

# Introduction (continued)

# WORLD LANGUAGES

## Then and Now

The language classroom in the U.S. has been transformed in the last 20 years to reflect an increasing emphasis on developing students' communicative competence. Unlike the classroom of yesteryear that required students to know a great deal of information about the language but did not have an expectation of language use, today's classroom is about teaching languages so that students use them to communicate with native speakers of the language. This is what prepares them to use their language learning as a 21st Century Skill. Following is a chart comparing how language classrooms looked in the past compared to today.

## IN THE PAST

Students learned about the language (grammar)

Teacher-centered class

Focused on isolated skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)

Coverage of a textbook

Using the textbook as the curriculum

Emphasis on teacher as presenter/lecturer

Isolated cultural "factoids"

Use of technology as a "cool tool"

Only teaching language

Same instruction for all students

Synthetic situations from textbook

Confining language learning to the classroom

Testing to find out what students don't know

Only the teacher knows criteria for grading

Students "turn in" work only for the teacher

## TODAY

Students learn to use the language

Learner-centered with teacher as facilitator/collaborator

Focus on the three modes: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational

Backward design focusing on the end goal

Use of thematic units and authentic resources

Emphasis on learner as "doer" and "creator"

Emphasis on the relationship among the perspectives, practices, and products of the culture

Integrating technology into instruction to enhance learning

Using language as the vehicle to teach academic content

Differentiating instruction to meet individual needs

Personalized real world tasks

Seeking opportunities for learners to use language beyond the classroom

Assessing to find out what students can do

Students know and understand criteria on how they will be assessed by reviewing the task rubric

Learners create to "share and publish" to audiences more than just the teacher.