

## How to Enrich a Language Program and Motivate Students with Elective Projects

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### Russian Heritage Student Programs

- Intensive (5 hours/day) summer language programs
- Designed for Russian heritage high school students (14-17)
- Content-based (focus on STEM/ Culture & Social Science)
- Collaboration with the local museums
- Interviews with native Russian-speaking professionals
- Afternoon elective projects

### Project Products

- Drama Performance
  - Model of LEGO robotic Mars rover
  - Newspaper
  - Digital story
  - Linguistic research
- At the end of the program --- presentations of students' projects at Conference or Closing Ceremony

## STARTALK

### Russian Heritage Student Programs

#### Russian in the Sky and Outer Space

- Focus on STEM
- 4-week long
- Int.H. in Speaking and Listening, Int.L. in Reading and Writing



#### Bridges to Russia: Culture and Social Science

- Focus on Culture & Social Science
- 3-week long
- Int.M. in Speaking and Listening, Nov.M. in Reading and Writing



### Projects Timeframe and Materials

- Amount of time: 22 h. + a conference
- Groups of 5-7 students
- Authentic materials
- Access to university library
- 1-2 museum field-trips
- Access to a computer lab and Internet
- MOODLE (or another learning platform)

### Language Goals

#### Interpretive

- Read and understand authentic texts: articles, technical instructions, dictionaries
- Listen to and understand video lectures and other students' presentations, take critical notes
- Interpret graphs, pictures, posters, cartoons, and art objects

#### Interpersonal

- Discuss ideas and opinions related to research topics
- Participate in after-presentation discussions with peers and experts

#### Presentational

- Write a PowerPoint Presentation based on a research
- Present findings from research projects orally in front of parents, instructors, classmates, and experts at the student conference.

## Elective Projects for Heritage Learners



## Elective Projects for Heritage Learners

- Language and linguistic reflection
- Life-long linguistic skills
- Critical thinking



### Student's Voice



*I loved the Startalk program last year. It opened my eyes to so many things that I wouldn't have otherwise encountered. From talking to war veterans and hearing their incredible experiences to delving deeper into the life of Mark Chagall, to hearing a variety of Russian songs (beyond Visotskiy) I had an incredible learning experience that I would have never had otherwise. I also became friends with Russian speaking peers, not only from Boston, but across the U.S. I would love to have the opportunity to continue to expand my knowledge of Russian culture, meet Russian speaking peers, and contribute to the Startalk program.*

Gwyneth, Harvard Startalk, 2017

## More Options for Differentiated Instructions



## Hands-on Learning and Creativity



## How to Motivate Students with Elective Projects

- Explore your students' interests
- "Sell" projects
- Let students choose elective projects
- Let them choose their roles in a group project or research topic
- Let them compete at student conference

## “Selling” a project: Demo lessons



Лингвистический проект: выбираем слово для исследования

Ваше имя: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Напишите, пожалуйста, чем вы интересуетесь, увлекаетесь и любите (или мечтаете) заниматься в школе и в свободное время: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

1. Выберите из списка самое интересное слово, которое вы хотели бы исследовать:  
 совет, культурный, кремль, верста, большевик, дача, комиссар, самиздат, совхоз, гласность, субботник, самовар, интеллигенция, дружина, товарищ, аппаратчик, народ, суд, копейка, мужик, рубль, перестройка, погром, дума, тайга, балакава

Почему вы выбрали именно его? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Какое еще слово вам кажется интересным? Запишите его: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Выберите и запишите третье слово, которое вам интересно: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Project Conference

### Challenges:

- To judge or not to judge?
- Who are the experts?
- How to prepare the experts to judge/grade students' presentations?
- How to celebrate students' success?



## After-Project Students' Reflection

Students were asked about

- What they have learned during the project;
- How they can use their new knowledge and experiences;
- What was the most interesting part of the project?
- What was the most challenging part of the project?
- How (if so) the project has changed their attitude toward studying Russian?

## What Students Like about Projects?

- Making their own choices
- Field trips vs. classroom routine
- Hands-on learning
- Competition
- Challenges
- Research and exploration
- Creativity

## After-Project Students' Reflection

### Student's Voice



- *What was the most challenging part of the project?*
- *Making the final presentation and being able to speak on a confident level, with confidence, with people who obviously knew about the subject more than me.*

- Ilia, UW Startalk, 2015

## New Elective Projects

- Translation
- Biology
- Cryptology

## Thank You

You can see and use our materials

- Units and lesson plans
- Scenarios and texts
- PowerPoint presentations
- Videos of the lessons

on UW STARTALK website

<https://depts.washington.edu/startalk/russianstudentresources2014.php>

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