

Dear Dr. Frahm, Dr. Overholt, the TEPS Committee, and CTA Website (Mike Thomas),

Thank you for allowing me to participate in Edu-Inter's two-week Summer Intensive Program for teachers in Quebec City. This was an amazing opportunity for me to strengthen my French language skills while also exploring new resources and teaching methodologies..

There are three main aspects of my program participation that I particularly benefited from as a French teacher:

Language Immersion

By driving my own vehicle to Quebec City, I was able to stay with a host family in the suburbs. Aside from a few minutes on the phone with my family in New York each day, the entirety of my time was spent immersed in the French language. It was a wonderful opportunity to use my French at a significantly higher level than I typically do in the everyday classroom. I also learned a great deal about Québécois culture and expanded my vocabulary to better reflect the way the French language is evolving throughout the Francophone world. I am returning to the classroom this Fall feeling more confident in my ability to speak French correctly and fluently.

Instruction in the French Language

Each morning, I attended three hours of French language instruction. Prior to the program, I completed placement tests and was placed in the highest-level course offered at the school. While I did not necessarily learn entirely new concepts, this was a wonderful opportunity to review linguistic structures and grammatical rules that I do not regularly teach to my students but that I need to understand when preparing instructional materials for them.

I was also able to observe different approaches to teaching the French language by receiving instruction from native French speakers who were trained as teachers outside of the United States. Combined with the immersion experience described above, this time was extremely valuable in preparing me to be more accurate and effective in my classroom instruction.

Instruction in Pedagogy

In the afternoons, I spent three hours working with a professor from Université de Laval whose regular school-year work involves training future teachers of French as a second language. She spends two weeks each summer working with educators like me who are looking for new ideas and resources to improve their classroom instruction.

She shared several different ways of presenting content and opened my eyes to new approaches that I would like to try in my own classroom. Equally important, the afternoon sessions were structured more like a collaborative workshop than a traditional class. During my time there, I regularly interacted with 13 colleagues from different parts of the United States and Canada. We developed new materials together, shared materials we had already created, and introduced one another to online resources and ideas based on our individual backgrounds and experiences.

I am genuinely excited to begin the upcoming school year with new strategies and ideas for actively engaging my students in the learning process.

I know that my TEPS request was unique compared with many of the conference requests you receive from my colleagues, and I sincerely appreciate your willingness to allow me to identify and participate in such an ideal program for my classroom needs.

Let me conclude by once again expressing my gratitude for the district's investment in my professional growth. The 60 hours of classroom instruction, combined with the rich immersive language experience, provided a powerful opportunity to strengthen my abilities as a French classroom teacher.

Sincerely,

Melanie Williams