

STUDENTS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Learning a second language can be exciting and memorable if students can see a real purpose. This presentation will illustrate how language can serve learners as an instrument to get to know another culture and empower them with strategies which foster self directed learning.

The presenter will show how to create a student exchange program between a secondary school in the USA, in which Spanish is taught as a second language, and a secondary school in B A, Argentina, in which English is taught as a second language. The success of this program does not only lie in the ideal context provided for second language learning but also in the underlying methodology, which highly motivates students to acquire the necessary language skills to understand and communicate with their English/Spanish speaking exchange partners about each other's culture and customs through real communicative tasks.

Furthermore, reference to '*Experiential Learning*' will be made, as it is the methodology which underlies this practice. Kolb, one of its major exponents states '*Learning takes place by doing only if experience is observed and analyzed consciously*'. And this is the way language is learnt in this program.

In addition to this, an array of intercultural activities that take place before, during and after this program will be analyzed. The following tasks will be shown, through videos, classroom plans and materials:

- 'The writing and exchanging of e-mails and letters',
- 'The organization of a field trip to a B A neighborhood
- 'Showing exchange partners around our town',
- 'A Press Conference on key cultural aspects of the two countries',
- 'A Conversation Exchange',
- 'Cross curricular activities'
- 'The Writing of Articles' to create a yearbook or magazine.

We can go the extra mile by learning foreign languages in the context provided by Exchange Programs.

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