

Languages of the World Day 2027: Guidance for proposal submissions

Getting started

- Look over past session descriptions (see below) for inspiration
- Questions to think about:
 - How can you make your session engaging and interactive?
 - What are your goals for the session? What do you want students to learn? To remember?
 - What is interesting, unique, or useful about learning your language/culture/topic?
 - Are there ways that you can link your topic to topics already familiar to students?

Format

- Consider one of the following types of presentations:
 - Demonstration introductory language lesson
 - Interactive presentation on a cultural topic (e.g., holiday, cuisine, theater/drama, history, pop culture, etc.)
 - Presentation related to the scientific study of human language(s)
 - Student or other panel
 - Performing arts workshop
 - Other creative ideas?
- Keep it engaging – both the description as well as the presentation itself. Let students participate, rather than lecturing, through:
 - Interaction (questions, tasks for audience to complete)
 - Demonstration of material (audio-visual, oral, physical)
 - Opportunities for students to brainstorm, show, and apply what they learned (in pairs, small groups, or through games, etc.)
 - Breaking up your session into smaller parts to help keep students' attention
- Structure your presentation ahead of time. Use the entire 40 minutes allotted for the session.
- Most importantly, **have fun!** We know based on prior feedback that when presenters are enthusiastic and excited about the topic, students are also more engaged.

Writing your title and session description

- Remember the audience: **This is not an academic conference proposal.** High school students will be reading your description and deciding if they want to attend your session based on what you write.
- Keep the description engaging, direct, and short (3-4 sentences)

- Use an informal tone and give participants a sense of what they will learn and how they will participate in the session.
- Write in first person plural (e.g., "we will do...") and second person (e.g., "in this session, you will learn...") to make your description inviting.

Note: We may edit session descriptions before publishing them on the Languages of the World Day webpage. We will also provide descriptions to the participating schools so students can decide which sessions to attend.

Examples of Prior Successful Presentations

- Title: The Ghostly Tales of Zhongyuan: China's Festival of Spirits
Language: Chinese
Description: You may have a good time in Halloween, but have you ever wondered how other cultures honor the spirits? Zhongyuan Festival, also known as the Ghost Festival, is China's ancient tradition of connecting with the unseen world. From eerie taboos to ghostly legends like "hungry ghosts" and the fearsome Ox-Head and Horse-Face, this presentation will take you on a hauntingly fascinating trip. Get ready for an unforgettable cultural journey that's as intriguing as it is spooky!
- Title: Ukrainian Humor: How to Laugh in Ukrainian
Language: Ukrainian
Description: Humor, in particular dark humor, can be a source of strength for helping people to cope with hard situations. Ukrainians are notorious for being able to laugh at everything! They have been coming up with all kinds of creative jokes throughout all historical crises. Come and enjoy Ukrainian humor from as long as 400 years ago to current memes, and learn some Ukrainian while you are laughing!
- Title: Swahili for a Kenyan Safari Adventure
Language: Swahili
Description: Embark on a thrilling Kenyan expedition and explore the rich language, wildlife, and culture of this East African country. In this session, you will learn basic Swahili phrases to use on a safari, discover fascinating facts about Kenya's iconic animals, and explore world-renowned game parks like the Maasai Mara, Amboseli, and Tsavo. Together, we will practice Swahili greetings, role-play as safari adventurers, and design a mini guidebook featuring Kenya's famous game and game parks/reserves. Prepare for an adventure blending language learning with Kenya's breathtaking landscapes and cultural treasures! Karibu (welcome)!
- Title: Discovering Spanish Accents: Voices of the U.S.
Language: Spanish

Description: In this lesson, we will learn about different Spanish accents and discuss some of the most common accent features in Spanish-speakers in the United States. At the end of this lesson, you will be able to answer the following questions: Who make up the largest Hispanic/Latino populations in the U.S.? What do their accents sound like? Why does Bad Bunny say '*Nueva Yol*' instead of '*Nueva York*' and '*me fui de vacacione*' instead of '*vacaciones*'? ¡Ven conmigo a aprender!

- Title: Indigenous Languages of Wisconsin and Why They Matter: Words, Places and Stories We Should All Know

Language:

Description: In this session, we will learn about each of the Indigenous languages of Wisconsin and practice Native language greeting terms still used by the First Peoples of this Place. Participants will reflect upon their home territories and consider several Indigenous placenames used by everyone in Wisconsin today. We will reflect upon a couple of key stories that help demonstrate the rich connection between language, culture, and Indigenous beliefs and life practices.

- Title: Beyond Words: Untranslatable Concepts from Five Nordic Countries

Language: French

Description: *Lagom? Hygge? Sisu?* In our collaborative presentation, we will give you a sneak peek into five of the Nordic languages we offer here at UW. Join us to learn about a few of the most interesting and untranslatable words/concepts from Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish—including how to say and live them. You will get to hear the languages spoken as well as learn several new words that offer a glimpse into life in the far North of Europe!

- Title: From Grounds to Fortune: The Art of Turkish Coffee

Language: Turkish

Description: Discover the art of "*kahve falı*" (coffee fortune telling), an ancient practice of interpreting the patterns left in coffee grounds. Immerse yourself in the world of Turkish coffee, a cherished tradition that goes far beyond a simple cup of coffee. You will learn the basics of reading symbols in the coffee cup and have the chance to practice this fun and culturally significant activity with your peers. By the end of the session, you'll leave with a deeper appreciation for Turkish coffee as both a beverage and a cultural symbol.