

Language Barrier

While students enjoy language class opportunities, they said that they find classes unengaging

BY AVIVA GERSHMAN

According to Flessas, this did not stop after sixth grade.

Seeking to explore an unfamiliar culture, freshman Isabel Flessas decided to take Chinese when she entered sixth grade.

"I think Chinese is really interesting," she said. "I took it because I wanted to take something different from what most people were taking as a language." Much Some parts of the class's curriculum and activities, however, were not beneficial to the students.

she explained.

"I wish that there was more interpersonal speaking [activities], because most of the time we just have to memorize dialogues. I feel like that is not as useful as being able to talk to other people because it won't be applied as much in a foreign language speaking situation," she said.

Senior Michael Garb took Russian as a non-heritage speaker. After five years, he said that he still did not understand a lot of Russian.

"I could read a children's book, but I had no idea what the children's book was saying. I could only recognize a few words," he said.

Freshman Shoshi Gordon agreed and said that her French class

should incorporate more engaging activities and rely less on its textbook.

After all, the goal of the language program is to prepare students for real life situations, Spanish teacher Viviana Planine said.

"The goal would be that you communicate and then can use it in real life—like if you go to Spain and you need to buy a ticket to go somewhere or go to the store to shop for something or your job," she said.

Some students find language classes unengaging because of the level of difficulty, sophomore Colin Chen said.

"To be honest, I thought it was boring before because it was too easy for me. I have the unpopular opinion. Now that it's more of a challenge, it seems more interesting," he said.

The difficulty of a class does not always correspond with the level of interest and intrigue, Gordon said.

"[Easier classes are] not that engaging but I think it's because people think of that way that easy classes can't be as fun and engaging as harder classes," she said.

Students have the power to make a class more interesting and useful, sophomore Eva Sours said. Already flu-

ent in French, Sours chose to take Spanish as her third language.

"I feel like some students don't really take it seriously. They just want to get language credit. I feel like the teachers are doing what they can to make the class interesting with games to study with or just in general," she said.

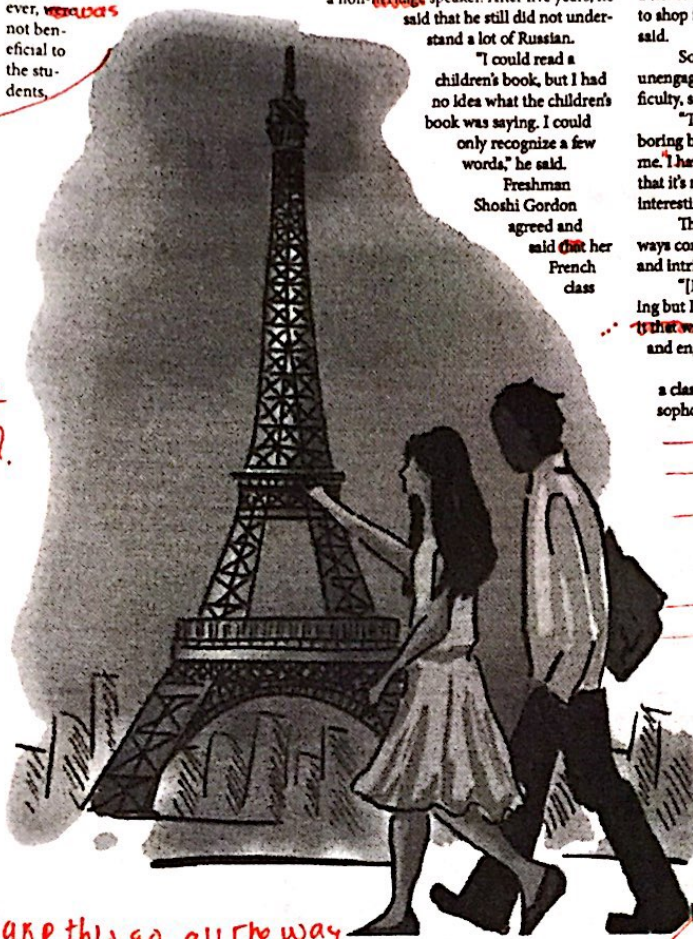
Planine agreed and said that the atmosphere of a class depends on the students' passion and involvement.

"Some kids enjoy it a lot. You can see they have a passion for it. They like to communicate and they participate and they enjoy it. Some kids don't, unfortunately. It depends on how you are," she said.

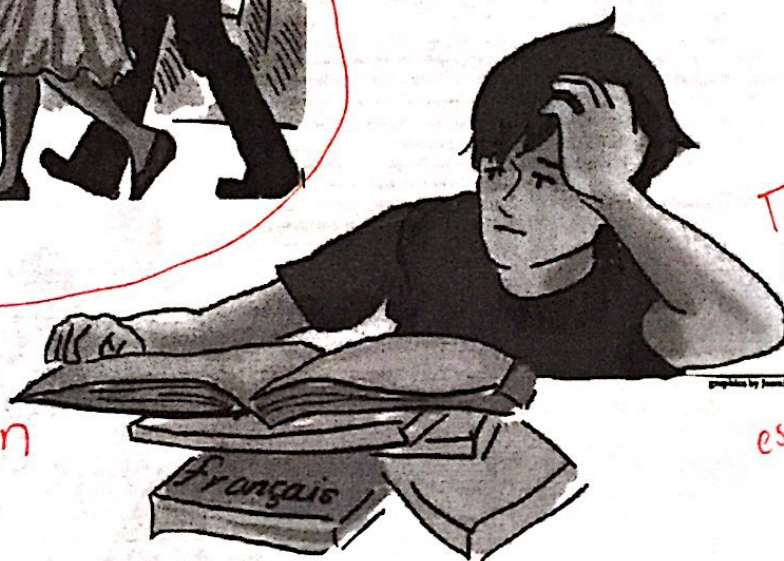
Even though some students may find language classes uninteresting, each class explores a new culture, while creating a good environment, Sours said.

"It's interesting to learn a language with students you know. I guess it's a way to bond," she said. "You can learn about people and culture in languages and I think that's something really important that should be taught."

Additional reporting by Ella Biggs and Rayna Song



WAY TOO MUCH SPACE HERE!



This article could use another interview or 2, especially from a teacher

Make this go all the way up! so text can go further down on the other side

let's talk about design in person!!