



# Nebraska Department of Education

500 S 84<sup>th</sup> St. Second Floor ♦ Lincoln, Nebraska ♦ 68510

## World Language Review

May & June 2023

### NDE World Language Mission Statement

Empower educators to engage students in the authentic use of world languages via standards-based instruction to fulfill a range of functions, from expressing personal needs to communicating in the workplace and establishing strategic relationships across cultures so that they may learn, earn, and live.



NDE World Language sincerely thanks Kelly Garcia for spending the time editing and reviewing the newsletter.

- [NeSoBL Updates: April Awardees & New Form Ready](#)
- [Opportunities & Resources for Language Teachers](#)
- [Reviving Chinese Programs with J1 Projects](#)
- [Teacher Story: Ana Peterson](#)
- [Technology of the Month: Get Organized with Symbaloo](#)
- [Call for Contributions to Future Issues](#)

### NeSoBL: Updates & Medallion Purchase Forms

NDE and NILA are working on establishing a Memorandum of Understanding on the future Seal of Biliteracy Processing. The official MOU will be shared when both agencies sign the document.



As shared in previous issues, the new application form is: <https://tinyurl.com/NeSoBL-Application>. Please encourage your students to apply. If you or your school/ school district plans to purchase medallions for your students, please follow the procedure for medallion purchase:

- Verify the application results via [crystal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:crystal.liu@nebraska.gov);
- Download and fill out the [form](#);
- Write a check payable to the Nebraska Department of Education – please add “Seal of Biliteracy Medallion” as a reference/ memo.
- Scan the check and the form, and email both to [crystal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:crystal.liu@nebraska.gov) (in this way, NDE World Language can keep track of each case)
- Mail the check and form to the following address:



P.O. BOX 94987  
Lincoln, NE, 68509-4987  
Or

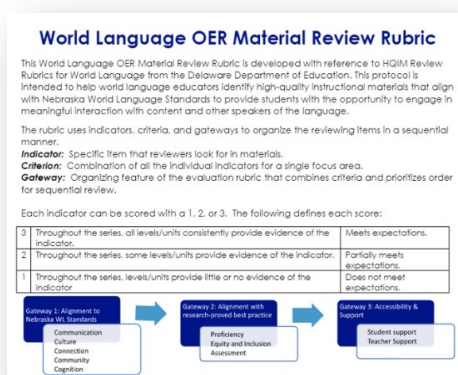
500 S 84th St. Second Floor  
Lincoln, NE, 68510

Please don't hesitate to contact [chrysal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:chrysal.liu@nebraska.gov) if you have any questions.

## Opportunities & Resources for Teachers

### NDE WL HQIM Rubrics

Thanks to the dedicated NDE World Language Advisory Board for finalizing the NDE World Language High Quality Instructional Material (HQIM) rubrics. There are two versions of NDE WL HQIM rubrics. [The complete version](#) serves as reference for schools/ districts for material selection and



**World Language OER Material Review Rubric**

This World Language OER Material Review Rubric is developed with reference to HQIM Review Rubrics for World Language from the Delaware Department of Education. This protocol is intended to help world language educators identify high-quality instructional materials that align with Nebraska World Language Standards to provide students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful interaction with content and other speakers of the language.

The rubric uses indicators, criteria, and gateways to organize the reviewing items in a sequential manner.

**Indicator:** Specific item that reviewers look for in materials.  
**Criteria:** Combination of all the individual indicators for a single focus area.  
**Gateway:** Organizing feature of the evaluation rubric that combines criteria and prioritizes order for sequential review.

Each indicator can be scored with a 1, 2, or 3. The following defines each score:

3	Throughout the series, all levels/units consistently provide evidence of the indicator.	Meets expectations.
2	Throughout the series, some levels/units provide evidence of the indicator.	Partially meets expectations.
1	Throughout the series, levels/units provide little or no evidence of the indicator.	Does not meet expectations.

Gateway 1: Aligned to Nebraska WL Standards  
Communication  
Culture  
Connection  
Community  
Cognition

Gateway 2: Alignment with research-proven best practice  
Proficiency  
Equity and Inclusion  
Assessment

Gateway 3: Accessibility & Support  
Student support  
Teacher support

development/  
improvement. [The brief version](#) aligns with the long version, and it is intended to provide reference for teachers to select instructional resources/ supplemental materials.



**Events**

- ◆ [State Board of Education Meeting](#)  
June 2<sup>nd</sup>
- ◆ [NILA Proposal Dues](#)  
June 3<sup>rd</sup>
- ◆ [Nebraska Career Education Conference](#)  
June 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [Future Ready Conference](#)  
June 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [LILL Cohort 5](#)  
June 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>
- ◆ [NDE WL Hub Development Cohort 2](#)  
June 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [Binational Symposium at Bellevue University](#)  
June 29<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [CSCLEA Proposal Dues](#)  
June 30<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [ACTFL Conference Early Bird Registration](#)  
July 12<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [NDE Day](#)  
July 26<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ [Education Forum](#)  
August 7<sup>th</sup>

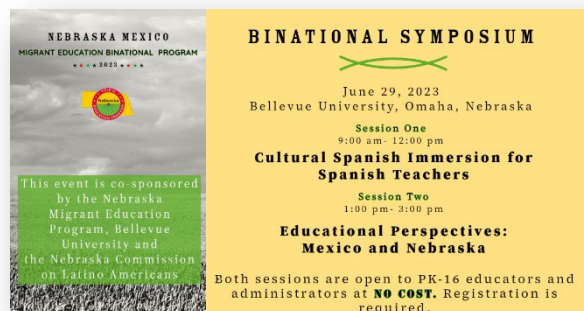
Please email your event information to [chrysal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:chrysal.liu@nebraska.gov)

### Binational Symposium June 29

Invitation to all Spanish teachers, ELL teachers, and any specialist working with Spanish-speaking migrant students.

You are invited to attend the **Binational Symposium June 29** at Bellevue University. The Binational Symposium brings together educational professionals from Mexico and Nebraska to discuss the needs of our shared students. In addition, the Symposium offers an immersion experience for teachers of Spanish interested in the culture and customs of Mexico.

There are two sessions, and you may register for both or one. The morning session will be the immersion experience in which teachers from Mexico will teach about traditional Mexican customs in Spanish. Be ready to make something, dance, or sing. Most of all, be ready to have fun.



**NEBRASKA MEXICO**  
MIGRANT EDUCATION BINATIONAL PROGRAM  
2022

**BINATIONAL SYMPOSIUM**

June 29, 2023  
Bellevue University, Omaha, Nebraska

Session One  
9:00 am - 12:00 pm  
**Cultural Spanish Immersion for Spanish Teachers**

Session Two  
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**Educational Perspectives: Mexico and Nebraska**

Both sessions are open to PK-16 educators and administrators at **NO COST**. Registration is required.

This event is co-sponsored by the Nebraska Migrant Education Program, Bellevue University and the Nebraska Commission on Latino Americans

In the afternoon, we will have presentations and a panel discussion. Our Mexican teachers will share the perspective of the Mexican educational system on topics such as family involvement, academic expectations, and student behaviors. A panel discussion of Nebraska and Mexican teachers will then compare and contrast their experiences.

If you would like to join us, please register [here](#). There is NO cost to attend. You may also use the registration to join us virtually for the afternoon session if you are not able to attend in person.

This event is co-sponsored by the Nebraska Migrant Education Program, Bellevue University, and the Nebraska Commission of Latino Americans.

Please check the flyer for details:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PlubDVjxE8cBsfuzrdSZHT2aRxmwwcju/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PlubDVjxE8cBsfuzrdSZHT2aRxmwwcju/view?usp=share_link) Please contact Stephanie Call [stephanie.call@nebraskalanguagesinitiative.org](mailto:stephanie.call@nebraskalanguagesinitiative.org) if you have any questions.

### 2023 NILA Call for Proposals Dues on June 3<sup>rd</sup>

As the deadline of NILA Call for Proposals approaches, NDE World Language would like to friendly remind teachers to [submit a proposal](#) to the conference. The due date is June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The theme for the 2023 NILA conference is "Building, Growing, Sustaining". It will be held on Saturday, Nov 4, 2023, in the Mammel Hall at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. Presenters will be notified over the summer if the proposal is accepted by July 15th.



### 2024 CSCTFL Call for Proposals Dues on June 30<sup>th</sup>.



The 2024 Central States/MCTLC Joint Conference will be held March 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> in Minneapolis. The theme for the 2024 CSCTFL conference is "Reclaim Your Joy". The conference is now calling for session, workshop, and event proposals. The due data is June 30<sup>th</sup>. The conference is an opportunity to share your expertise, network with, and to collaborate with colleagues in central states. Please consider submitting a proposal via

this [link](#). The step-by-step instructions can be accessed [here](#).

### [Teach World Language with Technology](#)

NDE World Language has worked with Dr. Guy Trainin in the Department of Teaching, Learning, & Teacher Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and created a series of Vodcast, namely, Teach World Language with Technology. The first five episodes have been published on YouTube. Here are the links to



those four episodes:

- introduction: <https://youtu.be/F6pVHXaqvaQ>,
- LyricsTraining: [https://youtu.be/X\\_ckG8AcFXE](https://youtu.be/X_ckG8AcFXE);
- Jamboard:  
<https://youtu.be/NFhhM0pUn2k>;
- Blooket:  
<https://youtu.be/3HXxKtdMfLE>.
- Plxton:  
<https://youtu.be/nHXSu6wjUaU>.

More episodes will be available [here](#). Please subscribe and follow us on YouTube.

## UNO Graduate World Language and Teacher Education Programs

- **The Master of Arts in Language Teaching (MALT) Program**

The Master of Arts in Language Teaching program is an interdisciplinary program that allows students to take courses in a wide range subject from literature, culture, and linguistics in the target language to second language acquisition theory and teaching methodology. We also offer Graduate Certificate programs in Spanish, French, and Teaching Spanish to Heritage/Bilingual Learners. For more information, please request [here](#).



- **Graduate Certificate Program**

Beside [the Master of Arts in Language Teaching \(MALT\) Program](#), UNO also offers Graduate Certificate Programs including. Please check the following links and the flyers for details.

[Graduate Certificate in French](#)

[Graduate Certificate in Spanish](#)

[Graduate Certificate in Spanish](#)

[Graduate Certificate in Teaching Spanish to](#)

[Heritage/Bilingual Learners](#)

## Free Online Russian and Arabic Courses Offered by UNL

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is offering free online Russian Courses for students via Nebraska NOW. Two sessions are offered: Session 101 is from May 30 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, and Session 102 is offered from July 10 to August 10. Students will be guided to explore Russian and Ukraine culture while learning the language. Please sign up [here](#). For details, please contact Dr. Olha Tytarenko ([olha.tytarenko@unl.edu](mailto:olha.tytarenko@unl.edu)).



UNL will also offer some other online language courses this summer for any students who would like to enroll as visiting students:

Arabic 101 (May 30-June 30)



<https://www.facebook.com/NDE.WL/>



[education.ne.gov/worldlanguage/](https://education.ne.gov/worldlanguage/)



[@NDE\\_WorldLang](https://twitter.com/NDE_WorldLang)

Arabic 102 (July 10-August 10)  
Czech 102 (July 10-August 10)  
Spanish 101 (May 30-June 30) AND (July 10-August 10)  
Spanish 102 (May 30-June 30) AND (July 10-August 10)

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## Teacher Stories – Martha Thompson & Melissa Kuskie

Name: Martha Thompson

School: Norfolk Senior High School

Language: French

Bonjour, my name is Martha Thompson and I am the French teacher at Norfolk High School. I am endorsed to teach French and English. When I started my career, I wanted to teach English. However, unlike the current teaching market, it was more difficult to find a job. I could not find an English position. I needed a job so I accepted the position to teach French at Norfolk High in July of 1986. My position at Norfolk High was my first and will be my only teaching position. I have taught French levels one through four for thirty-seven years. I taught English in our summer school program, as well as served as a theater director for 26 years.



My journey as a teacher has been both frustrating and fulfilling. I finished my Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on teaching language in 1992 and started work on a Masters in French. I did not finish that program as I started my family. I did however continue my education and training as a teacher. I was always looking for new ideas and trying different approaches in my classroom. I would describe my classroom at that time as a traditional language class. I taught vocabulary and grammar. We did paired activities and played games. My students did very well at vocabulary and they memorized the verb conjugations. But there was always a frustration with the results. Only the most talented or determined students developed any true proficiency in French. I could predict with accuracy which students would be lost in the fog of the passé composé and the imparfait in the second semester of French 2.

In June of 2015 I attended a free Comprehensible Input workshop in Lincoln. This was truly a turning point in my career. That fall, my principal approved the purchase of a class set of readers. I incorporated them into my curriculum and the results were promising. I was hooked. The next year I added more books. I researched comprehensible input and read books on the topic. I tried so many new ideas and techniques. Most of them worked. Some were simply not a good fit. Pop up grammar completely changed the way that I approach grammar. I changed the way that I test students when I learned about Integrated Performance Assessments. In the past 8 years, I have completely revamped my teaching methodology. COVID slowed me down but in the fall of 2022, my French 1 was taught almost entirely using comprehensible input. This year my levels one and two



and some of the French 3 units are comprehensible input. Next year, comprehensible input will be incorporated into all four levels.

As my focus has become language acquisition and communication, I have found that it is easier to differentiate instruction, provide support to struggling students, and provide enrichment opportunities to more advanced students. Students who struggle with grammar based instruction are doing very well.

During this transition, I received two classroom grants from the Norfolk Public Schools Foundation to support the transition to a comprehensible input classroom. The grants provided the funds for a classroom library of readers as well as funding for proficiency testing. Proficiency testing has provided the data that I needed to show my administration that these changes are resulting in more proficient students. It is my hope that this year, some of my students will qualify for the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy

I have once again become passionate about my job. This is year 37 and I am still learning and growing as a teacher. I don't know how many more years I will continue to teach. But as I approach the next few years, I know that they will be the best of my career.



Name: Melissa Kuskie

School: Central High School

Language: Spanish

Hola! My journey as a Spanish teacher started when I was 10 years old. I was part of a Talented and Gifted Program in my elementary school. I was asked to participate in a summer course, which was Spanish! From there, like many students, I took 4 years of high school Spanish and my junior year, my family and I took a trip to Monterrey, Mexico to visit my sister in college. This was my very first college visit and soon

to be the university I would attend in 1991 and 1992 in Monterrey, Mexico. Now, there were 2 bilinguals from my family, both my sister and I! We have had the opportunity to travel over the years and share our passion for the beautiful Spanish language and culture.

In 2003, I finished my teaching certificate and in 2004, I finished my master's degree in Secondary Education. I have now been teaching at Spanish Central High School for 20 years!

While working at OPS, I have completed the Oral Proficiency Interview with ACTFL scoring Advanced-Mid and have been teaching AP Spanish since 2005 offering Dual Enrollment with UNO. I received the UNO Teacher of Excellence last year and I am currently working on my Graduate Spanish Certificate and Bilingual Endorsement at UNO and love my job!

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## Technology of the Month: Escape Room with Google Slides & Google Form



Escape rooms have gained popularity as immersive and interactive experiences where students actively participate in problem-solving and collaboration to achieve educational objectives. By transforming traditional learning into dynamic and experiential journeys, escape rooms foster critical thinking, teamwork, communication, and subject-specific knowledge.

The following checking list is recommended for teachers create escape rooms:

- Setting Learning objectives – what students need to achieve at the end of the game.
- Deciding on the context/ story of the game – this helps to frame the puzzles into a relevant and meaningful activity that invites students to participate.
- Picking puzzle elements: direct & indirect clues – these are the assignments, reading pieces, or practices that you want your students to go through.
- Gathering links to those clues – this links will allow students to access those puzzle elements in the escape room2.
- Creating the escape room (for submitting the answers – these can be slides/ map/ website (or other forms) for student to navigate.
- Sharing the escape room to engage students.

Many platforms and tools can be used to create Escape Rooms. Google slides and Google Forms are recommended for beginners. Google slides can be used as the escape room and Google form can be used to collect students answers to all the clues.

This [tutorial](#) shows how to create Google Form to collect student responses to monitor progress. It is recommended that create a separate section for each clue question and make each question “required”. The “response verification” allows a second chance to answer the questions once they get the answers wrong.



This [tutorial](#) provides directions to create the escape room for student navigation. It is recommended using separate slides for each clue question and linking all slides back to the “escape room” slide for easier student navigation.

To share the escape room, teachers need to copy the URL of the Google slides and change the word “edit” to “preview” in the URL to share with the students. In this way, the students can assess the escape room as a website so that they won't be able to make unexpected changes. Please check this tutorial for detailed directions.

Ideas for escape rooms:

- Language-Based Puzzle Solving: Create a series of puzzles, riddles, or codes that students must decipher using their language skills. These puzzles can be designed to test their vocabulary, grammar, or cultural knowledge. Students must solve each puzzle to unlock the next clue and ultimately escape the room.
- Cultural Quest: Set up a scenario where students are “trapped” in a foreign country and must navigate their way out by completing cultural challenges. Each challenge can be related to a specific aspect of the target culture, such as ordering food in a restaurant, asking for directions, or understanding local customs and traditions.



- Story-Based Escape: Develop a storyline that requires students to read and comprehend a series of texts in the target language. The texts can be in the form of dialogues, narratives, or news articles, and students must analyze the information to solve the puzzle and escape the room.
- Vocabulary Treasure Hunt: Hide vocabulary cards or objects around the room, each labeled with a word or phrase in the target language. Provide students with a list of clues or sentences with missing words, and they must search the room for the correct vocabulary items to complete the sentences and find the key to escape.
- Role-Playing Escape: Assign each student a specific role or character and provide them with a set of instructions and objectives in the target language. Students must interact with each other using their language skills to gather information, negotiate, and solve problems to escape the room together.
- Audiovisual Challenges: Incorporate audio or video materials that students must interpret and analyze to solve language-based challenges. For example, students might listen to a recorded conversation or watch a video clip and answer comprehension questions or decode a message hidden within the media.

Please feel free to reach out to [chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov) if you have any questions or want to share more ideas about how to effectively use technology in your teaching practice.

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## Call for Contribution to Next Issues

World language teachers, your contribution is needed to build the Nebraskan world language community. If you are interested in sharing any information or contributing to any section of the newsletter, please contact [chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov). The purpose of the NDE monthly newsletter is to communicate NDE initiatives, advocate for programs, advertise cultural events, make connections, and build community.

Make sure you contact [chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov](mailto:chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov)

- When you have questions about NDE initiatives.
- When you have an initiative that needs support from NDE.
- When you want to increase the presence of your program.
- When you have resources to share.
- When there are exciting events going on locally.
- When you need help to get connected with other teachers and programs.
- When you have professional learning needs.
- And more!

If you are not on the email list and wish to subscribe to the newsletter, please put your contact information in this [Google Form](#).

