion? What were the primary points of agreement? What were the biggest bones of contention?

3) Consider the opportunities for real-world activities that exist in your current curriculum. Is there any provision for the types of content-based instruction or thematic units discussed in the recommended readings? How might content-based instruction help your district to implement Communities? In small groups, share examples of authentic texts and tasks you have used in the last year that helped students meet the Communities standard.

Recommended Readings

Ballman, T.L. (1997). Enhancing beginning language courses through content-enriched instruction. *Foreign Language Annals, 30,* **173-186.** *The author contends that content-based instruction in language learning is usually delayed until the intermediate level once students have studied the basics of the linguistic system. This postponement means that students receive little exposure to "cultural or real-world information" in the beginning stages. She proposes instead a content-enriched instruction in which learners use the target language to access "real-world" information on the target culture as they develop their language skills. She describes a six-day unit lesson plan "to illustrate the uses and benefits" of content enrichment.*

Genesee, F. (1998). Content-based language instruction. In M. Met (Ed.), *Critical Issues in Early Second Language Learning* **(pp. 103-124). Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley.** *Genesee presents a rationale for the appropriateness of content-based language instruction, followed by a discussion about the pedagogical issues involved such as the suitability of attention to form, when to address grammar, and the teacher competencies required for content-based instruction.*

Shrum, J. L., & Glisan, E. W. (2000). *Teacher's handbook: Contextualized language instruction,* **2nd edition. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.** *Chapter 3 (pp. 48-74) addresses a "new paradigm for instructional planning" in terms of objectives, content and culture, skills, the learner, the teacher, materials, and assessment. The authors discuss the use of authentic materials and content-based instruction, delving into planning for instruction, including state frameworks, year-long planning, unit planning and lesson planning. Teach and Discuss activities and case studies provide an opportunity to reflect on a variety of situations that may be encountered when designing curriculum.*

Williams, M. K., Lively, M. G., & Harper, J. (1998). Designing theme-based activities: Bringing ideas to speech. In J. Harper, M. Lively, & M. Williams (Eds.), *The coming of age of the profession* **(pp. 177-190). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.** *The chapter examines important elements in the design of thematic activities, those that "promote reflective processing." The authors discuss important considerations such as making the topic engaging, personalizing the activity, engaging higher order thinking skills, emphasizing teamwork, etc. The chapter includes numerous concrete examples.*

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