7/9/2018

Dear [Name of Administrator],

I am excited to tell you about a new television program that I would like to include in our Spanish 3 curriculum. “El Internado: La Laguna Negra” (The Boarding School: The Black Lagoon) next week. “El Internado” is a compelling drama/thriller about a fictional boarding school in a strange, remote forest in contemporary Spain. The school has many dark secrets and mysteries which the viewer has to solve. This series was one of the most popular television shows in Spain in the past decade. American students will be able to relate to the characters’ struggles and triumphs. The series ran for seven seasons from 2007-2010 and had millions of teenage viewers (its target audience) in Spain while it was on broadcast television.

I am excited to share this authentic cultural resource to aid language acquisition in our Spanish 3 class this year. Our national organization, The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), encourages the use of authentic resources in the target culture when they can be made comprehensible. Both the audio and the subtitles are in Spanish. We will watch short clips and then stop to discuss, debate, and make predictions about the characters and the story line. Much of our discussions involve higher order thinking as students evaluate the characters’ thoughts and decisions. Students will also have readings to complete in class in order to make the upcoming segments more comprehensible. Discussion of the story will be 90% or higher in the target language per ACTFL’s position statement.

“El Internado” is a part of the Spanish curriculum in many classrooms in the United States because of the high level of student engagement that it generates. I have colleagues across the country who tell me that their students have elected to continue their Spanish studies beyond the second year due in large part to their interest in this series because they have heard how much their older classmates enjoy working with this show. Second language acquisition research, as well as my own experience as an educator, strongly supports the notion that students acquire language more effectively, faster, and at a deeper, more meaningful level when they engage with compelling content. “El Internado” provides the compelling and comprehensible input that students need to produce proficiency in a second language as well as increased cultural competence.

While this series is not officially rated, it would have the equivalent of a PG-13 rating in the United States for some language and mild romantic scenes (some will not be viewed in class).

I would love to sit down with you to discuss how we could purchase a DVD set for our department. I am confident that this relatively small expense will result in increased retention and student buy-in within our Spanish program. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

(Sign name here)