

## **Navigating the City: Acquiring German through TPRS and Technology**

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### **Synopsis**

One of the toughest challenges for foreign language teachers today is making the target language relevant to the students. We are obliged to equip students with skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century including good communication in a foreign language, but how do we help students see a real purpose for foreign language skills and encourage them to move past the basic requirement to higher levels? This unit is designed for a split level high school German 3/4 class whose students will travel to Germany as part of an exchange program, but it could be adapted to other levels and certain concepts could be applied to other foreign language courses. My unit creates a sense of relevance for the students by allowing them to “travel” by train to the city of Hamburg, Germany and research hotels, restaurants and the cultural background to popular sightseeing attractions there. With comprehensible input through TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling) combined with meaning-based activities involving technology, the unit provides opportunities for students to acquire language individually and also collaborate in groups. Students will explore Hamburg and language needed for travel to a big city via PowerPoint, online research, reading and communicative activities. In addition, they will communicate online with their German counterparts via Facebook and submit material for a class blog. As an end project, students will document their experiences there with Photo Story 3, posting these “stories” online and presenting them to a variety of audiences.