

# Welcome to FLES: an introductory presentation for parents

***F*oreign *L*anguage *E*lementary  
*S*chool Program In The Pelham  
School District**

**Presented by:**

**Frances Corelli and Lauren Gobbo, FLES  
Teachers**

# The Benefits of FLES

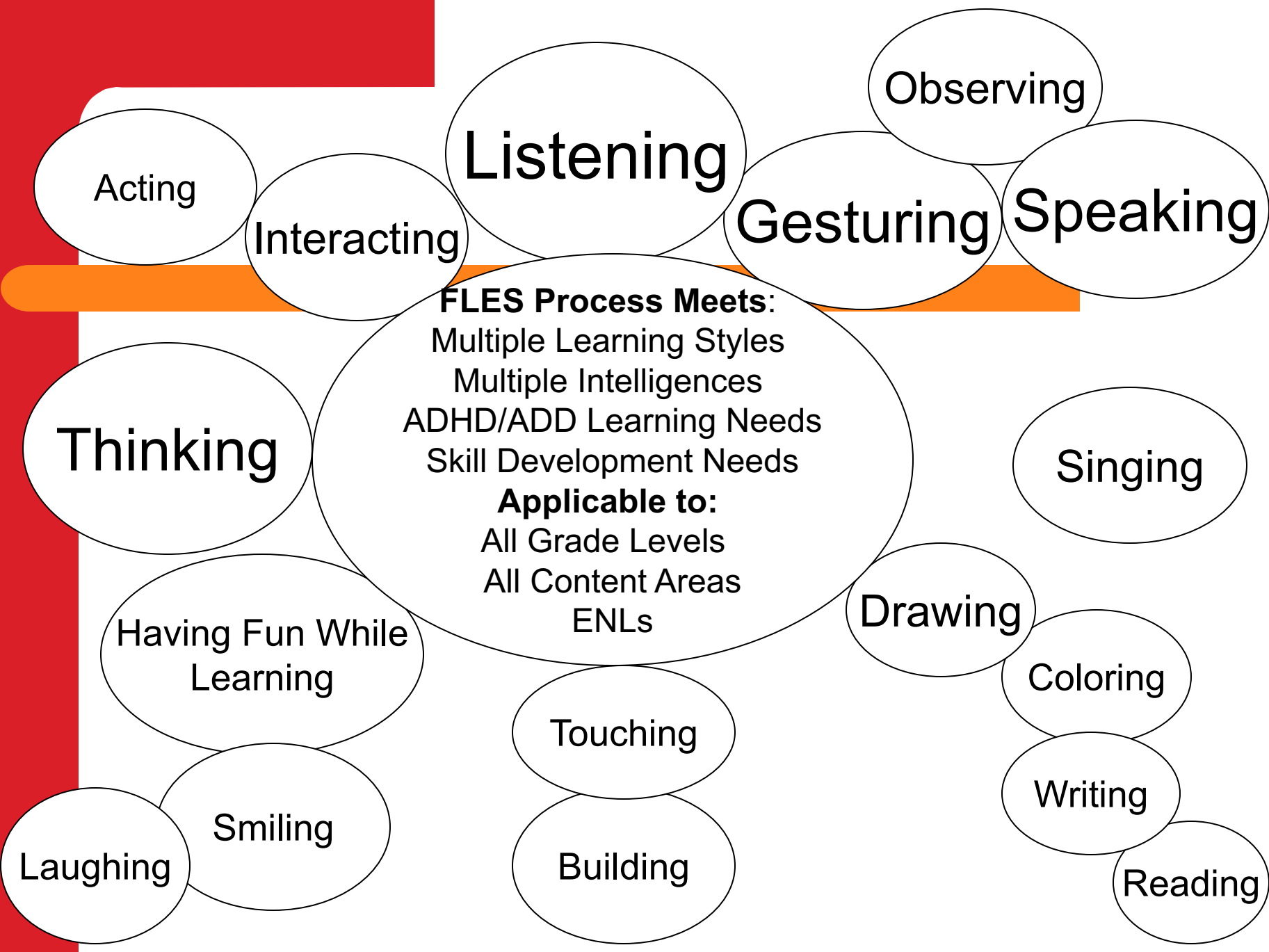


- Children benefit from exposure to foreign languages in the elementary years even if the exposure is limited. A child who begins a foreign language in the early years will more likely be able to develop near-native language skills than a child who begins at a later age.
- Young children acquire authentic pronunciation of a second language better than adults.
- Students who study foreign language in the elementary grades gain insight and appreciation for other peoples and cultures and a better understanding of their own language and culture. It helps children move toward intercultural competence.
- Children with specific learning disabilities and slow learners do benefit from second language study although it may take them longer.
- Foreign Language study has been shown to enhance listening skills and memory.
- Various studies show that language students have a significantly higher self-concept than do non-language students.

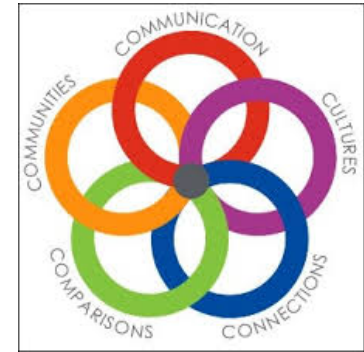


## Benefits of FLES, continued...

- Second language study appears to facilitate the acquisition of minimum skills in the children's native language, indicating that foreign language study aids rather than hinders the acquisition of English language skills.
- FLES reinforces concepts being taught in the elementary curriculum such as graphing, patterning, acute listening skills, narrative description, geography skills and global awareness, etc.
- FLES develops the skills and habits essential to the learning process such as creative imagery, and critical thinking.
- Students who study a foreign language over a period of years attain higher standardized test scores than their peers who do not have this experience.



# Research on FLES Programs



Concerns about achievement in the “basics” are voiced by educators and parents involved with FLES programs. They assume that taking time out of the school day for foreign language may detract from achievement in other subject areas. The issue of foreign language study and achievement has been investigated repeatedly with similar results: study of a foreign language in elementary school has no negative effects on achievement in other areas. Quite the contrary, considerable evidence is available that the achievement of students in such programs equals, if not surpasses, that of their peers (Donoghue, 1968).

# Quote from Terry Caccavale



“When we **‘add’** foreign language to the elementary curriculum, we do not **‘add’** another curriculum area, but rather borrow from the existing curriculum and teach them in more creative and cognitively engaging ways...kind of like adding food coloring to a full gallon pail of water...changing its **hue** and its **entire appearance** without adding one ounce to its volume.”

# Addressing LOTE Themes and the State Standards

- LOTE Themes:

One of our goals as a Foreign Language Department is to address LOTE (Languages Other Than English) themes and the State Standards. Connections are made when the general education content can be applied to a LOTE theme. As a result, FLES instruction reinforces and enriches the skills learned in other disciplines and/or subject areas.

- State Standards:

The Pelham Public School District FLES Program addresses the following New York State LOTE (Languages Other Than English) standards:

Standard 1: Students will be able to use a language other than English for communication

Standard 2: Students will develop cross-cultural skills and understanding

# Approaches/Methods



- The FLES program in the Pelham Central Schools District emphasizes language learning through oral, interpersonal communication.
- FL thematic units are designed to reinforce skills and content being taught in the elementary schools. The units link LOTE (Languages other than English) themes with topics in the other academic subject areas whenever these connections are suitable.
- The Natural Approach to language acquisition developed by Tracy Terrell and Stephen Krashen is a foundational methodology for early foreign language instruction.



# Approaches/Methods that we commonly use...

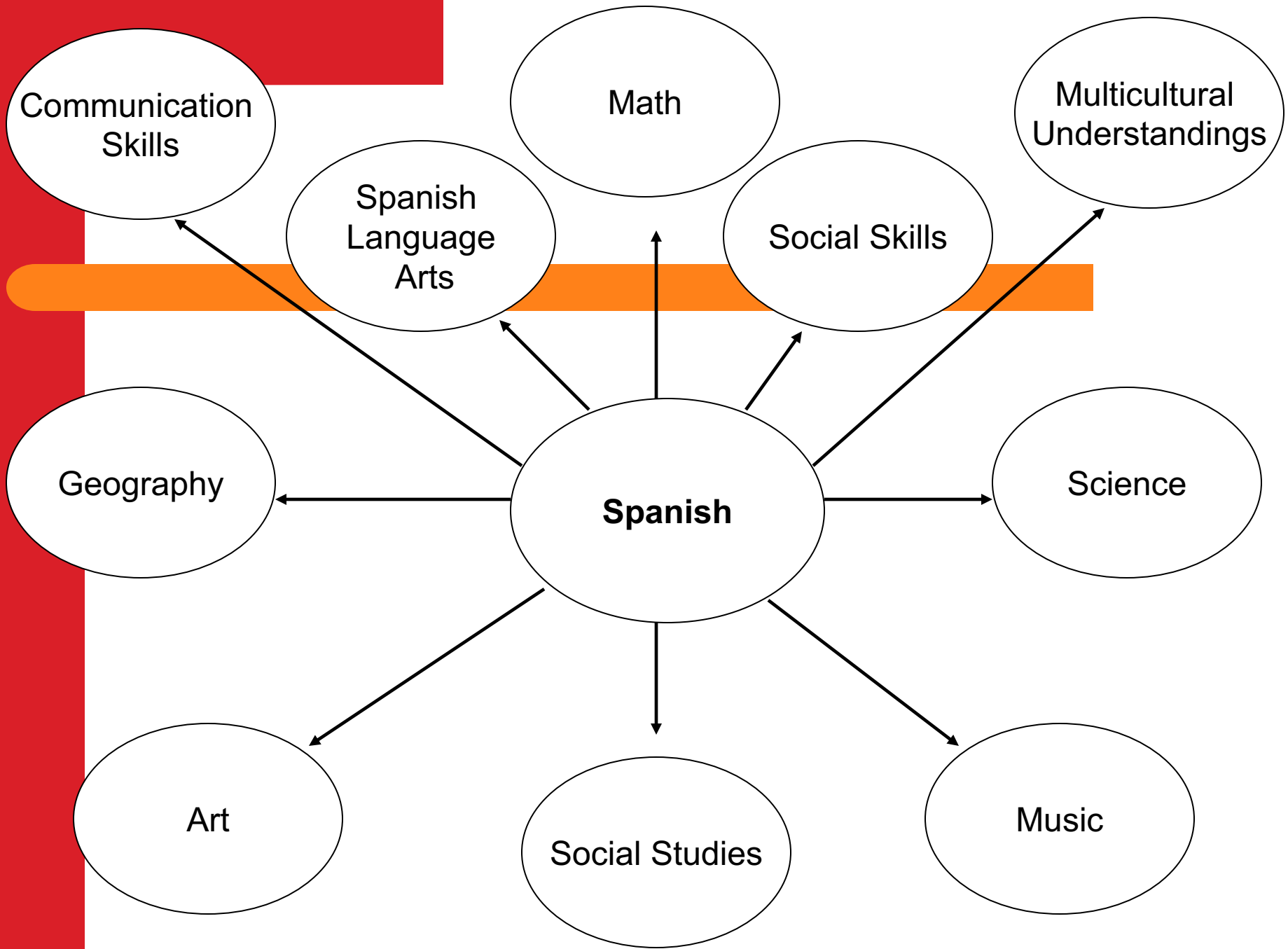
- **The Communicative Approach:**

An approach in which comprehension precedes production and production emerges in stages. The goal is meaningful communication.

- **Total Physical Response:**

Students learn vocabulary and structures through teacher/student directed series of commands used to convey information. This approach appeals to a kinesthetic learning style.

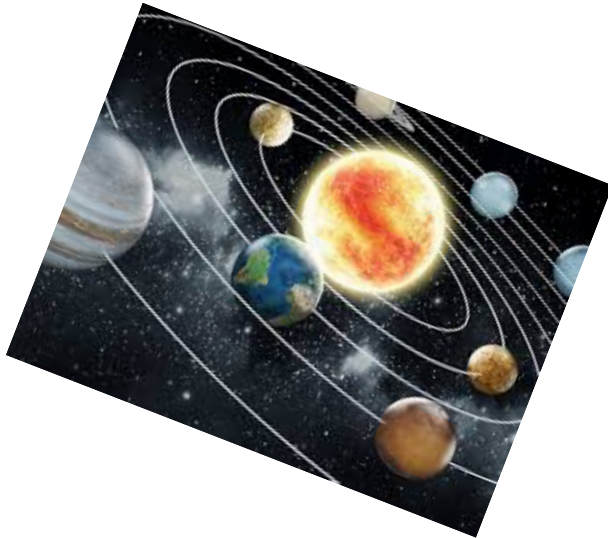




# 30 minute FLES Class

## FLES Lesson Example in French

<http://www.learner.org/libraries/tfl/french/ap/pel/analyze.html>



# What if my child already speaks Spanish at home or has studied Spanish before?

FLES teachers are always excited to have native Spanish speakers or other students with Spanish experience in our classes!

- Content- coordinated program
- Academic language
- Culture
- Linguistic variety (vocabulary and accents)



# Classes Per Cycle/ Instructional Time

Grade Level	Duration	Sessions per Cycle
Second Grade	30 minutes	3 times
Third Grade	30 minutes	3 times
Fourth Grade	30 minutes	3 times
Fifth Grade	30 minutes	3 times

# What can you do to help your child learn Spanish?

- Stimulate your child's interest by discussing what he or she has learned each day.
- Let your child teach you what he/she has learned in class. This is the best way to solidify his/her learning.
- Be available to listen to your child practice his or her oral language skills.
- Sing with your child.
- Listen to Spanish music as often as possible. The more your children hear the target language the easier it will be for them to learn how to pronounce new words.

# What can you do to help your child learn Spanish? Continued...

- Involve your family, extended family, friends and child's friends in the learning process.
- Encourage your child to seek out opportunities to practice speaking and listening outside the classroom.
- Visit your local public library or provide bilingual books and dictionaries.
- Raise his/her awareness of traditions, culture, geography, sports, and music of Spanish speaking countries.
- Maintain a positive attitude toward language learning

# At Home Web Resources



[NNELL: National Network for Early Language Learners](#)



# FLES Everywhere



By integrating foreign language learning in the existing elementary curriculum in our district, we are not only reinforcing the content areas, but also empowering our students with the linguistic and cultural tools needed in today's increasingly competitive and diversified marketplace.

# Sources

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