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**31 Classroom Jobs**

**athletic director**

The athletic director tells the class what school sports events are coming up and informs them of recent results and standings. This person should be knowledgeable about a wide range of sports and professional athletes so that they can field questions from the teacher and the class.

**artist**

You’ll use this person a lot if you do One Word Images and class stories. We’ve all had students who love to doodle. Keep them on task and help the class at the same time. It helps if this student processes the language quickly so that their drawings don’t prevent them from hearing the language.

**caboose**

Even though we don’t walk in lines through the hallway in high school, it’s important that certain things happen when we leave the classroom to read outside or go to the computer lab to work on Señor Wooly. I rely on the caboose to make sure everyone has retrieved their phones from the organizer on the wall and hasn’t left anything else behind, the lights are turned off, and there is a message written on the main whiteboard saying where we went in case a student arrives late or someone from the office stops by to look for a student.

**calendar**

The calendar tells the day and the date. I prefer to already have this information written on the board and ready to go in the interest of time, but you could have your calendar write it instead. This person is also in charge of keeping track of students’ birthdays. Give them a copy of the school calendar so they can make note of scheduled late arrivals and holidays off for when they report out to the class.

**chef**

The chef handles anything that has to do with food, whether it is passing out candy prizes or arranging the buffet table for our end-of-semester lunch/farewell party. Sometimes I’ll ask them what is being served in the cafeteria or have them confirm the main ingredients in a dish from the target culture.

This person is my assistant when we cook in class as I model each step before allowing students to try it for themselves.

**clock**

The teacher asks the clock, “What time is it?” at various times throughout the class and whenever we are talking about when an event starts or ends. If there’s a clock in a Picture Talk or I’m wondering about what time it is in a picture, we rely on this person. Sometimes I’ll ask a random question about what time a certain class period starts or ends, the schedule that runs between our two high schools, or scheduled times for school events like football games and concerts. Going through a modified schedule on the first two-hour delay day of the year provides them with valuable information (especially freshmen) and gives them lots of practice with times.

The key with this job is to naturally work in as many reps of various times as you can. Your students will learn to tell time and understand times when they hear them without explicit instruction sooner than they will using traditional methods because the times will actually have meaning for them and the reps will be spaced out over time, which research shows is essential for long-term acquisition.

**conductor of the orchestra**

The conductor tells the class to stand up and leads the class in singing “Happy Birthday” and other songs that you may use. The conductor tells the class, “Good job!” and then tells them to sit down when they’re done singing.

**counter**

The counter handles numbers that come up during whole class reading, PQA, and stories. The counter keeps a stuffed Sesame Street “Count von Count” under their chair. When a number comes up that I want them to take note of, the counter says the number in the target language followed by their best impression of the Count’s “Ha ha ha.”

**custodian**

The custodian verifies that the room is clean before anybody gets up to leave at the end of class. I ask them, “Is there anything on the floor?” or, “Whose insert object is that over there?” For Spanish, this is an ideal way to get reps on important structures like *¿Hay algo…?* and *¿De quién es…?*.

This person is also in charge of letting me know when we’re running low on tissues, paper towels, and hand sanitizer.

**ecologist/conservationist**

The ecologist is responsible for ensuring that students are recycling aluminum cans and plastic bottles. Even having a recycling bin literally right next to the trash can, it never fails that some people still throw cans and bottles in the trash. The ecologist will put these where they belong and remind the class about the responsible thing to do. My school also recycles paper, so this person walks around and collects used scrap paper when we’re done with it.

**economist**

The economist handles all matters involving prices and currency exchange rates. You’ll find yourself using their services often during personalized questions and answers (PQA). The economist can research the names of currency for the target countries and keep a relatively current chart of the values of these currencies relevant to the dollar.

**electrician**

The electrician turns the lights on and off and also controls any fans, humidifiers, and diffusers.

**expert**

The expert has the final say when the class can’t agree on a detail for a story or when there is debate over what is true or false. Don’t let people argue with the expert after they have made a ruling.

**gardener**

You can have a gardener even if you don’t have any live plants in your room. My gardener pretends to “water” my two artificial ficus trees each morning and my kids find it amusing. You could also have them spray your fake plants with a spray bottle. If you do have live plants, your gardener is responsible for watering them, moving them as needed to receive adequate light, and informing you of their general health. Just like the zookeeper is an expert on animals, this person can chime in when there are questions about plants.

**historian**

I do a “this day in our history” segment every day. You’ll probably figure out who your history buffs are soon enough, or you could show your history/humanities teachers your class rosters and have them tell you. Depending on their knowledge and proficiency level, the historian can provide additional details or confirm dates while we’re discussing what happened on this day in our history. The historian should be comfortable saying these in the target language.

**host**

The host greets visitors with an appropriate greeting in the target language. I have them say, “Welcome to Spanish \_\_\_ class!” and “Have a good day (or weekend)!” when they leave. Make sure you pick someone who will do this with some enthusiasm so that visitors get a good first impression. We practice the host’s lines before they do it for real so that the class can hear how these phrases sound different based on the number and gender of the visitors. Students who arrive late are also greeted the same way.

If an administrator is completing an observation or stopping by to do a walk-through, the host will offer him or her a seat within our class circle (I’m deskless).

**interpreter**

Sometimes providing a translation in L1 is the quickest way to establish meaning. The interpreter will say or write the word in L1 per your directions. In higher levels (although I encourage circumlocution starting at level one), this person could use circumlocution to try to explain it to the class in the target language.

**librarian**

I do Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) four days a week at the beginning of class. The librarian tells the class to go get their books at the beginning and to put them away at the end. This person is also in charge of ensuring that the books are facing forward in an orderly manner in our “library”, which is a spinning display rack.

I try to pick one of my stronger readers to be my librarian so that they can also recommend appropriate books to individual students for FVR.

**medic**

The medic gets bandaids from my first aid kit for students with minor cuts. This person will accompany students who aren’t feeling well to the nurse’s clinic. Since I teach in a STEM school, I choose someone who is in the health science pathway.

**messenger**

The messenger relays information or notes to and from the office. I pick a stronger speaker to do this job since I have this person report out to the class when they return. This should be someone who you can trust to get from point “A” to point “B” without taking detours to stop and talk with friends.

**meteorologist**

I ask the meteorologist, “What’s the weather like today?” They can also make forecasts for the weekend and special events like football games and the Homecoming parade.

**photographer**

The photographer takes whatever pictures I request as well as some of their own. For example, I might ask them to take a picture of the notes on the board from a Special Person Interview and email it to me so I can post it on our learning management system. They can also take fun pictures during Reader’s Theater, running dictations, and other classroom tomfoolery. These pictures can help convey to parents what you do in class on Meet the Teacher/Back to School night. The parents will love how the pictures were taken by actual students from the class.

**police officer**

The police officer verifies that all cell phones are in the caddy that is hanging on the wall. This person also tells the class to retrieve their phones at the end of class once the custodian verifies that the room is in satisfactory condition. If you don’t have kids turn in their phones during class, you could have the police officer be in charge of getting (or attempting to get) the class to quiet down.

I like to pick an assertive, self-confident student for this job. It helps if they naturally command a little more respect than the average student. I usually go with an upperclassman if one is available.

**professor**

I always write my tentative plan for the day on the whiteboard so that students feel like they’re in the loop. After I check in with the secretary for the attendance, I ask the professor, “What’s the plan of the day?” or, “What are we going to do today?” You can also work on ordinal numbers by asking what we’re doing first, second, third, last, etc.

“What are we going to (do, eat, see, etc.)?” is a high-frequency, versatile structure that your students can use in real-world scenarios for making plans for meals, going out with friends, and much more.

**psychologist**

The psychologist can call for a brain break when they feel the class needs one. Since this person is a student, they will have a better sense of when they need one than you will. They can also lead the brain breaks that they are familiar with.

Sometimes a student will report that they are stressed, frustrated, or generally not doing well when I check in with the class at the beginning. The psychologist could provide some positive affirmations or give advice. For Spanish teachers, this is an ideal way to get reps on *Deberías*…

**secretary**

I like to assign this job to a kid who I know needs to move around a lot. The secretary is in charge of handing out copies of readings and other papers, collecting finished assignments, and passing back graded work.

The secretary is also in charge of attendance. Make sure this person has an updated class roster, but don’t forget to redact student ID numbers. Most importantly, ensure that the secretary knows who each kid is! This is a natural opportunity to have students properly introduce themselves to one another in the target language and build community from the first day of class.

**substitute**

I have the substitute ask the secretary, “Who wasn’t here yesterday?” It is the substitute’s responsibility to ensure that anyone who was absent the prior day receives copies of readings and handouts. The substitute collects enough copies of handouts for students who are absent.

This helps (but does not eliminate) students from coming up to me right before class to ask what they missed, or my personal favorite, “I wasn’t here yesterday. Did we do anything?”

I occasionally ask the substitute what we did in class the prior day in order to get reps on the preterit and imperfect first-person plural verb forms. This also helps remind them of the previous day’s topics and conversations.

**scapegoat**

This one can be a lot of fun, but you need to make sure you pick someone who has a thick skin. The class will blame everything that goes wrong on this person. Everyone turns to this person and says, “Name, it’s all your fault!”

The cafeteria ran out of chicken tenders on Chicken Tender Tuesday? We didn’t get a two-hour delay for fog? The Fortnite server is down? It’s all their fault!

**sound board/technician**

This one is just a lot of fun if you have “that” student. Pick your most gregarious, attention-seeking student to make sound effects at the proper times (it helps to have a cue) during stories, Reader’s Theater, and whole class reading of class novels.

**technician**

The technician turns my projector on and off and helps me troubleshoot technical problems when they arise. Since I teach in a STEM school, I choose someone who is in the information technology pathway.

**zookeeper**

The zookeeper is the authority on anything relating to animals. Every class has at least one animal lover. I take their suggestions for my “Animal of the Week” and have them confirm details about the animals we are talking about.

If you have a fish aquarium or other classroom pet, the zookeeper is in charge of feeding and taking care of it.