Questions for Service-Learning Journals or Discussions
Choose a few as a springboard for your reflection

*Issue-focused questions:*  
Why is there a need for your service?  
What do you perceive as the underlying issue, and why does it exist?  
What social, economic, political and educational systems are maintaining and perpetuating it?  
Do you see connections to public policy at the local, state, or national level?  
What can you do with the knowledge you gained from the experience to promote change?  
How is what you study preparing you to address this issue?  
How does this [profession/field] affect this issue?  
How do your lifestyle choices affect this issue? Is there anything you are doing or are not doing that perpetuates the situations?  
What is the responsibility of a person in this field to address this issue?  
How have your orientation to or opinion about this issue changed through the service-learning experience?  
What would it take to positively impact the situation (from the level of individuals, communities, education and government)?

*Client-focused questions:*  
What similarities do you perceive between you and the people you are serving?  
How are you perceived by the people you are serving?  
What do you think a typical day is like for the people you serve? What pressures do they confront?  
How does their situation have an impact on their life socially, educationally, politically, recreationally, etc.?  
What stereotypes are you confronting about the people you serve? Have you reconceptualized these stereotypes? What new information led you to do this?  
If you were in charge of the agency/organization in which you are serving, how would you improve the delivery of service to clients?

*Self-focused questions:*  
In what ways are you finding your involvement with your service program difficult? What have you found that help us you follow through despite the difficulties you encounter?  
What personal qualities (e.g. leadership, communication skills, compassion, etc.) have you developed through service-learning? In what ways do you anticipate these qualities will help you in the future? To help others in the future?  
How would you motivate others to become involved in service-experiences? What would you say to them?  
What happened during your service experience that made you feel you would (or would not) like to pursue this field as a career?  
What contributions can you bring to this field from your service experience?

*Course-focused questions:*  
How does the service experience relate to class material?  
Did the experience contradict or reinforce class material?  
How did course material help you overcome obstacles or dilemmas in the service experience?  
What aspects of your learning may have been due to your service experience?
teacher is observing the eager class participation, the on-target responses, and the reasonableness of the presentation on second language learning. By repeating this format and by utilizing similar story/video materials, the basically monolingual classroom teacher can feel confident in adding this entertaining and educational program to the class activities again. Thus the visiting language teacher (a) shows the classroom teachers at the primary level an effective and reasonable format for adding L2 to their lesson plans, (b) gives important resource information to the classroom teacher to enrich and to continue this developing class enrichment experience, and (c) excites the interest of the young learner in L2. The interest in learning another language and about other cultures is stimulated. The resulting enthusiasm of the young student is carried home: Who requests that he/she has a book in Spanish about Spot? Who requests that the parents buy a new, cuddly yellow-colored stuffed puppy-dog with a brown spot? And then, who buys the video of "Las aventuras de Spot"? The children exert the demand and the supply will respond to that demand.

A really worthwhile project of all chapters of AATSP across the country would be to establish a working committee to fulfill this objective: to create a demand for FLES* by stimulating strong interest on the part of the young learner himself/herself to learn a second language through bringing to the elementary classrooms effective enrichment programs on L2. As for the supply, teachers of second languages could volunteer for such an activity when the teaching schedule permits. An excellent source would be former classroom language teachers who, like myself, have the time and flexible scheduling to adjust to the regular hours of the elementary school.

Another supply source could possibly be present in the local geography and/or history education alliances. I have found that there are many enthusiastic members of these alliances who have had direct experience with the culture of the target language which we are encouraging. These educators are usually very interested and supportive colleagues of second language learning and they can be effective assets for us in our objective of stimulating real interest in second language/culture learning opportunities in the elementary grades. Therefore, another suggestion would be to connect with our educational colleagues in the areas of social studies and geography areas to enlist their support for adding a unique educational and cultural aspect to the curriculum of the primary grades. Across the disciplines, we could become the greatest mutual supporters in our American educational system.

Teachers of FLES* or a member of the local AATSP chapter's executive board could serve as coordinator of such an educational service, informing the local schools, through their principals, that this educational enrichment opportunity is present in the community. I feel sure that all true educators would value this opportunity and would appreciate the resulting enrichment experience for their school's study body. This might be an effective way to have others feel "the same drive, enthusiasm and concern about early introduction to L2 as we." Is not this FLES* concept of the law of "supply and demand" worthy of our consideration?

Teaching Spanish to Children with Different Learning Styles: Evolution of a Philosophy

Debbie Hurst,
The Collegiate Middle School, Richmond, Virginia

As far back as kindergarten, my teacher reported that "Debbie will not take 'no' for an answer." I suppose my father instilled my "never give up" attitude in me, and it has served me well at many times during my life.

When I returned to teaching after both of my children entered school, I was contracted to institute a fifth grade Spanish program in a private middle school. I was assigned a group of eighth graders with vari-
ous learning problems who would be beginning Spanish 1. This group of students were either visual learners, had auditory problems, attention deficit disorders, dyslexia, organizational difficulties, and had already experienced French in grades 3-6, without much success. I was told that they had difficulty with language, so to teach them Spanish was definitely going to be a challenge. I had the feeling that even though these children had other strengths, everyone had given up on them. Not me! I knew it was up to me! Put the old motto to work! Get them excited about Spanish! Get them engaged! Get them motivated!

Everyone knows that foreign language teachers are energetic and a "bit wild and crazy." I immediately enrolled in an Orton-Gillingham summer program that taught the Keystone approach to learning with phonemes. I soaked in all the multisensory techniques I could retain. I read all of the literature, listened to expert speakers on the subject of the learning challenged student, utilized all the multimedia available, and started making all of the visual aids I could possibly create. I went to Baltimore and spent the day with Sylvia Kenniwiz, who has devoted many years to the study and teaching of foreign languages to students with different learning styles. I was enriched by her knowledge, materials and attitude.

The instructional program began. It was September, and this teacher was ready. The one thread through all of my research was to make these fourteen students feel successful. People do things in life at which they are good. We not often elect to attempt something, knowing it is not a strength. So, it was my responsibility to make them learn, to make them successful. My goal was that by the end of the first month, Spanish would be their favorite class. My attitude would be their attitude, and they were going to love it!

I learned all that I could about these students. I knew their strengths and weaknesses, their family situations, their extra curricular activities, the sports they play, their hobbies, and I became, more than a teacher, a support system. I am always in the classroom five minutes early, playing "La Bamba" or Jon Secada. I want to be there when they arrive. I ask Felipe how his basketball tournament went over the weekend, or Pablo about his choral concert in Washington. I ask Miguelito to let me see what he drew on his sketch pad today in Art. They do not linger in the halls, they get to my class early. We have built up a trust. When the bell rings, we are all ready for Spanish.

The class is very structured, multi-sensory, and alive. We stick to the basics at first. Each class starts with a five-minute warmup, using phoneme cards. Everyone writes (either at the board or in a notebook) the syllable, then words with that sound, then two sentences using many words with this same sound. The students say these sounds, words, and sentences at the same time that they write them. For example:

ma, me, mi, mo, mu
mañana, madre, mes, miércoles, mono, muñeca
Mi madre hace una muñeca cada miércoles del mes.

We do a different letter every day. Since many students have difficulty hearing the sounds, this daily practice really reinforces correct pronunciation. Furthermore, knowing the routine relieves anxieties.

The use of visuals is very important, such as flash cards, books, pictures, sports equipment, foods, and clothing on clothes lines. The students make place mats with pictures of family members. They make Spanish banners, murals and puppets. They use real telephones for conversation, they play with Spanish computer games, they watch familiar folk tales in Spanish. They get in groups, and record simple conversations in Spanish. Then, they play them back and have another group correct the errors.

They play games in Spanish. Sometimes, the teacher throws the ball to the students while asking a question in Spanish. They get five seconds to throw the ball back with the correct answer. Yes, they must pronounce it correctly or they are out! The win-
The students like this activity and they stay engaged. The teacher can speak all in Spanish, and while they may not understand every word, they watch the hand motions, and they catch on. At least once a month, there is a fun activity—to paint one of the walls like the Mexican or Spanish flag, make tacos, or play charades. Students write five sentences about themselves, and then read them aloud, while the rest of the class tries to guess “Quién es?” Spanish teachers do many of these things, but children with learning difficulties need to change activities every ten minutes to keep them on task. This takes a great deal of preparation, time, and energy, but it gets easier each year!

For reinforcement, the students make note cards, usually for homework, of all the new vocabulary words. They write the Spanish word three times, once in print, then broken into syllables, and then close their eyes and try to write the words. If students can see the word in her/his mind, make a mental picture, they are more likely to remember the word and the spelling. This seems simple, but it is routine and structured, and it works!

Self esteem is especially important during these middle school years, so it is important for the teacher to build their confidence. I always ask the first day, “In what do you excel?” Most students say sports, art, music, drama, but rarely do they admit to being good in an academic area. I tell them that I cannot dunk a basketball, play the piano, or carry a tune, pero sé hablar español. They need to know that we all have our strengths ...; yours may not be foreign languages, but you will be able to communicate. I build on the attitude that I have confidence in them, and in turn, they try to live up to my expectations and work hard with me. The harder they work, the better their skills become. These students are very proud to achieve what others thought and said they could not do. For example, one student asked me not to put his Spanish stickers on his papers, as he preferred to keep them separately. At the next football game, he was the quarterback, and had those stickers plastered all over his helmet. Bravo!

This type of student has won my heart. It is easy to teach an “A” student; every one wants a “good” class. I wouldn’t trade my eighth graders for three “good” classes. These students need me because I won’t take “no” for an answer.