



## Learning by Doing: Drawing on Student Creativity

Tell me and I will forget;  
show me and I may remember;  
involve me and I will understand.  
--Chinese proverb

### 1. The dilemma: how to get students excited about learning

- for required courses: “I don’t want to be here, but I have to” (ENGL 102: Writing for Arts and the Humanities; ENGL 209: Survey of World Lit. II; beginning and intermediate French)
- for electives: students can get bored with teacher-fronted, lecture-based classes (ENGL 367: Film Studies; FREN 303: Survey of French Literature)

### 2. The solution: draw on their creativity

- ENGL 102 and ENGL 209:
  - re-enactments (Chekhov’s “The Lady with the Dog”); later, students are put into two groups: members of the first group write interview questions, the others become characters
  - group projects (*The Journey to the West*; Kafka’s “The Metamorphosis”, drama unit)
- beginning and intermediate French
  - alternating between textbook chapters and “cultural interludes”
    - unit on the French and food
      - first, readings from *French or Foe?* and *French Toast*
      - next, Internet research and presentations (regional cuisine, Guide Michelin)
      - then, cooking a French dish (recipe in French, metrics)
      - finally, watching *Ratatouille*
    - unit on Monet and the Impressionists
      - first, Internet research and oral presentations
      - then, presentation and analysis of Monet painting
      - then, visit to National Gallery of Art
      - finally, making a “Monet”
- advanced French: Survey of French Literature
  - creative writing: *Tintin*, *Huis clos*, *Lettres persanes*, *Moderato cantabile*, poetry
- Film Studies
  - writing a screenplay