

# Lire, Lesen, Leer!

## Practical Reading Strategies For The World Language Classroom



**L**o más divertido

**E**s leer,

**E**s pasar un buen

**R**ato para saber

**Lust auf  
LESEN**

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## Why Reading?

Reading is a basic tool in the living of a good life.

~ Mortimer J. Adler ~

Reading is not a duty, and has consequently  
no business to be made disagreeable.

~ Augustine Birrell ~

Read in order to live.

~ Gustave Flaubert ~

The proper study of mankind is books.

~ Aldous Huxley ~

Literacy is a gatekeeper!

~ Brett Bowers ~

In our work with our high school's literacy planning team, we have had the pleasure of rediscovering the possibilities of teaching reading strategies with our colleagues across the curriculum. One of the most important discoveries we've made is that to some students, even reading in their native tongue can seem like a foreign language.

Our presentation today is framed around both our work with the literacy project and the Wisconsin Educational Communication Board's "Into The Book" resource. We hope you leave us today armed with a wealth of practical strategies that will enliven the reading experience for both you and your students, regardless of the level or language you teach.

Thanks for joining us today! Enjoy the conference!

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It is very important that you learn about traxoline. Traxoline is a new form of zionter. It is montilled in Ceristanna. The Ceristannians gristerlate large amounts of fevon and then bracter it to qualsel traxoline. Traxoline may well be one of our most lukized snezlaus in the future because of our zionter lescelidge.

1. What is traxoline?
2. Where is traxoline montilled?
3. How is traxoline quaselled?
4. Why is it important to know about traxoline?

Source: "Best Practices from the SCOLT Regional Teachers of the Year," 2009  
<http://www.senorstewart.110mb.com/doc/SCOLT.ppt>

## Reading Strategies As Defined By “Into the Book”

Source: <http://reading.ecb.org/>

	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Student-Friendly Definition</b>
<b>Prior Knowledge</b>	Readers activate what they currently understand or misunderstand about the topic and use this knowledge before, during, and after reading to clarify misconceptions and understand the text.	Use what I already know to help me understand something new.
<b>Making connections</b>	Readers relate what they read to personal experiences (text-to-self), to information from other text (text-to-text), and to information about the world (text-to-world) in order to enhance understanding of self, text, and life.	Make connections between different things I read.
<b>Questioning</b>	Readers ask questions about the text and the author's intentions and seek information to clarify and extend their thinking before, during and after reading.	Ask questions to understand what I'm reading.
<b>Visualizing</b>	Readers create images in their minds that reflect or represent the ideas in the text. These images may include any of the five senses and serve to enhance understanding of the text.	Create a movie in my mind while I'm reading.
<b>Inferring</b>	Readers think about and search the text, and sometimes use personal knowledge to construct meaning beyond what is literally stated.	Use clues to figure out what it really means.
<b>Summarizing</b>	Readers identify key elements and condense important information into their own words during and after reading to solidify meaning.	Tell what's important.
<b>Evaluating</b>	Readers judge, justify, and/or defend understandings to determine importance based on stated criteria.	Make judgments about what I read and explain why.
<b>Synthesizing</b>	Readers create original insights, perspectives and understandings by reflecting on text(s) and merging elements from text and existing schema.	Put the pieces together to see them in a new way.

# Prior Knowledge

## Questionnaires / Surveys

- Before reading, give a hypothetical survey asking students whether they have had experiences similar to those in the story. (E.g. – Have you ever eaten porridge? Have you ever seen a wolf dressed up as a grandmother?)
- “Sticker surveys” – place questions on wall or have kids interview each other or classmates outside of class and report their findings the next day.

## Wortsalat (Word Salad)

Before reading, select key vocabulary words and characters from the text and post them on the overhead. In small groups or individually, have students write sentences or paragraphs incorporating this vocabulary and predicting the plot of the story.

## KWL

\* K stands for Know

This is the prior knowledge activation question.

\* W stands for Will or Want

What do I think I will learn about this topic?

What do I want to know about this topic?

\* L stands for Learned

What have I learned about this topic?

## How Does It Work?

1. On the chalkboard, on an overhead, on a handout, or on students' individual clean sheets, three columns should be drawn.
2. Label Column 1 K, Column 2 W, Column 3 L. (or with the initials appropriate to your target language)
3. Before reading (or viewing or listening), students fill in the Know column with words, terms, or phrases from their background or prior knowledge. If you are having them draw on a topic previously learned, then the K column may be topic-related. But if the topic is something brand-new, and they don't know anything (or much) about it, you should use the K column to have them bringing to mind a similar, analogous, or broader idea.
4. Then have students predict what they might learn about the topic, which might follow a quick glance at the topic headings, pictures, and charts that are found in the reading. This helps set their purpose for reading and focuses their attention on key ideas.

5. Alternatively, you might have students put in the middle column what they want to learn about the topic.
6. After reading, students should fill in their new knowledge gained from reading the content. They can also clear up misperceptions about the topic which might have shown up in the Know column before they actually read anything. This is the stage of metacognition: did they get it or not?

(Source: <http://www.readingquest.org/strat/kwl.html>)

## **Think-Pair-Share**

Think-Pair-Share is a cooperative discussion strategy developed by Frank Lyman and his colleagues in Maryland. It gets its name from the three stages of student action, with emphasis on what students are to be DOING at each of those stages.

How Does It Work?

1. Think. The teacher provokes students' thinking with a question or prompt or observation. The students should take a few moments (probably not minutes) just to THINK about the question.
2. Pair. Using designated partners (such as with Clock Buddies), nearby neighbors, or a deskmate, students PAIR up to talk about the answer each came up with. They compare their mental or written notes and identify the answers they think are best, most convincing, or most unique.
3. Share. After students talk in pairs for a few moments (again, usually not minutes), the teacher calls for pairs to SHARE their thinking with the rest of the class. She can do this by going around in round-robin fashion, calling on each pair; or she can take answers as they are called out (or as hands are raised). Often, the teacher or a designated helper will record these responses on the board or on the overhead.

(Source: <http://www.readingquest.org/strat/tps.html>)

# **Making Connections**

## **Bubbles!**

Each character has his/her own bubble. In groups, students draw lines between characters and identify the connections between them. This can be simply factual (e.g., family members) or interpretive (e.g., is it a good relationship? What do they say/do to each other?)

## **Compare / Contrast Charts**

The possibilities here are virtually endless! Parallels within the story, characters, settings, how this relates to contemporary society, etc.

### **Grammar In Action**

Use the text to review a particular grammatical concept. Have students identify parts of speech, verb tenses, etc. Create drill and practice handouts that reinforce the content of the reading. Upper level students can write a brief summary of an independent reading selection. This not only provides feedback as to their comprehension level, but also an opportunity to identify grammar concepts that require further review.

## **Questioning**

### **Parking Lot**

A few days after beginning a short story or novel, give students two different colored pieces of Post It paper. On one color, they should complete the sentence “I don’t understand...” and on the other “I wonder....” Have them post their notes on the wall or board under the appropriate heading. Then read the “I don’t understand” questions aloud and have other students answer them. Or, for further oral practice, after all post-it notes have been placed on the board, have students remove ones that they can answer and then have them read both the questions and the answers aloud. Leave the “I wonder” notes up and then recheck them regularly as the story progresses.

### **Questions & Answers**

Have students write comprehension questions related to the reading and give them to their classmates. This can be done in groups, in a game format, etc. Please consult Appendix A (pp. 8-9) for suggested games that can be created with minimal time and materials.

### **Psychologist**

This activity is an excellent tool for working with question formation, reviewing literature and re-entering previously studied concepts. The “psychologist” leaves the room. The remaining students create a pattern with which they will answer the psychologist’s questions. For example, students wearing jeans will answer inaccurately and all others will answer accurately. Another possibility would be that every third student answers inaccurately. The variations are endless. The psychologist must ask questions that have clearly correct and incorrect answers. The questions continue until the psychologist determines the pattern by which students are answering accurately and inaccurately.

### **Hatschi Patschi / Coucou Chouchou**

Students sit in a circle on chairs (all facing into the circle). One student is “it” and has to stand facing away from the circle. The teacher gets all students in the circle to close their eyes and then proceeds to tap up to 3 kids on the head. All students may then open their eyes and the person that is “it” may come into the circle. This student will go around the circle asking individual students a question in the target language. Each student is required to give a correct answer, except for the students that have been tapped on the head. When a question is addressed to them they simply call out “Hatschi Patschi”, which is the signal for all students in the circle to jump up and run to a different chair (incl. the student who was in the middle). The new student left without a chair is now “it” and the game begins again.

# Visualizing

## **Picture Perfect**

This is a great pre-reading activity. Place an illustration from the upcoming reading on the overhead, obscuring all but one key portion of it. Elicit discussion from the students about that particular portion of the picture, then show a bit more of the picture and continue discussion until the entire picture has been revealed. With upper levels, this could be done as a writing activity.

## **Human Snapshots**

Divide the text into small portions that can be summarized in one or two sentences. Assign that portion of the text to students in small groups and direct them to create a single “freeze-frame” snapshot that effectively summarizes the events in that particular reading selection. Students can neither move nor speak. Look for creative improvisations when there are fewer characters to be portrayed than group members! 😊 (Students have been doors, trees and even furniture in the past.)

## **Simulations**

This takes some preparation, but works particularly well in reading selections with a generous amount of dialogue. Rewrite the selection to be read as a dramatic scene and set your classroom as the “stage.” Create a sense of anticipation by locking the door and greeting students in costume and in character when class begins.

## **Superhero Project**

A full explanation of this project can be found in the appendix. It can easily be adapted to a portion or an entire reading selection.

# Inferring

## **“Huh?” Post-It Notes**

Give students three or four post-it notes to keep handy while reading a story. When students reach a passage that they don’t understand, they place a post-it note there but keep reading. As they read on and the meaning of passage they identified becomes more clear to them, they return to that Post-It note and write what they learned.

## **What Comes Next?**

This works best with longer reading selections (e.g., novels or easy readers). Pull key quotes or passages from subsequent areas of the reading. In small groups, have students make predictions about future events in the story.

# Summarizing

## 4-2-1

After reading, have students write down four words (nouns, adjectives, prepositions, emotions, etc.) that they believe best summarize the text. Then have them pair up with one classmate and choose the best two words out of the eight they generated. Finally, have each pair find two or three other pairs (total of 6 – 8 students). This final group must agree on one word to summarize the reading.

## Role Plays

Have students write and perform informal role plays demonstrating the gist of each reading. Allow them to directly quote only key lines. Emphasize paraphrasing (aka the Cliffs Notes version). In chapter books or easy readers, groups can be determined using playing cards. The card number can also serve as the chapter or section number.

## GIST: Generating Interactions between Schemata and Text

This activity asks students to squeeze meaning into a tight, precise summary; it can be used as students process a reading or notes. The goal of GIST is to have students convey the essence or gist of what they read by summarizing the text in 20 words or less. When students create a GIST, they must discard extraneous details and focus only on the most essential information.

1. Divide the text/notes into three sections of approximately equal length.
2. Ask students to work alone, with a partner or in a small group.
3. Students read the first section. After they finish reading, students write a 20-word summary of the material.
4. Students then read the second section. After reading, students must write a 20-word summary that incorporates information from both the first and second sections.
5. Students repeat this activity for a third time, this time creating a 20-word summary that incorporates information from all three sections.

### *Variation:*

1. Ask students to read the entire text/day's worth of notes.
2. Working alone, with a partner or in a small group, students identify the 20 most important words from the reading. Those words are listed on a separate sheet, or highlighted/ circled on the page.

3. Students write a summary that incorporates as many of the words as possible.
4. So as to make the summary as concise as possible, students cut the summary in half or reduce it by an identified or progressively increasing number of words.

See the appendix for a copy-ready sheet to use with GIST activities.

## Evaluating

### Question and Answer

Have students write questions that cannot be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no' and then justify their points of view in either a written or spoken context.

### Simulations / Role Plays

Hold a "town hall meeting" in which students take on the role of a character in the story and his/her point of view. To keep things really interesting, have students rank their characters from most to least preferred, and then assign them their least preferred character, forcing them to seek out further information to defend their points effectively.

## Synthesizing

### What is the sentence?

Have students think of one sentence that embodies the entire plot and theme of a reading. For best results, limit the number of words they can use. Then have them create a visual representation including that sentence and display it. (This may also be used as a summarizing activity with lower levels.)

### Compare / Contrast

Many film versions of readings diverge from the original text. Students may either write a composition discussing the differences, or for lower levels, give them a chart to complete during or after the film. Label one column "In the book" and include the plot points from the book that are different in the movie. Label the other column "In the film" and have them identify the changes that occurred. This activity can also be extended to distinct readings that cover a similar theme. Many more Synthesizing activities can be found in Appendix B (pages 10-12).

## **Appendix A**

### **Review Games In (Almost) An Instant**

#### **¡Ay Chihuahua! Zut alors! Ach Mensch!**

This is a game that can be used with any level to review anything from vocabulary to grammar to culture. All you need is an overhead transparency with the numbers 1 - 25 written on it (or the board) and 25 questions written in advance.

Divide the students into two teams. Student 1 from team A chooses any number he/she wishes. (The student must call out the number correctly in the target language - great practice for any of the numbers that the kids always forget or are reluctant to try to pronounce). The teacher reads the question. The student answers. If it is perfectly correct, that team earns the points (e.g., 13 points for question #13). If it is incorrect, simply say "no" and the question goes to student #1 from team B. It is important to mix the questions up so that a lower point value does not automatically mean an easier question.

Here's the rub: peppered at random among those 25 questions, include three or four "Ay Chihuahua" questions. If a student chooses that number, the team loses ALL the points they have accumulated! Since they don't know how many "Ay Chihuahuas" there are, nor where they are, the game belongs to EITHER team until the very last question. The "AY CHIHUAHUAS" really add to the suspense of the game.

#### **Trashball**

This is another simple way to review for just about anything. Divide students into teams (size is your choice). Have each student crumple up a piece of scrap paper. Ask individual students on each team a review question. If he/she gets the answer correct, he/she earns a point for his/her team and has a chance to earn another point for his/her team by tossing the wad of paper into the recycling bin from a close distance. If he/she gets the answer incorrect, he/she still has an opportunity to earn points for the team by shooting from a further free throw line.

## **The White Board Game**

Supplies: 4 – 5 white boards; white board markers and erasers; review questions

This game is very active and can get loud! Divide students into groups of 4 – 5 and arrange their seats into rows (one straight row for each team). The teacher asks a question. The student in the back of the row is responsible for writing the correct answer legibly on the white board. The board must pass through the hands of all students in the row. The first team whose correct answer appears at the front of the row wins that round. All students then stand up and move back one seat so that a new person is responsible for answering correctly each round.

If there are an uneven number of members on each team, give the extra students on those teams a “bye” round to keep things fair.

Variation: For a slightly calmer version of this game, place the students with the white boards at the front of the room facing away from each other. Whoever displays the correct answer first wins a point for his or her team.

## **Connect Four**

Create a set of 20 -30 sentences to translate, questions to answer, or culture points to comment on. Make a square grid with the same numbers as you have sentences. Assign students to two teams and have them choose a number. Give the question or sentence with the number that they choose. In order for the number to be considered theirs, they need to answer or translate correctly. The other team can then choose a number to advance their link or a number that will block their opponent. The winning team is the one that successfully connects four squares in a row either horizontally, diagonally or vertically.

## **Surrender on Six**

Materials: Dice (preferably large foam available at many dollar stores); review questions

Divide students into groups of three or four. Each student needs a piece of paper and there will be only one pen per group. Each group receives one sheet with review sentences to be translated, verbs to be conjugated, questions to be answered, etc. The game begins with the pen in the middle. Students take turns rolling the die. The first person who rolls a 6 takes the pen and the review sheet and begins writing. The other students continue rolling the die until one of them rolls 6, at which point he/she takes control of the pen. The process continues until one student has completed the review sheet.

## **Appendix B**

### **Project Options For Upper-Level Students**

#### **Deutsch IV**

#### **Emil und die Detektive: Projekte**

Instead of a traditional test on this story, you will be asked to choose a project that you feel most accurately demonstrates your understanding of the novel, its themes, and the nuances of Kästner's writing style.

Each of these projects must be in German. Your written work (including spelling, mechanics and proper development of your topic) is the chief item being evaluated here.

The use of online translation tools as one resource to complete your work is acceptable. However, you are not to rely on them exclusively. If you write your work in English and simply paste it into a translation tool, you are depriving yourself of a learning opportunity. Moreover, this constitutes academic dishonesty by submitting work other than your own. Should this be the case, your grade on this project will be declared invalid, and you will be asked to demonstrate your knowledge in an oral examination format for a measurably reduced grade. In short: I would much rather read your own original work full of errors, than a "perfect" one (usually not perfect at all) done by machine.

#### **Zum Schreiben (Written Assignments)**

Here are some possibilities for you -- maybe you have another idea that's even better. Please clear your idea with me before you begin writing.

- Create a new ending, at least two pages long. You can begin rewriting from any point in the story and may introduce new characters, new locations, etc.
- Write an epilogue of at least two pages.
- Have Emil write a letter (in German) to his friends, telling them his story (and what will happen now). This letter should be at least two pages long.
- Write a transcript for the interview of Emil that appeared in the newspaper, detailing the complete story in question/answer format. (3 – 5 pgs)

#### **Emil: Der Comic-Strip**

Draw and color a comic of at least 10 panels in length. You may use parts of chapters, single chapters or an extended sequence in the book. Each panel must include at least two full sentences of spoken dialogue. Your comic strip should be drawn on paper no smaller than 11"x17".

## 20 Questions

Write 20 questions about “Emil und die Detektive” using the question words below. Include an answer to your question, not only answering the question itself, but supplying additional information as well.

*z.B. (wer) Wer ist der Junge mit der Hupe?*

*Der Junge mit der Hupe heißt Gustav. Er organisierte die Gruppe, die Emil half, sein Geld zurückzubekommen.*

E.G. = (who) Who is the boy with the horn? The boy with the horn is named Gustav. He organized the group that helped Emil get his money back.

- |                               |                           |                         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. (was) who                  | 8. (seit wann) since when | 15. (wie) how           |
| 2. (warum) why                | 9. (wessen) whose         | 16. (wo) where          |
| 3. (wann) when                | 10. (wem) to/for whom     | 17. (wohin) where to    |
| 4. (womit) with what          | 11. (wen) whom            | 18. (woher) where from  |
| 5. ( wie viel) how much       | 12. (was) what            | 19. (von wem) from whom |
| 6. (wie viele) how many       | 13. (welch-) which        | 20. (mit wem) with whom |
| 7. (weshalb) for which reason | 14. (was für) what kind   |                         |

## Videos

- Choose one or two episodes of the story and dramatize it/them on video using live performers, dolls or puppets.
- Create and perform an alternate ending or epilogue to the story.
- Emil and his friends appear on a talk show to be interviewed.
- Create and perform a movie preview based on the story.
- Create a public service announcement cautioning parents from sending their kids on vacation alone, or for kids not to take candy from strangers.

A complete script featuring equally balanced speaking parts for all performers must be submitted with the video, and will be considered as part of the grade. Each performer must have eight complete sentences of at least six words each. Scripts may be used on camera; however, keep in mind that videos will be graded on accuracy and content as well as audiovisual and presentational quality. If you have an outstanding script and idea, it means very little if we cannot hear or see it, or if you are reading your script rather than speaking and interacting with your fellow group members.

## Create Your Own

Maybe you like components of some of these projects and wish to combine them into something else, or perhaps you have a completely different idea altogether. Consult with me to discuss your ideas and we will create a project tailor-made for you.

## SUPERHERO PROJECT

*(Note: This project may be easily adapted as a visualization, evaluative or synthesis activity.)*

Choose a superpower, for example one from “Heroes” or “X-Men” or “Fantastic Four.”  
Decide if you use this power for good or evil.

Ponder what you did last weekend with this power. Imagine and develop it well.

Consider the answers to these questions as you ruminate:

- a. Where?
- b. For whom?
- c. With whom?
- d. Why?
- e. What was the result?
- f. What were the consequences?

I suggest you make notes so that you don’t forget what you did.

Process in Class

Day 1:

1. You will play the role of a journalist.
2. You will interview your partner about his/her exploits last weekend.
3. You will prepare and write an article regarding this (anti-) hero.

Day 2:

1. You will edit several articles not written about you.

Day 3:

1. You will illustrate an article of which you are neither the subject nor the editor.
2. The illustrator will rate the clarity of the written article on a 1- 5 scale. The journalist will rate the accuracy of the illustrator’s artwork based on the content of the article.

# Appendix C

## From Strategies That Work (Harvey and Goudvis)

### Monitoring Comprehension:

- Good readers follow their inner conversation and leave tracks of their thinking.
- They notice when they stray from the inner conversation and repair comprehension—use fix-up strategies.
- They stop, think, and react to information as they read.

### Activating and Connecting to Background Knowledge:

- Good readers connect their reading to what they already know.
- Good readers make meaningful connections to their own lives to further their understanding of events, characters, problems, and ideas.
- They make connections between their text and other texts.
- They make connections to the world.

### Questioning:

- Good readers stop, ask questions, and wonder about their reading.
- They ask questions to clarify confusion.
- They read to gain information and answer questions.

**Visualizing and inferring:** Inferring involves merging background knowledge with text clues to come up with an idea that is not explicitly stated in the text. Visualizing requires us to infer using mental images rather than words.

- Good readers visualize and create mental images to make sense of what they read.
- They infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- They use text evidence to infer themes and bigger ideas.
- They infer and draw conclusions from informational text using features and text structures.

### Determining Importance in Text:

- Good readers gain important information from text and visual features.
- They sift and sort the important information from the details and merge their thinking with it.
- They make a distinction between what they think is most important and what the author most wants them to take away from the reading.
- They use text evidence to form opinions and understand big ideas and issues.

### Summarizing and Synthesizing:

- Good readers pull out the most important information and put it in their own words to remember it.
- They become aware of when they add to their knowledge base and revise their thinking as they read.



