



Teacher Guide to Strategies for Using the Resources on German Resource Hub

This document is intended to provide suggestions of research-based pedagogical strategies, approaches, techniques, methods, and activities for language educators, aligned with the principles of Comprehension-Based Communicative Language Teaching.

These strategies are intended to provide general ways teachers can use the resources on www.GermanResourceHub.com, though the strategies themselves can be used for teaching with *any* resources in *any* language.

Overview of this guide:

Section 1 contains strategies to use with all resources.

Section 2 contains strategies for text resources.

Section 3 contains strategies for audio and/or video resources.

Section 4 contains strategies for image resources.

I have made an effort to give attribution and provide references for all resources on German Resource Hub and pedagogical suggestions in this guide. If you have questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions about any content on the website or in this guide, please contact Josh at GermanResourceHub@gmail.com

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Section 1: Strategies for All Resources

a. Making Spoken Input Comprehensible

VanPatten recommends the following for helping make input more comprehensible to a beginner or intermediate learner:

- Short Sentences
- Repetition
- Rephrasing
- Clear, concrete content
- Slow(er) rate of speech
- Pausing at appropriate places
- Learner involvement/engagement

Donato includes the following points in his [“Interaction and Target Language Comprehensibility Tool”](#)

- Paraphrasing
- Defining with examples rather than translating
- Slowing rate of speech
- Using language learners know and building over time
- Using new words and expressions multiple times and bring them back into the input later
- Signaling new words and structures with tone of voice
- Using connected discourse rather than presenting isolated words for drilling/repetition
- Use gestures
- Use visuals and concrete objects
- Focus learner attention on the topic in advance of discussions or presentations
- Create purposeful lessons relevant to learners' lives
- Use active comprehension checks
- Making incomplete statements and cueing for learners to complete
- Use question sequences that begin with yes/no questions, then move to forced-choice questions, and then open-ended questions
- Ask for repetition/clarification (force the learner to negotiate meaning and confirm understanding)

b. Circling & Scaffolded/Progressive Questioning

The “**circling**” technique, which was coined by Susan Gross for use with Blaine Ray's TPRS, is very similar to Donato’s suggestion above to “**use question sequences that begin with yes/no questions, then move to forced-choice questions, and then open-ended questions.**”

The difference is that **circling usually involves doing this many times, changing one piece of content to provide further input and comprehension checks. The students are only expected to answer with the appropriate yes/no or one-word response, while the teacher reinforces the input by restating in a complete sentence after students respond*** See the table to the right and link below for more detail.

Many teachers use circling, or something similar, outside of TPRS and in a less methodological way. Done naturally, **this scaffolded progression of questions can gain meaningful repetitions in the input and simultaneously facilitating and checking comprehension.**

CIRCLING TEMPLATE

Adapted from Laurie Clarq

SUBJECT	VERB	OBJECT ETC	EXPLANATION
John	eats	a pizza.	Make a statement.
Does John	eat	a pizza?	Ask a question to which the answer is YES!
Does Bob Does Michael Jordan Does the French teacher	eat	a pizza?	Ask questions to which the answer is NO by substituting other subjects, verbs, and objects (prepositions, etc.).
Does John	throw sell drop	a pizza?	Follow them up with “either/or” questions (ex: Does John drop a pizza or does John eat a pizza?)
Does John	eat	M&M's? basketballs? the coffee?	Ask open-ended questions to which students know the answers.
WHO eats a pizza?	WHAT does John DO?	WHAT does John eat?	Ask open-ended questions to add more details that are not yet known.
WHEN does John eat a pizza? WHY does John eat a pizza? WITH WHOM does John eat a pizza? HOW does John eat a pizza? HOW OFTEN does John eat a pizza?			

Remember to always re-state the original statement correctly after each question.
For example, T: “Does John eat M&M's?” S: “NO!” T: “John does not eat M&M's; *John eats pizza!*”

Resource Presented at AFLA 2012 by Martina Bex, Victoria Gellert, and Michele Whaley
www.martinabex.com • www.afla-ak.org

<https://comprehensibleclassroom.com/teacher-training/essential-strategies-for-tpsci-teachers/how-to-circle/>

*One strategy I use when doing the restating which is specific to German is occasionally restating twice – once with a subject-first syntax and then with an adverb or object-fronted syntax to make sure the students get plenty of evidence from the input that this syntactical flexibility is possible in German, and how it works. For example, following the template above from Martina Bex: “Ißt John M&Ms? Nein! John ißt keine M&Ms; John ißt Pizza! Pizza ißt John!”



c. Personalized Questions and Answers (PQA)

The strategy of asking students personalized questions to engage more with a topic isn't a trademarked technique or specific to one approach, but it is used widely among TPRS and comprehension-based language teachers. With TPRS, Susan Gross called it "Teacher Talk." [Ben Slavic](#) encourages students to create imaginative, fun, not necessarily true responses to questions, though these could also be times to genuinely get to know your students. See his "Big C.I. Book" for more detail on this and many more strategies, or his books specifically on PQA, "PQA in a Wink."

This strategy does not have to be used in a highly methodological way. **Simply asking students personalized questions based on the relevant content can be a great idea for engaging students in motivating interaction, reaching the Novice proficiency level targets of using language familiar to one's self, maintaining student attention and facilitating comprehension, and plenty more reasons dealing with both language proficiency and classroom environment/student relationships.** Reading research also shows that learners are far more likely to comprehend a text on a topic for which they have substantial background knowledge. Glisan & Donato include building familiarity with students, humor, and spontaneous interaction ("chit-chat") among their practices for building a classroom discourse community, which is the second of their "high-leverage teaching practices." This could be done simply by **asking students about their personal experiences or connections or feelings about the content being discussed, or conducting surveys/polls (The results of these could then be used in Tasks and compare to similar data from other cultures!)**

See more explanation with model video here: <http://teachingcomprehensibly.com/pqa/>

d. Comprehension Checks

Communication involves interaction and negotiation of meaning, and input must be comprehensible to be acquired, so it is important to frequently check in and make sure learners understand.

- **Non-verbal:**
 - **Indicate with Thumbs Up/Down or 0 to 5 fingers to show a scale of confusion to understanding**
 - **Students draw or act out meaning**
 - **Students point to or sequence pictures**
 - **Students gesture**
- **Verbal/Written:**
 - **Ask yes/no, either/or, and lastly open-ended comprehension questions**
 - **Ask for summary**

- Using the L1 for a comprehension check can ensure you're checking what the students understood; not what they can express, which may be too limited to fully show their understanding.

e. Circumlocution

Circumlocution is a way of “talking around” language that one doesn’t know, by describing, explaining, comparing and contrasting, rephrasing, or otherwise negotiating meaning verbally. This is what one does in games like Taboo, Catch Phrase, Heads Up, and other games in which the player tries to have his or her teammates guess word or phrase by giving verbal clues which do not include the word or phrase itself. Any of these games can be used to “practice” circumlocution. Instead of having students always asking, “How do you say _____?” (in German, “wie sagt man...?”) and asking for translations, you can help them practice using phrases like those in the table below:

Circumlocution Phrases	
Es ist... (kurz, riesig, groß, klein, lang, leicht, schwer)	It is (short, huge, big, long, light, heavy,)
Es ist wenn... / Es ist was passiert, wenn...	It's when ... / It's what happens when...
Es ist aus (Holz, Metall, Papier, Kunststoff) gemacht	It's made of (wood, metal, paper, plastic) .
Es ist ein(e) Ding/Maschine/Gerät/Objekt, das...	It's a thing/machine/device/object that ...
Es ist ein Ort, in dem...	It's a place where ...
Es ist ein/eine (Tier, Obst, Person, Aktivität), das...	It's a (animal, fruit, person, activity) that...
Es (sieht aus/klingt) wie...	It (looks/sounds) like...
Es (riecht/schmeckt) nach...	It (smells/tastes) like...
Es ist (rund, viereckig, dreieckig, rechteckig, länglich)	It is (round, square, triangular, rectangular, oblong, etc.)
Man kann damit... (schreiben, spielen, schneiden)	One can... (write, play, cut)...with it.
Man benutzt ihn/sie/es zu...	One uses it to...
Es ist das Gegenteil von...	It's the opposite of...
Es ist ähnlich wie...	It's similar to...
Es ist (größer, schneller) als...	It's (bigger, faster) than...
Es kommt aus...	It comes from...
Man braucht ihn/es/sie, um...zu ...	One needs it in order to...
Es ist ein Teil von...	It's a part of...

f. Rejoinders

Rejoinders are quick reply that are often sharp or witty, or an expressive interjection or reaction. Some language teachers encourage students to use of certain words and expressions in the target language in response to input. It's a bit of a step beyond the usual "useful phrases" list and is more **fun and engaging**, which **helps students become more motivated and engaged**. For the teacher, they can even act as a **comprehension check/formative assessment** of sorts because if students either respond appropriately, respond inappropriately, or do not respond when they clearly should have, these indicate levels of understanding. Blaine Ray used some of these (for example: "obviously!" and "ooooo!") in TPRS, and [Grant Boulanger](http://www.grantboulanger.com) has strongly advocated for their use – here's his explanation with a demo video:

Produced and Copyrighted by Grant Boulanger

English	German
It's obvious (Duh!)	Na klar!
How ridiculous!	Quatsch!
What a pity!	Schade!
I'm so sorry!	Es tut mir leid.
Me too!	Ich auch!
Poor thing!	Der/Die Arme
I don't understand!	Ich verstehe es nicht.
Seriously? (for real?)	Echt?!
Well, I don't know	Ich weiß nicht.
How cute!	Das ist aber süß!
How strange!	Wie komisch!
Gross!	Ekelig!
Look out! (Careful!)	Pass auf!
Whatever! (whatevs!)	Was auch immer!
How interesting!	Das ist ja interessant!
Imagine that!	Stell dir mal das vor!

<http://www.grantboulanger.com/rejoinders-getting-started/>

g. Tasks & Activities

There are numerous publications on the use of tasks in the classroom, but as a result, what defines a "Task" has gone in a couple directions (much like the definition of the word "communicative" itself). Most scholars differentiate between "**Meaning-based Activities**", which involve the expression and interpretation of meaning but lack a communicative purpose other than using language for the sake of practicing certain prescribed vocabulary and grammar, and "**Tasks**", which are both meaning-based *and* purposeful. VanPatten calls activities under this definition "**partially communicative**" and tasks "**fully communicative.**"

An example of an activity under this definition would be having students take turns asking each other and answer a set of questions on if they like or dislike certain foods. "Tasks" include both the expression and interpretation of meaning as well as a true communicative purpose. An example of a Task under this definition would having students discuss their likes

and dislikes in this way for the purpose of comparing the class preferences with a data chart or poll result of the most popular foods in another country or culture.

Leeser & White acknowledge that **meaning and input-based activities can still be beneficial to acquisition, and thus be an important part of the language classroom, though tasks also promote communicative skill.** Many scholars and teachers agree that tasks should be a guiding force behind curriculum and lesson design. **All of the strategies in this guide can be used to facilitate the completion of a task.** For more on tasks in a short, teacher-friendly read, check out [“Interactive Tasks” by Leeser & White \(2017, Routledge\)](#)

The fixed context of the classroom and its participants must be respected when defining “communication” and “tasks”. Role-play scenarios would not be included under this definition of tasks because they are not genuine to the context of the classroom and have no purpose other than language practice. Leeser & White note that such activities force students to “become completely different participants than who they actually are” and that “the meaning they are asked to express is not their own but that of imaginary people in an imaginary circumstance...if students are frequently instructed to use the target language in imaginary settings, what kind of message does this convey about the L2?”

Tasks and Activities must also be level-appropriate, and can be either input-based or output-based. Input-based tasks, where learners have to interpret but not create meaning, would be more appropriate and beneficial for novice learners who have limited expressive ability, while intermediate and advanced learners could also benefit from output-based tasks. This **example** is from VanPatten in “While We’re on the Topic”: An **input-based task** could be having students look over a list of sentences like “I watched a movie” and “I cleaned my room”, and mark which activities they did recently. Then they could interview classmates about what they did, with the questions written out for them as support (“Did you watch a movie?). Lastly they could figure out how active vs. sedentary they are on average as a class and maybe compare this to similar data from other groups. In an **output-based version of this task**, students would start by writing some activities they did recently instead of choosing from a list of sentences (one or two could be still given as models). Then the classmate interview stage could be done without the support questions given to students (again, models could be given).

Simply put, most tasks require students to get information from each other and then use that information for some other purpose that helps them learn and/or create something. A popular example is an **information-gap task**. Teachers could modify a resource, making two versions, each with different content/text omitted or concealed. Students could then be paired given an information-gap task in which they communicate but do not directly show each other their version of the resource in order to discover the information they are missing. Then they could work together to fill in a data chart, make a collaborative decision, or compare and contrast with similar information from another country or culture. **Other tasks could include creating an informational pamphlet on a topic after reading about it, designing**



a collage of photos to accompany a text, or writing and illustrating a story for entertainment or educational purposes.

For examples of Tasks with the resources on German Resource Hub, browse the “Tasks” resource type on the website or see the “Lesson Plan Examples” page. There are countless teacher blogs with *activities* to use with authentic resources but not as many with tasks as defined here. Below are two activity pages from popular blogs which fit well here and offer many ideas in one place.

- <https://comprehensibleclassroom.com/2015/11/29/the-storys-done-but-class-isnt-over/>
- <http://www.creativelanguageclass.com/activities/>

Tasks can also be used for **Project-Based or Content-Based Instruction**, which uses the target language as the vehicle for engagement with subject matter content like science, math, and history. Check out a full course of instructional modules on CBI here:

- <https://carla.umn.edu/cobaltt/CBI.html>

h. Focus-on-Form & Pop-Up Grammar

Focus-on-Form (FoF) is an idea developed by Michael Long. It is **different than focus-on-forms**, AKA traditional explicit grammar instruction, in that focus-on-form is reactive, not proactive – it involves bringing attention to form *“as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication...triggered by students’ comprehension or production problems,”* in contrast to the teacher predetermining a grammatical form to be taught at a certain time. Long describes this as “learner-centered in a radical psycholinguistic sense” and notes that it “respects the learner’s internal syllabus” (AKA acquisition orders and developmental sequences). As an example, if a student makes an error that impedes communication (or is otherwise sufficiently distracting), the teacher could use a **recast; a natural, corrected repetition of what the student said that doesn’t interrupt the communicative flow**. For more on FoF in a short, teacher-friendly read, check out “Focusing on Form in Language Instruction” by [Wong & Simard \(2016, Routledge\)](#)

It may be contextually appropriate or desired to briefly explain the linguistic feature in as simple terms as possible, which many in the language teaching community have come to know as **“Pop-Up” grammar**, coined by Carol Gaab, which is a sort of focus-on-form. See here for more explanation of Pop-Up Grammar: <http://teachingcomprehensibly.com/pop-up-grammar/>

i. Graphic Organizers

Graphic Organizers are effective tools widely used in education. They can help students to make sense of a text as well as their own thoughts, and aid comprehension by allowing students to transform text into visual representation. They could be used by students and/or teacher **in all stages (pre, during, post)** of interpreting a text, watching a video, listening to audio, or participating in a class discussion. **They can also be used with the next strategy, Write & Discuss.** Different types might be more appropriate for different activities, topics, level, and other contextual factors.

- ACTFL consultant Dr. Donna Clementi has contributed a video presentation on **using graphic organizers in the world language classroom** here: <https://youtu.be/g4tOAIRSjBo>
- ACTFL has set up a page with all of Clementi's graphic organizers **for downloading/printing** on their website here: <https://www.actfl.org/learn/graphic-organizers-language-learning>
- Here is another collection of **free graphic organizer templates** for downloading/printing: <https://archivecurrikicdn.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/resourcefiles/55c32b5c20f03.pdf>

j. Write & Discuss

Write and discuss is a technique used by many teachers familiar with comprehension-based language teaching. It involves **reviewing whatever input/content was explored in a lesson by collaboratively writing a summary or entering language into a graphic organizer, at a level appropriate to the students' proficiency level.** By collaboratively, it is meant that the teacher is interacting with students and eliciting the summary from them orally (through a comprehensible discussion), while the teacher writes what they suggest in a correct, proficiency-appropriate way. The students observe the writing process live, which is beneficial for the development of students' literacy skills. **They have the writing process modeled for them, they get to see how special features of the language work (this can be a great time for focus-on-form; see Section 1, Strategy 'h' above), they get more oral input and interaction, and they get more written input.** This is much more beneficial for novice learners than having them write a summary themselves, and can be beneficial at *all* levels of proficiency. [Mike Peto](#) and [Tina Hargaden](#) are strong advocates for the technique (I believe Tina coined the phrase, according to the video example from Martina Bex).

- See an example from Mike Peto in Spanish here: <https://mygenerationofpolyglots.com/write-discuss-example/>
- See an example from Tina Hargaden in French here: <https://youtu.be/XOpZ8am2DRg>
- See an example from Martina Bex in English here: <https://youtu.be/hdHafv7DTCc>

k. Pre-Reading/Viewing Strategies:

Literacy research shows that readers are **far more likely to comprehend a text when they have background knowledge on the topic/content of the text**, and in language education we can anticipate challenging language and establish meaning prior to the communicative event.

- **Provide background info and/or a “hook”** to pique students’ interest by showing a relevant picture, quick video, or piece of realia before the reading and discussing using the communication strategies in Section 2.
- Ask students to brainstorm for **predictions** about the topic or complete first two parts of a KWL chart (Know, Want to Know, Learned – in German, “Was ich schon wusste”, “Was ich wissen will”, “Was ich gelernt habe”). [Click here for one in German available for free on Teachers Pay Teachers.](#)
- **Use TPR** ([Total Physical Response, by James Asher](#)) to pre-teach challenging vocabulary. This is a familiar technique for many teachers which essentially involves using the target vocabulary in gesture-based commands to students. See this video for a model and explanation of the traditional methodology: <https://youtu.be/1Mk6RRf4kKs> This can be made fun through creative commands and games like Simon Says.
- **Use PQA** (see section 2) and ask students about their **prior knowledge of and personal connections to the topic** as a way of introducing certain vocabulary.

l. Using H5P for Asynchronous Online Learning

H5P is a **free, open-source technology that allows you to easily create, share, and reuse interactive content online**. Common uses for teachers include adding pop-up questions, translations, or other information to YouTube videos or images, or adding drag-and-drop or hotspot features on texts or images. These features can be used to **create questions and activities for students to interact with while viewing the content, as well as to make the content more comprehensible using pop-up translations/paraphrases/images or linking to more information on a topic**. H5P is easy to use and embed on an online management system like Canvas, ITS Learning, Google Classroom, Blackboard, etc. Check it out at <https://h5p.org/>

m. Approaching “Culture” and “Intercultural Competence”

Culture is often presented in the classroom as a series of surface-level facts about products and practices (AKA “Foods, Flags, Festivals”) which are seen as representative of a culture. Even when perspectives are addressed as well, the common view sees culture as “out there”; separate and “other” from the “normal” (and possibly “superior”) learner who observes it as an object. In this view, culture defines and constrains the identities and behaviors of the

people that “belong” to that culture, which is often paired with a certain country and language (e.g. “All people from X culture eats X food” or “Everyone in X country speaks X language”).

In contrast, Holliday talks about a “small culture” view, in which **culture is a “social force which is evident wherever it emerges as being significant.”** This view **“considers any instance of socially cohesive behavior as culture.”** This view is also labeled **“non-essentialist,”** acknowledging the **lack of any permanent, prescriptive “essence”** of culture. In this understanding, **“people can belong to and move through a complex multiplicity of cultures”** and may be influenced by or make use of cultural products, practices, and perspectives, while simultaneously rejecting and challenging others. **Approaching culture in this way can help teachers and students avoid stereotypes and prejudice that could otherwise manifest from the approach to culture described in the first paragraph.**

Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey assert that **“The role of the language teacher is therefore to develop skills, attitudes and awareness of values just as much as to develop a knowledge of a particular culture or country.”** The skills, attitudes, and awareness mentioned here are called intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Corbett summarizes this concept below:

“Intercultural communicative competence is conceived of as a set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. With reference to Byram’s work, we can summarise these as follows:

- (a) knowing the self and the other;**
- (b) knowing how to relate and interpret meaning;**
- (c) developing critical awareness;**
- (d) knowing how to discover cultural information; and**
- (e) knowing how to relativise oneself and value the attitudes and beliefs of others.”**

Much of the work to facilitate growth of ICC, then, is focused on **open-minded, non-judgmental interaction with another culture, combined with equally open-minded and non-judgmental self-reflection and comparison to one’s culture(s).** Dr. Amanda Lanier puts it simply as *“Culture teaching increases knowledge. ICC teaching develops attitudes and skills.”*

Practically speaking, **we can enact the above in the classroom by allowing students to have intercultural encounters; to interact with authentic resources and examine and interact with them in an open, non-judgmental way, and ask students to reflect on and examine their own selves and cultures, and compare and contrast the two.** Because of the complexity involved here, it is recommended to do this in the L1. The book [“Intercultural Language Activities” by John Corbett \(2010, Cambridge\)](#) is highly recommended for practice classroom lesson ideas.

ICC develops over time and starts simply with novice learners. Check out ACTFL’s Intercultural Communications benchmarks, indicators, and can-do statements and **very useful**

reflection tool below. Released in 2017, these standards for intercultural competence provide a clear, detailed framework for us to facilitate the development of intercultural competence in the language classroom:

- Statements: https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/can-dos/Intercultural%20Can-Do_Statements.pdf
- Reflection Tool: https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/can-dos/Intercultural%20Can-Dos_Reflections%20Scenarios.pdf

Check out Rachel Emery's fantastic website with information and free teacher guide for using readers to teach intercultural skills:

- <https://panchoylasmomias.weebly.com/>

Section 2: Strategies for Texts

a. Read Aloud + Guided Discussion in L2

Reading aloud to young children and second language learners alike has a long list of benefits. The learners get to hear the language while seeing it, and you can **model the reading process and make the text more comprehensible**. Reading and discussing together can **engage and immerse the learners with more input and interaction** than they would get reading alone (although this is also very useful if the text is very comprehensible: see [Stephen Krashen's publications from the last several years](#)) and **allows the teacher to check comprehension, expose the learners to repetitions of the input, and more**. There is an actual step in Ray's TPRS methodology called "Read and Discuss," which involves translating a story with students, but that's not what I'm talking about here – I mean just **going through the resource slowly with students and discussing it in the target language, continually using the comprehensive discussion strategies outlined in Section 2**. Shrum & Glisan call these "instructional conversations," and they form the basis of one of Glisan & Donato's six "high-leverage teaching practices." Rereading can also benefit comprehension and language acquisition, so this could be done after a silent reading time or before a post-reading activity or task. See here for more on the benefits of reading aloud and discussing from Martina Bex: <https://comprehensibleclassroom.com/2017/08/09/dip-your-toes-in-ci-shared-reading/>

b. Modifying the Text

Some scholars/teachers/organizations are against simplifying texts, while others are for it. Michael Long talks about “elaborated input,” with added content to make the text more comprehensible. Others advocate only changing the task, not the text. Here are some suggestions for modification:

- **Chunk into smaller sections or separate text into graphic organizer**
- **Add extra visual content to show meaning**
- **Add Translations/Glosses/Paraphrases/High-frequency synonyms for challenging words**
- **Text enhancement**
 - i. This was coined by Michael Sharwood Smith and refers to **any bolding, color coding, or other highlighting of certain features in the language to make them stand out to readers (note: this is really meant for *meaningful* forms in the language – communication remains key)**
- **Embedded Reading**
 - i. This was developed by Laurie Clarcq and Michele Whaley – Basically, **create two or three simplified versions of a text gradually increasing in difficulty in order to scaffold the learner towards comprehending a more difficult text.** See the following two links for more explanation from Clarcq:
 1. <https://embeddedreading.com/about/>
 2. <https://embeddedreading.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/embedded-reading-in-action-2013.pdf>
 - ii. The following link is an example in German, shared to Clarcq’s blog from ‘Herr Knox’: <https://embeddedreading.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/clothing-embedded-story.pptx>)
 - iii. Here is another German example from ‘Frau Leonard’: <https://germansektor.blogspot.com/2013/09/embedded-reading-der-brieftrager-kommt.html>

c. ACTFL IPA Interpretive Task Comprehension Guide

In Glisan, Adair-Hauck, Koda, Sandroock & Swender’s “ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment,” published by ACTFL, there is a **“comprehension guide” template for students to complete as part of the interpretive task on an integrated performance assessments (IPA).** Teacher may find this useful outside of IPAs, however, having students complete them as a during and/or post-reading activity. There is no longer a working link to a downloadable version online, but it is a simple document for teachers to create. Here are the parts:



1. Teacher provides approximate L1 translations for some key meaningful content words/phrases from the text. Students are asked to locate those words within the text (not just translate them).
2. Students are asked to provide the main idea of the text *in their L1*.
3. Students are given a list of paraphrased (not translated this time) details, some of which are mentioned in the text and support the main idea, and some of which are incorrect distractors *not* mentioned in the text. Students are to identify which ones do appear in the text *and* point out *where* it appears as in the text well (like the key words in step 1).

Intermediate learners may go on to additional steps where they guess the meanings of words they wouldn't likely know but would be likely to understand in context, with the help of a list in the L1 similar to the step 1 key word location, or make inferences and discuss author's perspective, cultural perspectives, and text organization. **I have found the first three steps useful as a tool to help guide students through individual reading, and as a type of assessment.**

d. Reader's Theater

Reader's Theater is a common strategy in L1 literature classes and works very well when adapted to foreign/second language learning. The variations are flexible, but the essence is that **either the teacher reads a text aloud as other students act out the events being read, or the students *and* act, or the students read *without* acting but *still* reading with lots of expression and enthusiasm, in a *theatrical* way as opposed to simply reading out loud.** This could possibly be done with the aid of costumes and props. Of course, this works most naturally with stories, but could work with certain current event news articles or historical informational texts as well. See here for more information and variations:

<http://teachingcomprehensibly.com/readers-theater/>

e. Picture-Supported Retell

This could have many forms:

- Students could **show their understanding of the text non-verbally by drawing or selecting/sequencing images** (more appropriate for novice learners with limited expressive abilities)
- Students could **talk about the text using images as prompts/reminders** (more appropriate for intermediate and advanced learners with more expressive abilities)

- Teachers could **orally review the content of the text with students using images** for support, and could then also **model the writing process** and **actively construct a summarized version of the text with students as the students watch the teacher write in the moment**. See “Write and Discuss,” Section 1, Strategy ‘j’. Watch [Tina Hargaden](#) do this with a chapter from the book “[Brandon Brown veut un chien](#)” here: <https://youtu.be/kQwFsdeWmlA> (This video is in French, and this guide is on a German resource website, but it is a good example even if you don’t understand the French. The summary in this video is also includes a PACE-style lesson after the story summary.)

f. Story Listening

If the text is a story, there is evidence from researcher/professor [Dr. Beniko Mason](#), who has published with [Dr. Stephen Krashen](#), that Mason’s “story listening” method can be both effective and efficient, as it **doesn’t include any follow-up activities or tasks and still reports comparable or improved long-term vocabulary retention**. The teacher **simply tells the story to students while actively illustrating the story and writing key words on the board**.

It’s deceptively simple and a very specific method, so here’s Mason modeling it herself : <https://youtu.be/-dzLx7y1Nm8>.

Also check out [Kathrin Shechtman](#) on YouTube for many examples in German, like this one: <https://youtu.be/AheadZNTVK8>

Section 3: Strategies for Audio/Video Resources

a. Subtitles, Slowed Audio, Muted Viewings, and Repeated Viewings

Research shows that interventions/supports such as video subtitles/captions, reduced speed audio, previewing visual content without audio, and having repeated viewings of a video **all facilitate comprehension and acquisition**. YouTube offers the ability to slow the speed of a video, and sometimes offers captions.

b. MovieTalk

MovieTalk is a method developed by Dr. Ashley Hastings which involves playing a video in short sections at a time while **narrating, describing, predicting**, and generally **discussing** with students in a comprehensible way. Hastings uses full length movies, though many teachers who make use of this technique tend to use short clips. Hastings has acknowledged that as more teachers use this method, it will be adapted and modified, and will have to remain



appropriate to context, so cartoons and internet videos may be more useful than films. The focus is on communicating about the content of the action and images on the screen, and not the audio, so dialogue-rich videos aren't as good as visually engaging and action-oriented ones. If the technique is adapted and modified, Hastings has made it clear that **“the essential feature of MovieTalk is comprehensible input through narration of interesting movies” – that is, teachers should not try to use the technique to get purposeful repetitions of a certain predetermined grammatical form.** Many teachers have used the name “MovieTalk” to describe things being done in class that are not aligned with this original purpose, such as “using a MovieTalk to teach the past tense or school vocabulary,” which is counter to Hastings’ intent and the principles of comprehension-based communicative language teaching.

See Dr. Hastings’ own comprehensive MovieTalk tutorial here:

- <http://ajhmusic.info/movietalk/menu.html>

See the following for more information and extension ideas surrounding MovieTalk commonly used by teachers:

- <http://teachingcomprehensibly.com/movietalk/>
- <https://spanishmama.com/movie-talk-in-spanish-class/>
- <https://comprehensibleclassroom.com/teacher-training/movietalk/>

c. Screenshots & Captions

Plenty of pre-viewing and post-viewing activities and tasks can be done using screenshots and/or text captions from a video. Predictions could be made based on a few select screenshots before viewing, several screenshots could be **sequenced** while being **described** orally post-viewing, students could **write** and/or **match** and/or **sequence captions** for screenshots. **See Section 1, Strategy ‘j’, Write and Discuss.** Also **see Section 2, Strategy ‘e’, Picture-supported retells** - this can be done with screenshots from the video or relevant images found for audio-only resources. Also see the previous strategy’s further detail links - many teachers follow-up a MovieTalk by using screenshots and captions in a variety of ways.

Section 4: Strategies for Images

a. Look & Discuss, Write & Discuss, & Intercultural Reflection + Comparison

This sequence of strategies essentially involves leading a guided discussion of an image using the comprehensible discussion strategies from Section 1, then extending into a literacy activity, then a focus on intercultural skills.

[Ben Slavic](#) calls his way of working with images “Look & Discuss” and notes in his “Big C.I. Book” that this is an especially powerful strategy when we choose high-quality, engaging photos. Slavic also notes that when combined with related writing and reading tasks, Look and Discuss is like what students are asked to do on the AP test.

This can also be done with data charts, maps, infographics, etc. Watch [Tina Hargaden](#) demonstrate this with a French 2 class here: <https://youtu.be/-Z3p3sMfhb4> - Later in this video she models a **Write and Discuss (see Section 1, strategy ‘j’)** which is a great technique to follow the Look & Discuss.

This can then be a great time to incorporate some intercultural reflection and comparison as mentioned in Section 1, Strategy ‘m’: Culture & Intercultural Competence. Here are some ideas for high-quality, engaging sets of photographs to consider using:

- This set shows families from 24 different countries with all the food they would eat in a week: <https://time.com/8515/what-the-world-eats-hungry-planet/>
 - Here is a similar one with just children: <https://www.boredpanda.com/kids-surrounded-weekly-diet-photos-daily-bread-gregg-segal/>
- This set shows children from all over the world with their most prized possessions: <https://slate.com/culture/2014/03/gabriele-galimberti-photographs-children-with-their-toys-in-his-book-toy-stories-photos-of-children-from-around-the-world-and-their-favorite-things-photos.html>
- This set shows average school lunches from all over the world: <https://mymodernmet.com/sweetgreen-school-lunches-around-the-world/>
- These sets show different classrooms all over the world:
 - <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/gabrielsanchez/this-is-what-going-to-school-looks-like-around-the-world>
 - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/11/13/how-classrooms-look-around-the-world-in-15-amazing-photographs/>
- This set shows bedrooms all over the world: <https://metro.co.uk/2017/02/20/photo-series-reveals-what-bedrooms-look-like-around-the-world-6460546/>

I have made an effort to give attribution and provide references for all resources on German Resource Hub and pedagogical suggestions in this guide. If you have questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions about any content on the website or in this guide, please contact Josh at GermanResourceHub@gmail.com

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