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Checking out books at institutions like “Bibliomedia”

Goal

Students should find reading materials in their first language that are of interest to them, thereby increasing their motivation for reading and their reading competence. In looking for appropriate reading materials, they can avail themselves of the collections by specialized institutions, such as “Bibliomedia” in Switzerland. These institutions where one can borrow books in different languages for longer periods of time, exist in many countries.

1st–9th grade

15–30 minutes



Procedure:

- An institution’s library holdings in the students’ first language are collectively reviewed and discussed. Appropriate materials are selected and an order is placed.
- Upon receipt of the books, the students may take them home to read. For 4–6 weeks, HLT classes reserve 15–30 minutes during which students discuss their reading experiences and make recommendations.
- Two students are selected to assume control of the process and to ensure that all borrowed books are returned in good and clean condition.

Remarks:

- Local librarians or the teacher who is responsible for the library in the school building may be able to assist students in searching for appropriate institutions with native language collections.
- Information about and links to various institutions in Germany, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland can be found in the introduction, chapter 4d, “Books and informationen in country-specific institutions”.

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A library visit

Goal

Students visit a library (if possible a multilingual library) and thus experience there the extent and variety of the library collections. They learn about the holdings, titles and the library’s structure, and inform themselves about the circulation conditions. They should also perceive the library as a place of learning, i. e., as a focal point for obtaining information about specific themes.

1st–9th grade

45–90 minutes



Procedure:

- Most libraries are happy to receive classes and to introduce them to the library systems. Many libraries, most of all the larger ones, hold titles in various languages to lend.
- The trip to the library should become a habit for all students. In the library they should find those reading choices that really are of interest to them. This could entail very different topics, such as cookbooks, magazines about football, love stories or comics. There are often computers available in the libraries, which can be used to search for texts in the native language.

Remarks:

- For additional information about intercultural libraries and school libraries with expanded multilingual collections, see chapter 4d in the introduction. The multilingual expansion of a school's internal library is an optimal project of cooperation between HLT instructors and regular classroom teachers; see also chapter 4c.
- It would be best if the library visit could indeed take place in a multilingual or intercultural library, where students can also find books in their own language. Even if that is not possible, the library visit should not be waived, particularly since it may open doors to an entirely new world and wealth of information for students from educationally disadvantaged families. Moreover, the libraries always have reference works, etc., that are valuable for HLT as well.
- Before the library visit, it is useful to check with the regular classroom instructors about the extent of the students' introduction to and use of the libraries and what could perhaps be done to deepen their understanding.
- Prior to the library visit, it is important to register and establish contact with the employees. It may be possible that a library prepares or even especially orders a selection of books in the native language of the students. It is equally important to clarify the circulation conditions prior to the visit. In many communities the borrowing of library resources is free for students.
- If possible, each and every student should borrow a book. In subsequent classes they should be given the opportunity to briefly present it to the other students in the class.

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Book domino

Goal

Domino can also be played with books. This is an unusual way to acquaint students more closely with the book holdings (e.g. from the library) so they learn about and get to know new books (including from private collections).

1st–9th grade

20–30 minutes



Materials:

Many different books, picture books, magazines, etc.

Procedure:

- A stack of books is distributed in class, so that every student (or group of 2–3 students) has three to four books each in front of them. The age of the students must of course be considered when distributing the books, and beginners must naturally be supported. They all have five minutes to become acquainted with the books. They look closely at the cover, read the blurb, and browse through the text. Maybe there are illustrations, an index, chapter divisions, or there is a short portrait of the author, etc. The goal in this phase is that students acquire the knowledge of characteristics for the books which they can later use in the game.
- The teacher then describes a book by way of the recognized characteristics, i.e., s/he could state "it is a picture book, it is colorful, the theme is nature in our country of origin". Pursuant to that, a matching "stone" is placed next to it as in the traditional game of domino, i.e. a second book with one or more matching characteristics (see below). The person who wants to add a book next to it, explains why it belongs there. The