

# How to ... Resources

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. How to [Construct a Thematic Unit Using a Textbook](#)
2. How to [Teach Grammar](#)
3. How to [Teach Vocabulary](#)

## How to Construct a Thematic Unit Using a Textbook

The textbook can be a very useful tool for organizing a district curriculum, but it should not be the only tool. Here are some suggestions from teachers for using your textbook, along with authentic resources, to create units in which real communication can occur. Other [instructional strategies](#) are also available in the Model Curriculum for World Languages.

### 1. Use essential questions along with the textbook themes.

You can use the themes from the textbook as a base for vocabulary and grammar. Then use essential questions to guide your unit. For example, if the chapter is on “transportation/travel,” choose one or two [essential questions](#) to focus your unit.

An essential question such as “How do I get from place to place in my community?” focuses the unit on directions and local transportation. A question such as “What do I need to know to travel to Paris?” could focus the unit on airplanes and international travel. A question such as “What do I want to see in Madrid, and how do I get to these places?” focuses on finding out about places to visit and transportation such as the metro and a taxi. The question “How do 16-year-olds in Germany travel around their country compared with 16-year-olds here?” poses a comparison.

Notice that these questions give the topic a focus that is real and more interesting than just learning vocabulary words and following the text. Authentic materials on the metro system in Madrid, places to visit, arranging a trip, or driver’s license requirements in Germany add interest and motivation to decode real target language.

### 2. Decide what students should be able to do at the end of the unit.

Decide what your students should be able to do at the end of the unit. Perhaps students should be able to ask for directions, or find places that they want to visit and figure out how to use the metro to get there, or describe to a friend how to go through customs and immigration.

### 3. Design instruction based on the tasks in the final IPA.

Create the tasks in the summative Integrated Performance Assessment based on what students should be able to do by the end of this unit. Then design your lessons and formative assessments around activities that will help students be successful on the IPA.

#### **4. Add vocabulary to or delete vocabulary from the textbook.**

Delete vocabulary from the textbook that students don't need. Add vocabulary that is relevant and current. For example, if you are doing a theme on communication, add words for "to text," "hashtag," etc.

#### **5. Elaborate on resources in the textbook.**

Choose resources from the textbook that you might like to use and then elaborate on that resource. For example, if the textbook has information (in English) on gestures, locate a YouTube video on gestures, done in Spanish by a native speaker.

#### **6. Create higher-level comprehension activities for textbook audio and video**

If you are using a textbook audio or video because you can't find an appropriate authentic resource, create higher-level comprehension questions and activities. Have students listen individually or in pairs to explain in English the gist of the audio or video.. Ask whether this situation has ever happened to them. Did they react in the same way? For other ideas, see Bryce Hedstrom's matrix of [Bloom's Taxonomy and Foreign Language Instruction](#).

#### **7. Extend textbook activities.**

Take an activity from the book and redesign it to make it either more authentic or more communicative. Use new verb forms in real situations. Personalize the chapter and relate it to students' lives.

#### **8. Introduce vocabulary and grammar in context.**

Instead of showing students the grammar and vocabulary in the book, make up a PowerPoint presentation or a story in which the new vocabulary is used in context with visualization. Let students hear the vocabulary and grammar and start using it before you define words or "teach" a grammatical form.

#### **9. Use the textbook as the base and then be creative with your activities.**

Don't do everything in the book. Cover the basic information that you think is necessary and then be creative with your activities to ignite interest in the students. For example, look at department store websites and compare videogames, toys, and clothes in both cultures. Or have students look for interesting websites on the topics in the unit and share these websites with their classmates.

## How to Teach Grammar

1. **Forms and Functions:** Understanding [how to use language structures in context](#).
2. **The PACE Model:** The PACE Model is a four-step process that includes elements that encourage student comprehension and participation. The four stages are:

### A. PRESENTATION:

The teacher foreshadows the grammar structure with an appropriate text, with emphasis on meaning. Typically, the teacher recycles the storyline through pictures, TPR activities, etc., to increase comprehension and student participation. The focus is not on the grammar structure at this point, but it is used by the teacher and in the text.

### B. ATTENTION:

The teacher now has students **focus on the language form or structure** through the use of transparencies, PowerPoint slides, or circling or highlighting a particular linguistic form.

### C. CO-CONSTRUCTION:

After the teacher has focused student attention on a particular target-language form, together they **co-construct** the grammatical explanation. The teacher provides scaffolding and assists the learners with questions that encourage them to reflect, predict and form generalizations regarding the consistencies of the language. Students “write” their own grammar rules, guided by the teacher who will make sure that they end up with an appropriate explanation.

### D. EXTENSION:

The learners use grammatical structures to complete a task relating to the theme of the lesson, which helps the language remain communicative while also highlighting a particular structure.

**Reference:** Donato, R. & B. Adair-Hauk. “A Whole Language Approach to Focus on Form.” Paper presented at the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages. San Antonio, Texas (1992). For sample lesson see <http://web.cortland.edu/flteach/mexico/pace.html>.

## How to Teach Vocabulary

### Marzano's Six-Step Strategy

1. **The teacher provides a description, explanation or example** of the word or term. Provide a context for the term.
  - Introduce direct experiences that provide examples of the term.
  - Tell a story that integrates the term.
  - Use video as the stimulus for understanding information.
  - Ask students to investigate the term and present the information to the class (skit, pantomime, poster, etc.).
  - Describe your own mental picture of the term.
  - Find or create pictures that explain the term.
2. **Linguistic:** Students restate the description, explanation or example *in their own words*.
  - Monitor and correct misunderstandings.
  - Give original ideas, don't parrot the teacher.
  - Discuss with a partner.
  - Record in a notebook or journal.
3. **Non-Linguistic:** Students make a picture, pictograph, or symbolic representation or act out the term.
4. **The teacher extends and refines understanding** of the word by engaging students in activities that help add to their knowledge of the terms in vocabulary notebooks.
  - Highlight prefixes, suffixes, root words that will help students remember the meaning of the term.
  - Identify synonyms and antonyms for the term.
  - List related words.
  - Write brief cautions or reminders of common confusions.
  - Translate the term into another language for second language students.
  - Point out cognates to words in the target language.

- Write incomplete analogies for students to complete.
- Allow students to write (or draw) their own analogies.
- Sort or classify words.
- Compare similarities and differences.

**5. The teacher asks students to discuss or practice the terms with one another.**

- Use Think-Pair-Share strategy.
- Compare their descriptions of the term.
- Describe their pictures to one another.
- Explain to each other any new information they have learned (“aha’s”).
- Identify areas of disagreement or confusion and seek clarification.
- Revise their own work.

**6. The teacher involve students in games** that enable them to play with the words and reinforce word knowledge.

- Use games to help and encourage learners to sustain their interest and work. Helps the teacher create context in which the vocabulary is useful and meaningful.
- Request learners to take part. In order to do so, they must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information. In this way, they are not only improving their vocabulary but also improving their communication skills.
- Listen for misconceptions when learners are playing games/activities.
- Provide an opportunity for learners to work together.
- Give in-context and out-of-context opportunities to apply, analyze, evaluate and synthesize new vocabulary.