Comics in the language classroom, as a means to analyze and discuss various cultural, sociological, and/or political topics

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Agenda

- **Warm- up**
- **Definition & brief history**
- **Reasons for the integration of comics into foreign language teaching**
- **Pedagogical benefits**
- **Practices, strategies and tools for using comics in teaching cultural and/or political topics**
- **Lesson plans and steps**
- **Assessment & reflection**
- **References**
- **Questions & Answers**

WHEN? WHERE? WHY?

E.g.: I read comics when I was…to…

PART I

DEFINITION & BRIEF HISTORY

COMICS

- Comic means: Amusing or intended to be amusing; humorous; funny. ·A source of humor in art or life.

- Comics is a <u>narrative</u> <u>medium</u> used to express ideas with images, often combined with text or other visual information. It typically takes the form of a sequence of <u>panels</u> of images. Textual devices such as <u>speech balloons</u>, and <u>captions</u>, can indicate dialogue, narration, sound effects, or other information

- Comic or Cartoon?

- A cartoon in its original form consists of a single image, without or with text. If a story is being told using few images presented in a sequence, then we speak of "cartoon strips" or sometimes "comic strips". Sometimes the terms cartoon strip or comic strip are used interchangeably to describe a hybrid of the two.

- <u>"Cartoons" are not an invention of modern times.</u> Picture stories already existed in ancient Egypt, Japan and the <u>cave drawings in southern France can also be understood as an early phase of *the cartoon*</u>. The origin of cartoons as we know them today, however, is not to be found quite so far back in early history

- Scholars believe the oldest comic book in the world is The Adventures of Obadiah Oldbuck, which was published in Europe in 1837. It contained several picture panels with accompanying text underneath.

- Around the turn of the century, the first daily and weekly newspapers printed cartoons with balloon text.

THE FIRST ANIMATED CARTOONS

- The picture stories were so well received by the public that in the 1910s people began to animate the sequences of pictures - the first animated cartoons were thus created as a short form of the "animated cartoon" from contemporary newspaper cartoons.

- The very first animated cartoon was created by the French cartoonist and animator Émile Cohl. "Fantasmagorie" was created in 1908 with a running time of two minutes and about 700 drawings.

- Walt Disney started his first attempts with animated children's stories as early as 1923, and in 1929 Mickey Mouse and Minnie were introduced in the short film "Steamboat Willie".

- In the 1930s, the first "superheroes" finally entered the scene. The two adventure comics "Tarzan" and "Budd Rogers" appeared in 1929. Donald Duck also made his debut as a comic book character during this period. And when America went into World War 2, the American nation needed heroes - that was the birth of Superman, Batman and Spiderman.

- With the first appearance of Superman in 1938, the comic book industry gained an independent identity. This allowed the comic to become a successful mass medium, which was to have a significant influence on radio, television and cinema.

- And in 1937, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" ushered in the era of modern animated films. The film was the first color animated film with a full soundtrack.

NEW GENERATION OF CARTOONS SINCE 90S

With the beginning of the 90s, the new generation of cartoons developed, which are primarily aimed at adults and have a satirical character.

The "Simpsons" marked the beginning of this development. Cartoon series like Southpark or Ren & Stimpy can be seen as a continuation of this trend.
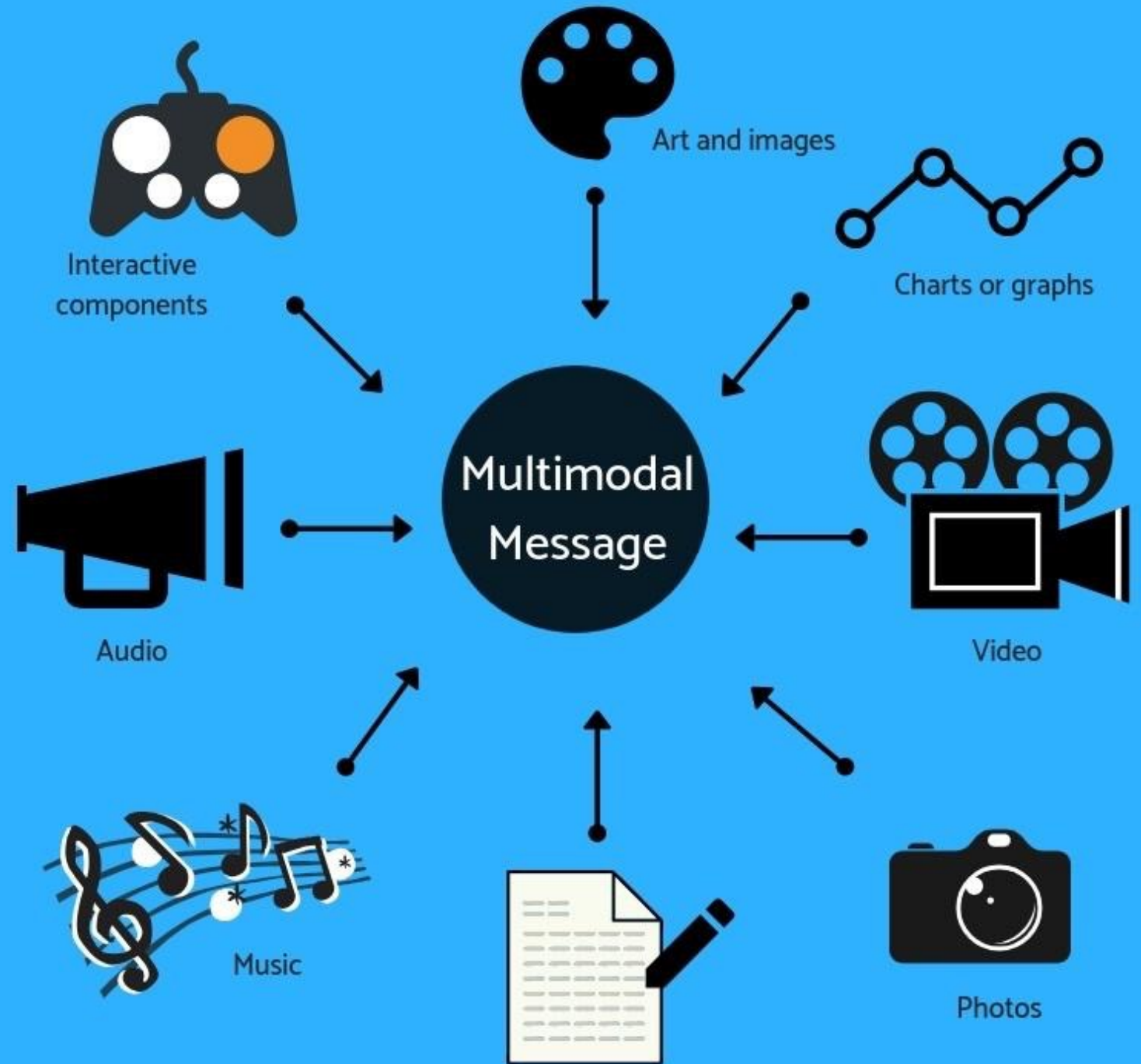
PART 2

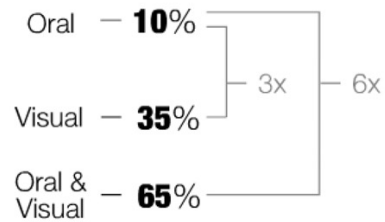## REASONS FOR THE INTEGRATION OF COMICS INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

MULTI-MODAL COMMUNICATION

- Communication does not only take place among people when speaking or writing, in a verbal or non-verbal way> not only computer-mediated communication but also multimodal communication, which has had a remarkable impact on the way people communicate.

- **Multi Modal Communication** is simply a term for describing all the different ways we employ in **communicating** with each other, every day. This may be via spoken language, texting, tweeting, emailing, handwriting, body language, & gesturing, or by using a **communication** device.

- Thus, other semiotic resources such as images, colors, gestures, actions, music, and sound, etc. are also combined with language to communicate meaning.

Interactive components

Art and images

Charts or graphs

Audio

Multimodal Message

Video

Music

Photos

Impact of Visuals

Rule of thumb

Oral — **10%**

Visual — **35%**

Oral & Visual — **65%**

3x — 6x

Pictures are more memorable than text (Medina, 2008)

Visual Literacy (Frey & Fisher, 2008)

- Our students "read" and "write" visually

- Nerve cells in the brain's cortex devote:
  - 30% for visual processing
  - 8% for touch
  - 3% for hearing

- Color visuals increase willingness to read by 80%
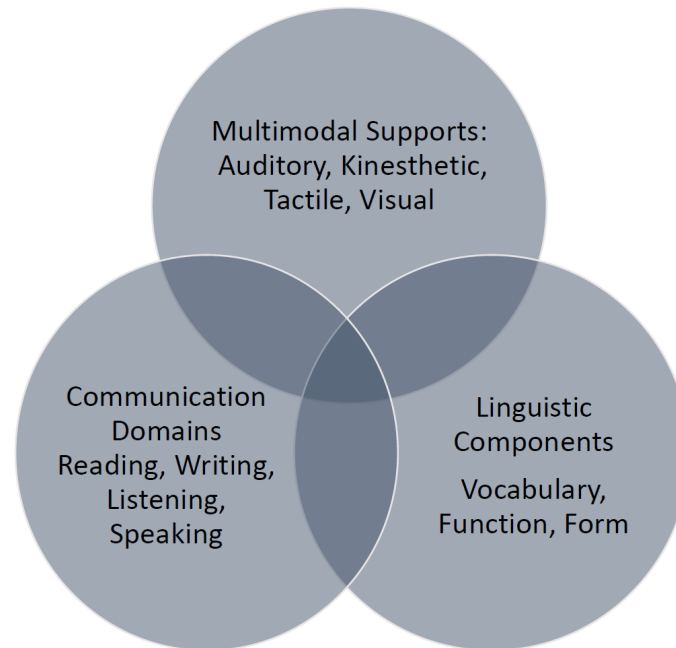
- Color enhances learning and improves retention by 75%

DR. JOHN MEDINA'S *BRAIN RULES* BOOK

- A research on the impact of visuals from *Medina* shows: That pictures are more memorable than text. When a text is presented orally, we remember 10% of what we hear, 35% of what we see, and 65% of what we hear and see.

- It also has been proven that learners can cognitively process and retain information better (up to 90%) if what is learned could be not only seen and heard but also created and produced by the learners themselves.

- One of the effective multimodal media that combines both verbal and nonverbal elements to create meaning is COMICS.

Creative Language Experiences and Multimodality

Multimodal Supports:
Auditory, Kinesthetic,
Tactile, Visual

Communication
Domains
Reading, Writing,
Listening,
Speaking

Linguistic
Components

Vocabulary,
Function, Form

PART 3

PEDAGOGICAL BENEFITS OF USING COMICS IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM.

Finally, comics can help students develop improved skills in each of the four language domains: reading—both silently and out loud, using small, comprehensible chunks; listening—to themselves, their classmates, and their teacher as they read and discuss a comic; speaking—reading the comic aloud, acting the story out, discussing and explaining what is logical or humorous, and why; and writing—creating their own comics, completing cloze activities, and finishing existing comics.

1. Creates an inclusive environment

2. Lerner-centered

3. Promotes the target language through student-centered work, varied group work and discussions

4. Allows for creativity with language and art

5 Fun and motivational

6. helps students understand and appreciate humor and irony in the target language

7. Particularly useful for teaching colloquial language and register.

8. Promotes the use of higher-level thinking skills—analyzing (for example, comparing two panels), evaluating (examining what makes something humorous), and creating (generating a comic)

9. Sequencing promotes understanding

10. Serves as and assessment and evaluation tool

PART4

PRACTICES, STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR USING COMICS IN THE TEACHING OF CULTURAL AND/OR POLITICAL TOPICS IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE

TOOLS FOR DESIGNING COMICS

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Pixt...

Pixton: is an easy-to-use and intuitive tool that promotes collaborative work, creativity, and critical thinking. It is a platform designed to create comic strips online.

These characteristics help students develop their imagination, interaction, and entertainment.

In addition, this software allows personalization without the need to build from scratch and is an excellent option to monitor students' comprehension of grammar and vocabulary in the target language.
It also includes options for providing feedback, sharing content online, and downloading comic strips

- **Creating comics**: Have students generate their own comics. E.g.: a childhood memory, or something that the student did over the weekend...

- **Dialogue bubbles**: Remove one character's dialogue from a panel and ask students to fill in this bubble. (This exercise promotes creativity and playfulness in the target language, pragmatic intelligence, and using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.

- **Drama**: Have students act out the comic, providing a springboard for drama.

- **Extending comics**: Give students a sequential comic strip with a panel missing from the middle and then ask them to write the missing panel; students could also be directed to extend the comics by adding a panel at the end. This activity, which could be completed in small groups to promote target-language use and communication, prepares for sequencing and prediction skills and negotiating this with partners.

- **Jigsaws**: Cut a strip apart then ask the students to put the strip back into the original order. Using the target language in small groups, students justify their ordering and compare their ordering with classmates; this promotes higher level thinking skills of analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. Jigsaws also promote reading and vocabulary skills, and the logic of sequencing and prediction. Doing this activity in small groups promotes the use of target language and encourages the students to negotiate what they believe is the correct sequence for the comic and why.

- **Retelling comics**: Multi-day activity. Have students read a comic one day and then retell it a few days later; this could be accompanied by a student or group redrawing of the comic. A variation might include having students construct an alternative ending visually to a story they have read.

- **Vocabulary and grammar cloze**: Prepare for this activity by taking a comic and removing words from one or more panels; these words should be connected to a specific grammar and/or vocabulary. A modification for advanced levels would include removing a group of words or an entire sentence; for less advanced students, you could provide a choice of potential words in a word bank.
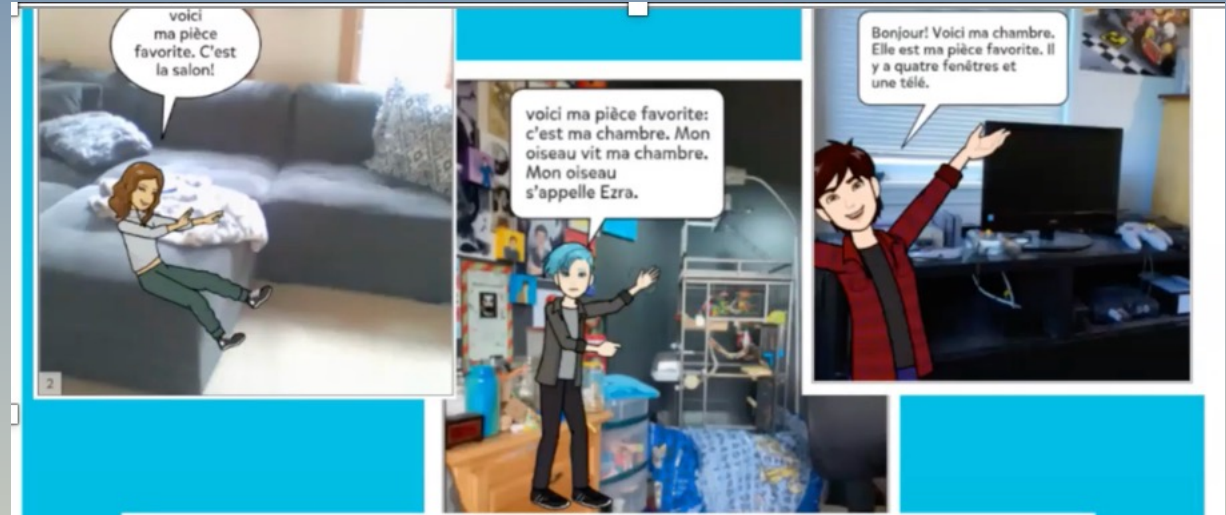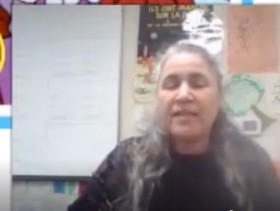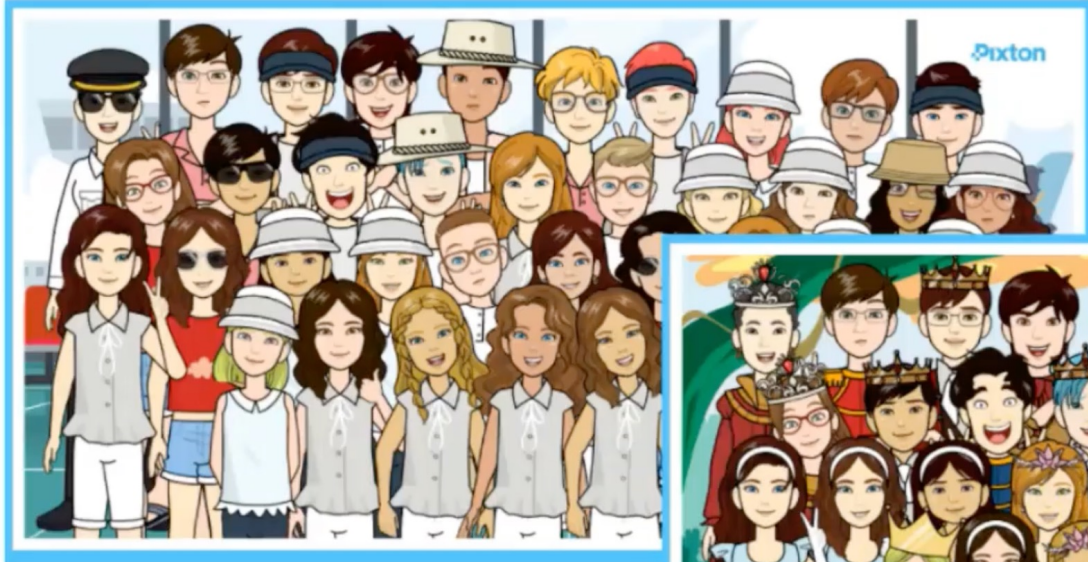
INTRODUCTIONS, FAVORITE ROOMS, OBJECTS IN THE HOUSE...

PAST TENSE

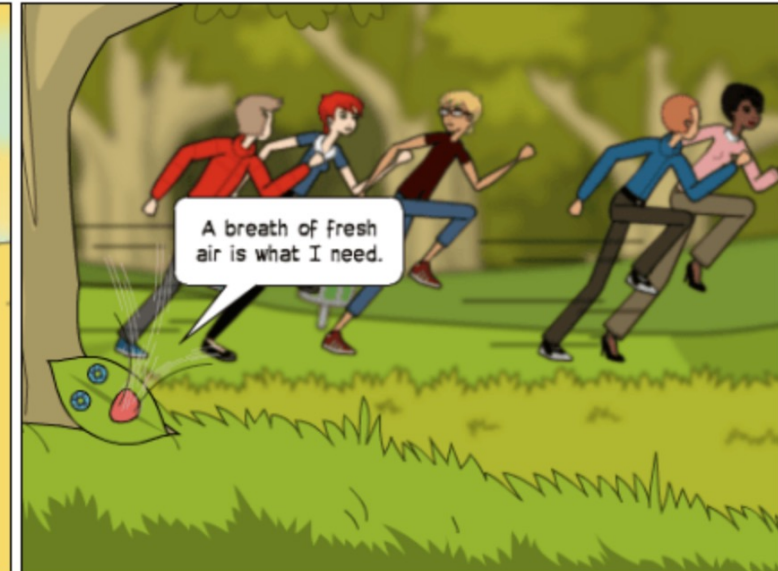# Class photo / prepositions of location

SCIENCE

- Have students summarize a scientific discovery or the evolution of a scientific concept in comic form. Or, have students construct a comic that illustrates a scientific process like photosynthesis.

"Pixton Comics" [screenshot] retrieved from https://www.pixton.com/

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS:

- Have students summarize a scene, book, or character by constructing a comic strip. They could also construct a timeline about these developments.

- **Art:** Comics strips can encourage creative expression and Pixton is a way to motivate students who are self-conscious about their drawing skills to still be creative and expressive
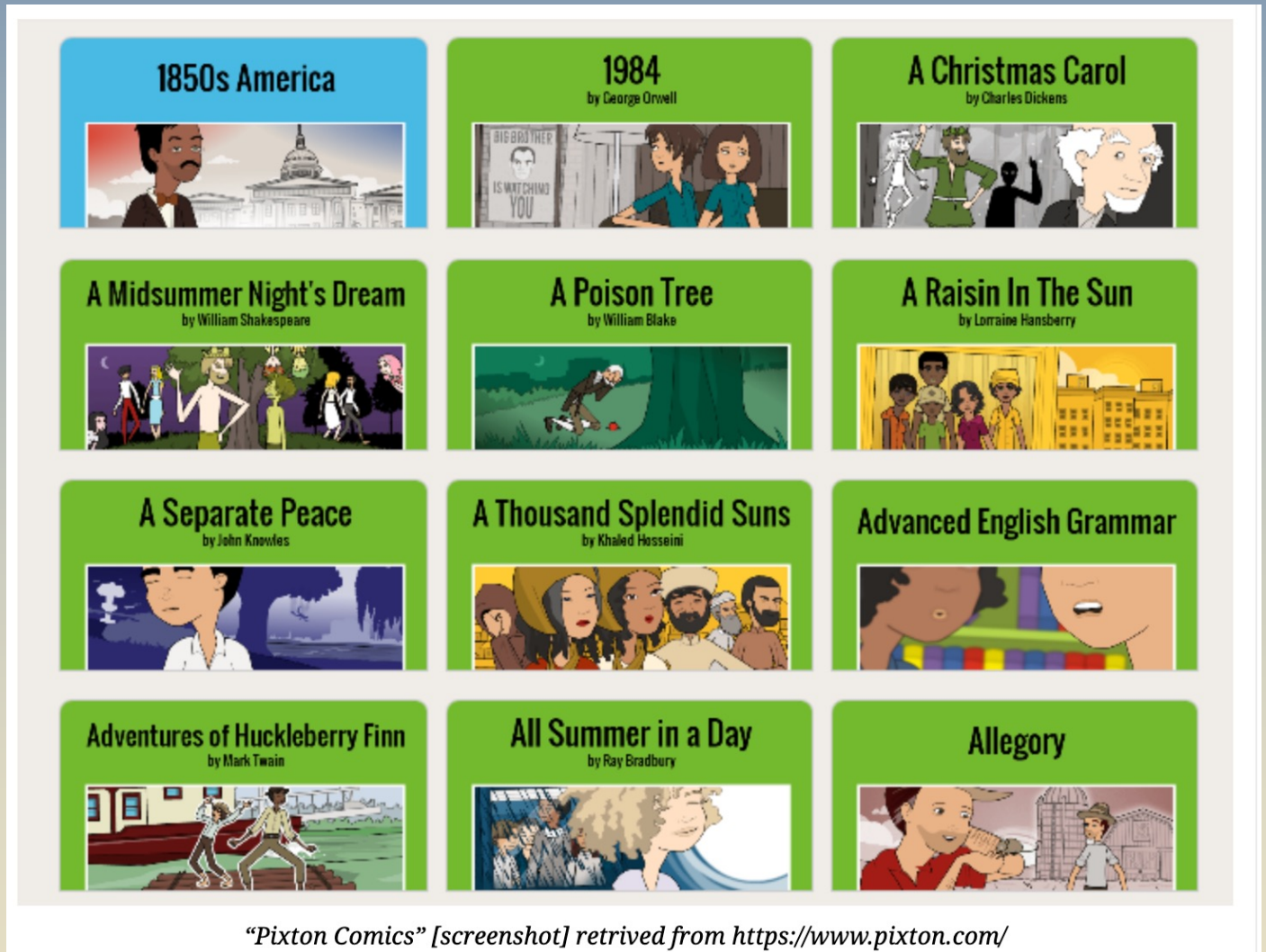
"Pixton Comics" [screenshot] retrived from https://www.pixton.com/

HISTORY

- Students can break historical events down into digestible and relatable stories through the creation of a timeline. Have them tell the story of the Boston Tea Party or Genghis Khan in a fun and creative new way. Or have them create their own political cartoons to discuss current events.

"Pixton Comics" [screenshot] retrieved from https://www.pixton.com/

PART 5

LESSON PLAN AND STEPS

A 5-WEEK INTENSIVE PROGRAM *SUMMER 2021

- Course: Germany today
- Topics: German mentality, meaning of culture and identity, German ticks, Foreign and self-perception, Values and norms, Facts about Germany, German culture, Inventions and discoveries, Nazi dictatorship and German history, Racism, anti-Semitism, Victim, perpetrator and guilt, Collective guilt, German identity, Germany today, migration and integration, Immigration and naturalization, Multicultural Germany, Consequences of migration and integration: PEGIDA and Islamophobia, Guilt and responsibility, Freedom of expression and its limits, social media and hatred on the internet, Patriotism and national pride, Identity, Fatherland and Homeland/Heimat, the new right-wing extremism, the NSU trials

STEP 1

small groups> discuss various types of questions

Comic erstellen (Schritt 1)

Ziel:

Sie wissen (know) welche Arten von Fragen es gibt und können einfache Beispiele auflisten

Aufgabe 1:

- Benutzen Sie Diagrams.net, um in Kleingruppen verschiedene Arten (types) von Fragen zu sammeln (Mindmap). Zum Beispiel gibt es klärende Fragen (clarifying questions!) und es gibt...
- Welche Beispiele könnten Sie für jede Art von Frage finden? Schreiben Sie es daneben! You can work on this simultanously.
- Here is a tutorial on how to use this user-friendly app ⬀

Aufgabe 2:

- Lesen Sie was Ihre Klassenkameraden geschrieben haben (types of questions) und schreiben Sie Beispielfragen (example questions) dafür: come up with questions (on any topic related to cliches, prejudices, stereotypes, etc.) for the question types of your peers!

Hier zu Diagrams.net! ⬀

STEP 2

Then> create thought proving questions for this week's topic of discussion> stereotypes, cliches

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Comic erstellen (Schritt 2)
Shiva Rahmani Khanghahi

Jun 23, 2021 at 3:47pm
2

Ziel:

Sie können Fragen zum Thema Kultur und Identität, Kulturblume,Kulturrucksack, kulturelle Unterschiede usw. stellen)

The key to powerful thinking is powerful questioning

Aufgabe 1:

- **Was macht eine gute Frage aus? Was beinhaltet eine gute Frage im generellen?**

Aufgabe 2:

- Schauen Sie sich diese Arten von Fragen hier an, um zu sehen, welche Arten es gibt. (Sie haben das schon auf Diagrams.net gemacht und einige Ideen gesammelt)
- Clarificatory questions: **This can be related to language (i.e. you do not understand a sentence, or how a word is used), or content (you do not understand what is happening in a given sentence or passage).**
- Factual questions **(clarify factual elements in the text, define words that are unclear, your responses are grounded in facts. Perhaps you could embed a link to an article or attach images, etc.)**
- Interpretive questions **(What is meant by what is said? This type of question draws the reader into a deeper understanding of the work- Answers must be supported from the text. After discussion, some questions may remain unresolved. This type of question sparks discussions.**
- Evaluative questions **(This is the only type of question in which your personal opinion can be stated. In short, what do you think about some idea or theme that is presented in the work?)**

Aufgabe 3:

- Stellen SIe jetzt gute, passende und diskussionsanregende Fragen zum Thema Kultur, kulturelle Identität, Kulturblume,Kulturrucksack, kulturelle Unterschiede usw.
- Stellen Sie **mindestens 3 Fragen** (choose from the types mentioned above or from your list) zu verschiedenen Themen (Kultur, kulturelle Identität, Kulturblume,Kulturrucksack, kulturelle Unterschiede

Aufgabe 4:

- Lesen Sie was Ihre Klassenkameraden geschrieben haben (types of questions) und geben SIe eine Rückmeldung! Sind das gute Fragen? Ja/Nein?
- Antworten Sie auch kurz zu den Fragen Ihrer Klassenkameraden!

STEP

Comic checkpoint 1 und 2

A discussion about the purpose and value of comic strips:
Why do people read comic strips?
What do you enjoy about comics?
How are feelings conveyed in comic strips?
How are books and comic the same? How are they different?
How can reading and writing comic strips help strengthen your vocabulary?

s does it address?)

omic?)

Für unsere Comics benutzen wir PIXTON. How to use Pixton to create comics: Pixton tutorial ⬀ (Länge: 12 Minuten)

 And use this link to join our classroom on Pixton: Click here to sign in with Google ⬀

Benutzen Sie all das, was Sie bisher in Schritt 1 und 2 (besonders Schritt 2) zu Themen **wie Kultur und Identität, Kulturblume, Kulturrucksack und kulturelle Unterschiede gelernt und geschrieben haben!)**

Kreieren Sie Ihre Figur oder Figuren und erstellen Sie Sprechblasen! Denken Sie dabei immer, was eine gute Frage ausmacht und wie ein guter Comic aussieht! Animationen, HIntergrund und Farben nicht vergessen!

Teil 3:

Erstellen Sie dann Ihre nächsten Comic strips zum Thema: Klischees, Typisch Deutsch/Amerikanisch, Besonderheiten, Tatsachen/Fakten, kulturelle Werte nachdem SIe eine Rückmeldung (Feedback) von mir erhalten haben!

Display various comic books and newspaper comics.
Discuss: what comics are, what topics normally are being discussed in comics, etc. what good comic look like, etc.

"Ozy and Millie" http://www.ozyandmillie.com/ ©2000 David C. Simpson

NEXT STEPS (DIFFERENT TOPICS WEEKLY)

Comic erstellen (Schritt 3)
Shiva Rahmani Khanghahi

Jun 25, 2021 at 7:40pm
2

Ziel:

Sie können Fragen zum Thema **Normen und Werte, Eigen- und Fremdwahrnehmung** usw. stellen)

==The key to powerful thinking is powerful questioning==

Aufgabe 1:

- **Was macht eine gute Frage aus? Was beinhaltet eine gute Frage im generellen?**

Aufgabe 2:

- Schauen Sie sich diese Arten von Fragen hier an, um zu sehen, welche Arten es gibt. (Sie haben das schon auf Diagrams.net gemacht und einige Ideen gesammelt)
- **Clarificatory questions: This can be related to language (i.e. you do not understand a sentence, or how a word is used), or content (you do not understand what is happening in a given sentence or passage).**
- **Factual questions (clarify factual elements in the text, define words that are unclear, your responses are grounded in facts. Perhaps you could embed a link to an article or attach images, etc.)**
- **Interpretive questions (What is meant by what is said? This type of question draws the reader into a deeper understanding of the work- Answers must be supported from the text. After discussion, some questions may remain unresolved. This type of question sparks discussions.**
- **Evaluative questions (This is the only type of question in which your personal opinion can be stated. In short, what do you think about some idea or theme that is presented in the work?)**

Aufgabe 3:

- Stellen SIe jetzt gute, passende und diskussionsanregende Fragen zum Thema **Normen und Werte, Eigen- und Fremdwahrnehmung usw.**
- Stellen Sie **mindestens 3 Fragen** (choose from the types mentioned above or from your list) zu verschiedenen Themen (Kultur, kulturelle Identität, Kulturblume,Kulturrucksack, kulturelle Unterschiede

Aufgabe 4:

- Lesen Sie was Ihre Klassenkameraden geschrieben haben (types of questions) und geben SIe eine Rückmeldung! Sind das gute Fragen? Ja/Nein?
- Antworten Sie auch kurz zu den Fragen Ihrer Klassenkameraden!

PIXTON

The comic will incorporate learned vocabulary, syntax and cultural components.
They would start by choosing their figure, layout, colors, and then
in class, students would work weekly on specific contents that will help them create one complete comic by the end of the quarter

Comic Stichtag 3

✓ Published ✎ Edit ⋮

Diese Aufgabe besteht aus 2 Teilen:

Teil 1: (Erstellen Sie die nächsten Comicstrips!)

- Für unsere Comics benutzen wir PIXTON. How to use Pixton to create comics: Pixton tutorial ⧉ (Länge: 12 Minuten)
- And use this link to join our classroom on Pixton: Click here to sign in with Google ⧉
- **Kreieren Sie Ihre Figur oder Figuren und erstellen Sie Sprechblasen! Denken Sie dabei immer, was eine gute Frage ausmacht und wie ein guter Comic aussieht!** Animationen, Hintergrund, Farben, Figuren, Ton, Ironie, Sprache und das Publikum nicht vergessen!

Teil 2:

- Erstellen Sie dann Ihre nächsten Comic strips zum Thema: **Klischees, Typisch Deutsch/Amerikanisch, Besonderheiten, Tatsachen/Fakten, kulturelle Werte** nachdem SIe eine Rückmeldung (Feedback) von mir erhalten haben!

STUDENT WORK

LeãoComics2.pdf

WINTER QUARTER 2022 *JAN 31
TASK-BASED ACTIVITY 1: MINI-COMIC

Task-based activity *Canvas
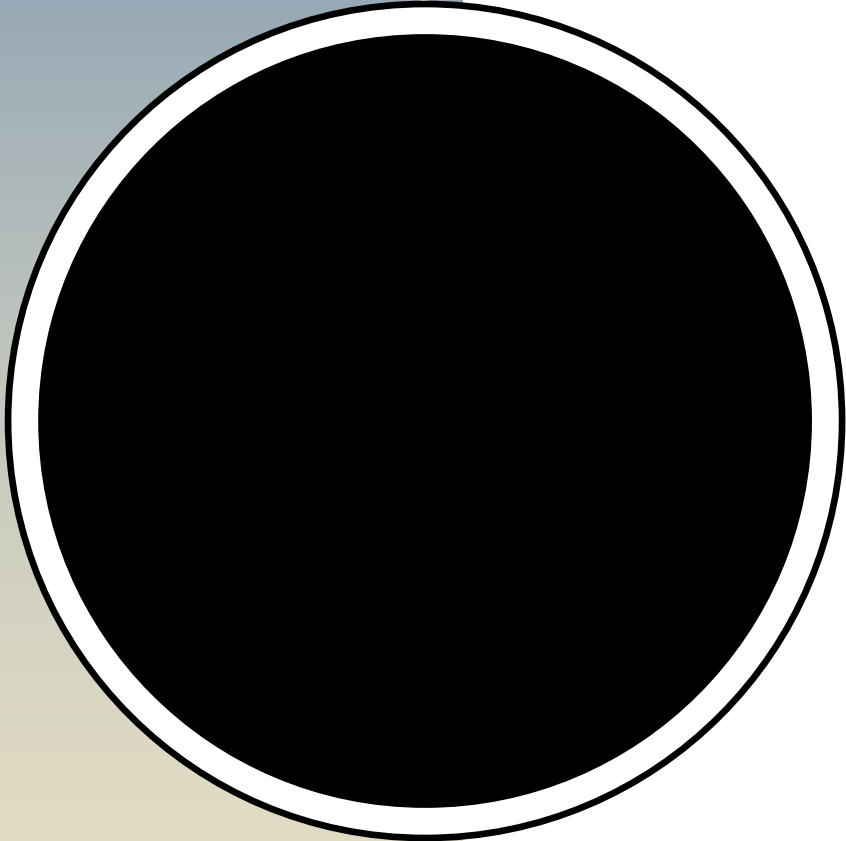
PART 6

ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

ASSESSMENT

- Mid-quarter> Comic Project Checkpoint: 1 Peer editing exercise

- Last week> presentations in class, analyzing, reading and discussing comics.

- Finals week> Comic Project Checkpoint 3: Schriftliche Rückmeldung geben

- On Pixton> Interactive rubric *rate your comic

SUMMARY

Comics give students the opportunity to read material that combines images with text to express satire, symbolism, point of view, and drama not possible with text alone.

Comics promote negotiation and communication in the classroom, they offer practice in all four language domains, promote creativity and higher- level critical thinking skills
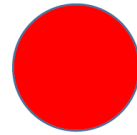
Students of all ages and abilities find comics fun, interesting, and motivating, and for instructors they offer opportunities to bring target-language culture and authentic language into the classroom and a better way to introduce difficult topics in a pleasing way.

- Comics give students the opportunity to read material that combines images with text to express <u>satire, symbolism, point of view, and drama not possible with text alone.</u>

- As Stephen Cary, a second language learner specialist and author of Going Graphic: Comics at Work in the Multilingual Classroom, says: "Comics provide authentic language learning opportunities for all students…. The dramatically reduced text of many comics make them manageable and language profitable for even beginning-level readers."
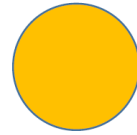
REFLECTION *TAKEAWAYS (DIFFICULTIES)

- I consider comic strips to be an innovative teaching aid, that enhances motivation and allows instructors and students to create original scenes that are easy to be produced, displayed, and understood.

- Teachers can use this tool to enhance students' imagination and autonomy because the learner becomes an active agent of the learning process (Valle, 2014).

- Students can easily and quickly revise comic strips based on feedback.

- Students select diverse characters and media to create unique comics with ease. Students can customize backgrounds with their own images and change the color of skin, hair, and eyes of their characters.

- Students can easily share their comics with others via social media. Additionally, the digital aspect of this tool makes it easier for less artistically inclined students to be encouraged and inspired

- **Requirements**: scaffolding + clear instructions, as an essential part of the teachers' methodology when using activities with Pixton, are indispensable for successful vocabulary and grammar learning when teaching students
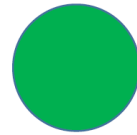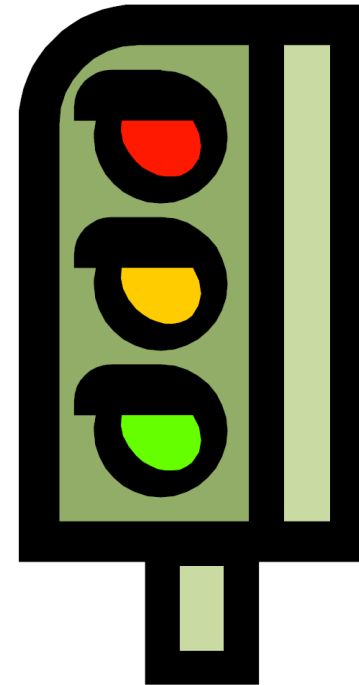
THANK YOU

shivar@uchicago.edu