

The NCLRC Language Resource



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Visit our website at: <http://www.nclrc.org>

This month's theme is **Culture: Practices and Perspectives**. At right is a photo from Karelia Pallan of a Brazilian cultural practice, Carnival. Readers chose the practices they feel reveal the most about a culture's perspectives in the [poll](#). We look at *la Francophonie* as Marcel LaVergne introduces us to [Black Writers of the French Language](#). Our [Heritage Languages Column](#) looks at the AP Test for Chinese. 'YANA' answers a question about [digital storytelling](#). Our intern, Marcos, is now studying in Madrid and blogging about his experiences in "[Marcos El Madrileño](#)." **Ever wanted to learn to play guitar?** You can do that and even take a guitar home to use in your classroom if you enroll in our Spanish Immersion or Arts Integration institutes. Our "[Strum, Throw, and Perform](#)" Arts Integration Institute and "[Spain, Language and Culture](#)" Immersion Institute **beginners' guitar workshops** are generously sponsored by **Godin Guitars, Dunlop Manufacturing, and The John and Joan D'Addario Foundation**, through **Guitars in the Classroom**. As always, our [Culture Club](#) is packed with [wonderful contests](#), book and movie reviews, and now, a blog where you can share your experiences with [Culture Shocks](#). **Enjoy!**



★ Announcements:

- FY 2008 **International Research and Studies** program grant applications are available. Go to www.grants.gov for the application details.
- Our 2008 **SUMMER INSTITUTES** schedule is out! **Institutes for all language teachers are offered**. Register soon to reserve your space. Two institutes, [Strum, Throw, and Perform](#) and [Spain, Language and Culture](#) will help you learn to play guitar and sing with your students.
- Find foreign language materials, workshops and summer institutes, and teacher resources at the [Language Resource Center Joint Website](#). Use the search option to find exactly what you need.
- **Summer institutes for teachers and students of Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu and Persian**, many with scholarship opportunities, can be found through the University of Maryland National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) www.nflc.org.
- NCLRC will be presenting at the exciting **NorthEast Conference (NECTFL)** in New York City in March. See our presentations described [online](#). If you plan to attend, register [here](#).
- The [National Museum of Language](#) is preparing to open its first exhibit to the public on **May 3**. [See the details here](#).
- **Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program** Fall 2008/Academic Year 2008-2009 applications are open. Students studying a critical need language may get additional funding. [See application form](#).

- Data from the **2005 American Community Survey** (ACS) about the thirty languages most commonly spoken in the United States are now available at the [Data Center of the MLA Language Map](#).

★ Feature article

Black Writers of the French Language

by Marcel LaVergne Ed.



Léopold Senghor

Unlike Spanish teachers who teach the Hispanic World, we, French teachers, have mostly confined our sights to *la belle France* and have widely neglected the world known as *la Francophonie*. Other than some token samples of African or Québécois prose and poetry, our students are mainly exposed to *le génie de la langue française* of France.

How much more interesting and informative our lessons would be if our students were to go beyond the physical frontiers of *L'Hexagone* and discover *le génie de la langue française* as it exists throughout the world. How many of them know that French is spoken in some 40 countries and manifests itself in very beautiful creative writings by authors who are largely unknown to them? Through those authors, our students would discover the history, traditions, beliefs, and artifacts of those other countries that make up [la Francophonie](#). [Read more...](#)

★ Teaching Heritage Learners: Root Words



Edited by Jamie Lepore Wright. This column features an article on a topic related to heritage language learning and news for teachers of heritage learners.

Is the Advanced Placement Chinese Language exam suitable for Native Speaking Chinese students?

Here at Root Words we are currently running a series of articles on the use of AP language tests with heritage populations. For this month's article, I interviewed two individuals in the Chinese language teaching field who have been involved in the development and administration of the AP Chinese Language and Culture test. I was primarily interested in investigating how the question of heritage learners of Chinese has been addressed in the creation and implementation of this test.

[Read more...](#)

★ Teacher's Diary

★ Culture Club

Edited by Christine Meloni



Visit the [Culture Club!](#) The new [Culture Shocks Blog](#) is announced in the [Internet Media Room](#). We hope you enjoy reading the amusing stories of cross cultural misunderstandings. Marcel LaVergne is the author of a very interesting article in the [Speaker's Corner](#), "[French Writers of New England](#)." You will find reviews of [Franco-American](#), [Russian](#), and [Spanish novels](#) in the [Library](#) and reviews of [French](#), [German](#), [Italian](#), [Japanese](#), [Spanish](#), and [Swedish films](#) in the [Screening Room](#). Take a look at the new [Mystery Photo](#) in the [Photo Gallery](#). If you can identify it, you may be the winner. The winners for the December contest and one of the January photos are announced. Two January photos remain mysteries, however. Don't forget to participate in the [Culture Club mini-poll](#) on the Home Page of the Culture Club. [It will take you about 3 seconds for you to click on your choice in the mini-poll.](#) Thanks!

★ Dear YANA

Edited by Sheila Cockey. YANA stands for "You are Not Alone." Your questions on challenges in your classrooms are answered by an expert on languages and culture teaching. This month's question:

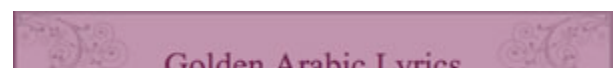
- *I am hearing some of my colleagues at other schools talk about the digital stories their students are writing. They are very excited about what their students are doing. What is digital storytelling? How can I use it in my classroom? I am not very technical beyond the basics, but am willing to learn.*

[Read YANA's answers...](#)

★ Websites for Teachers

Golden Arabic Lyrics: Using Music in Arabic Class

by MaryClaire Peroutka



Bill teaches a foreign language practicum course in South Carolina. Each month he shares his journal of reflections on teaching.

Dear Diary,

It's February and even better, a leap year, when the calendar is in alignment with the earth's motion around the sun. Perhaps the planet's alignment explains the recent influx of readers' emails requesting more information about past diary entries. Interestingly, my December diary entry has inspired readers to request my rubric for grading the midterm essays. Even though I cannot address each email I've received here, I have answered each inquiry in emails. [One person emailed me saying ...](#)

★ Readers' Corner

Here's where you, our dear readers, can TALK BACK! This month we ask about making connections to math. How do you integrate math content into your language class? Answer our [Poll](#)

Our monthly question is **What have you done to connect math content to your language teaching?** Click here to answer the [Question](#)

Last month we asked: Which cultural practice do you think reveals the most about a culture's perspectives? and How do you tie cultural practices with perspectives in your teaching? [See the results here...](#)

★ Critical Languages

Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, and more

Arizona State University's Critical Languages Institutes have been announced and a teacher of Sinhala is needed at Cornell. [Read it all here...](#)

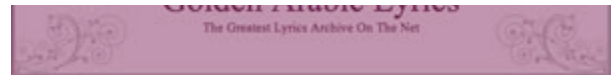
★ Testing Tips

By Margaret E. (Meg) Malone, Ph.D. - Center for Applied Linguistics

Welcome to NCLRC's newest offering "Testing Tips!" As promised, this month's Testing Tips discusses the process of making a test. A great deal of time goes into test development, administration, scoring, recording, reporting and revising tests. So, what do you do first? This column deals with the first step in selecting or creating a test, which is to [define your purposes for testing...](#)

★ Language Policy Update

On February 13, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, which would expand nearly fivefold the number of college students who participate in overseas education. The legislation aims to increase, within the next 10 years,



Teachers of every language are constantly on the lookout for newer and more accessible ways to present material. The problem with using music in a foreign language is that pop stars use slang, they speak too quickly for still-learning ears, and diction is nonexistent. In Arabic pop music, the problems associated with dialect amplify this problem. Golden Arabic Lyrics (www.arabiclyrics.net) is a tool for Arabic teachers and students alike. By providing the text, transliteration, and translation of songs, teachers can give their students a helping hand when they push "Play." [Read more...](#)

★ Professional Development, Conferences and Funding Opportunities

We've compiled the conference announcements in one easy-to access place, the Teachers' Calendar. From the **Brain Basis of Cognition to Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum** (CLAC) you can learn about all the conferences [here...](#)

Money for Teachers and Students; International Study and Exchanges

This month we have information on a **study abroad opportunity for disabled language students**; a chance to tour and learn about the Arabic and Islamic world through the **Malone Fellow Study Visit to Yemen**, and the State Dept.'s **Teaching Ambassador Fellowship**. [See the revised grants section here.](#)

★ Ask Dora

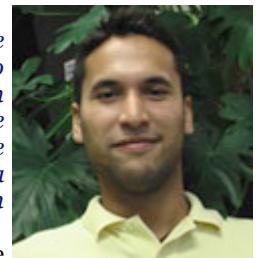
Dora Johnson is a Program Associate at Center for Applied Linguistics, and answers reader's questions related to languages. This month's question:

- *Where can Americans learn Turkmen (not Turkish) language in America?*

[Read Dora's answer...](#)

★ Marcos El Madrileño

After working for NCLRC for one semester, Marcos was inspired to apply for a study abroad program in Madrid. He's carrying on the tradition started by Candice (See [Candice al Dente](#)) by writing a blog about his experiences in Spain.



Another highlight of their at-home culture is the world famous SIESTA! That nap that I take every afternoon right after my hearty lunch sets me up for the perfect afternoon, up and awake ready to explore what Madrid has to offer. Lastly and definitely not least, their family life really helps us feel at home. Personally I grew up in a household where family should always come first

the number of American students studying abroad annually to one million. [More information...](#)

★NCLRC Staff

Our new staffers and interns are pictured on our [staff page \(scroll to the bottom of the page\)](#). As you can see, they're a well-traveled, brilliant, and energetic bunch. We're grateful for all of their help in gathering the information for this newsletter and keeping the NCLRC running smoothly! - *Jill Robbins, editor*

and love, caring, and sharing with each other was the most, if not one of the most important things in life. They've continued to hold on to that spirit throughout the city. I've learned a lesson or two myself. [Read more...](#)

The Language Resource is a monthly publication of the National Capital Language Resource Center <http://www.nclrc.org> to provide practical teaching strategies, share insights from research, and announce professional development opportunities for all foreign language educators.

Funded by the US Department of Education through Title VI, we are a consortium of Georgetown University, The George Washington University, and the Center for Applied Linguistics.

Also available on our website

[Culture Club](#)

[Arabic K-12 Teachers' newsletter](#)

[Sailing the 5 Cs with Learning Strategies:](#)

A Resource Guide for Secondary Foreign Language Educators

[Portfolio Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom](#)

[Elementary Immersion Learning Strategies Resource Guide](#)

[The Essentials of Language Teaching](#)

[Developing Autonomy in Language Learners:](#)

Learning Strategies Instruction in Higher Education

[Russian for Russians](#)

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