Later, the students used the floorcloth map (a shower curtain liner with a map of Chile drawn on it with permanent markers), created by one group, to give each other commands such as Camina a Concepción [walk to Concepción], Nada en el río Itata [swim in the Itata River], Sube las montañas [climb the mountains]. Peggy placed signs around the room with the names of the other countries in South America written on them. She asked the students to go to the country by role playing different means of transportation including maneja [drive], monta a caballo [ride a horse], and vuela [fly].

Using the poster of the Chilean arpillera from *The Language of Folk Art* (Figure 5), the students discussed what they saw. They talked about the houses, the mountains, the trees, the people. They knew the word *pan* [bread] and Peggy pointed out that the *panaderia* [bread shop] was where *pan* was sold. Later, the class discussed (in English) the two types of *arpilleras*, the original ones from the '70s with a political message and the more contemporary ones that depict daily life. For many women, making arpilleras has become their livelihood. Students also watched the movie *Missing* that illustrates life in Chile during the late '70s.

Integrating Language and Culture

Mari

Next the students learned the names of other stores in a town and the products they sold. To practice the new vocabulary they did a pair activity in which they asked each other what was sold in a certain store. Partner A asked, ¿Qué venden en la heladería? [What do they sell in the ice cream store?] and Partner B answered, (En la heladería venden) helado [In the ice cream store they sell ice cream]. The following day the students played a progressive reading game. Each student had a card with a product from a store written on the top and a question written on the bottom (see Figure 6). They had to listen until they heard their product mentioned, answer the question, and then ask the new question printed on the bottom of the card. Peggy found that the students were attentive and interested in both activities and wanted to play the reading game again and again after switching cards.

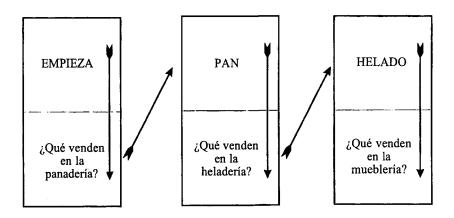


Figure 6. Example of progressive reading game cards (Haas, 1996, p. 211).

Once the students knew the relevant vocabulary, Peggy used masking tape to create a large town on the floor of the classroom (Curtain and Pesola, 1994, p. 350). She made a grid of the streets and the plazas and placed pictures of stores throughout the town map grid. Using TPR she introduced the vocabulary for getting around town and had the students stand up, turn to the right, turn to the left, go straight ahead, stop on the corner, cross the street, etc. Then she gave individual students a series of commands to carry out on the map. When they arrived at the appropriate store, they identified where they were and what they were going to buy. The students continued by instructing their peers how to get to a certain store. Peggy's journal entry reflects how this activity gave the students an experience that allowed them to understand the directions right and left and what a plaza really was. She said,

I have found that this activity is great for the kinesthetic learners. They volunteer and want to participate...[During] this activity the others watch and comment if they [their peers] make a wrong turn. For whatever reason, [the Spanish words for] right and left are very hard to assimilate into their vocabulary.

Later the students wrote a series of commands on index cards for another student to choose and role-play on the town map. Peggy wrote similar cards and, as an evaluation, asked each student to select a card, read the commands, and carry them out. During the next activity the students wrote concrete poems about a store. They read a poem (see Figure 7) about *una zapatería* [a shoe store]. Several students then recited and role-played the poem.

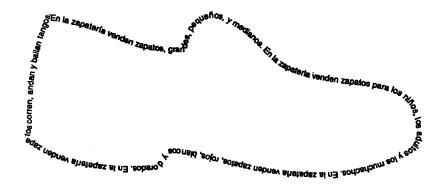


Figure 7. En la zapatería venden zapatos (Haas, 1996 p. 154).

Next, in preparation for writing a class poem, they created a web (Figure 8) about a *libreria* on the board. Since many of the words were cognates they quickly assimilated the new vocabulary. Finally, they chose a store and wrote their own poems, first in pairs and then individually (see Figure 9).

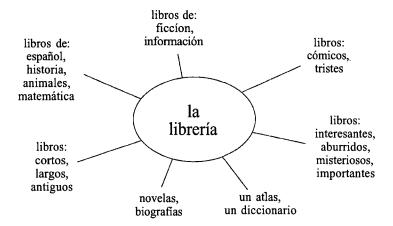


Figure 8. Web of words for a poem about a bookstore.

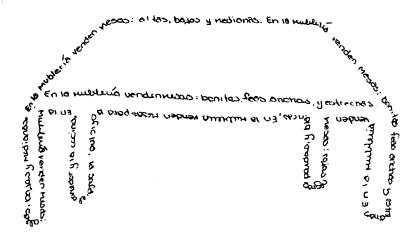


Figure 9. Example of a concrete poem by Catalina Zegarelli.

Literature to Learn about Communities

During the next activity the students read a short passage about a small Chilean town called Melipilla. The passage was written by Angela Roa, a Spanish teacher at Bank Street School for Children in Manhattan. Through the eyes of a young girl named Rosita, Angela wrote about her experiences growing up in Melipilla. The students were already familiar with much of the vocabulary in the first paragraph that described the location of Melipilla. Peggy retold the beginning of the story several times to the students substituting vocabulary and verbs the students already knew. She also illustrated the story with magnetic board pictures of a river, mountains, a house, and people swimming in the river and used the chalkboard to illustrate words like *rodeado* [surrounded]. By the third recitation she used the exact words from the text and asked the students questions about the story.

After hearing it so many times, several students were already able to narrate the story in their own words, illustrating with the magnetic board pictures. Then, they read the first paragraph in The Language of Folk Art Activity Book and confirmed that Melipilla was 60 kilometers from Santiago toward the coast, surrounded by foothills, and near the Maípo River. Peggy repeated a similar sequence with each of the four paragraphs. In the second paragraph Angela wrote about Rosita's small house near una panadería, una carnicería and unafarmacia[a bakery, a butcher shop, a pharmacy]. Next the readers learned what her family did on Sundays: going to church in the plaza, meeting friends and buying mani [peanuts] from the manicero or barquillos [wafer tubes with a cream filling], listening to the band, or browsing at the craft fair on the edge of the plaza. On Sundays, Rosita's parents bought delicious things to eat like empanadas [meat-filled turnovers] and her mother made pastel de choclo [corn pie]. In September there were rodeos on the farms around Melipilla where the huasos [cowboys] roped cows and in the afternoon the people danced the cueca. The passage ends with a description of what Rosita did on rainy days. The students enjoyed reading the story and retelling it in their own words, often embellishing the story with details about the weather or a description of Rosita.

Interviewing a Guest from Chile

Mari invited Angela to visit Peggy's Spanish class. The students prepared interview questions to ask the author. For the first question, Diego

asked ¿Cómo se llama usted? An interesting discussion ensued when Angela explained why her name was Angela Roa Pérez de Arce. The students knew that Pérez de Arce was her mother's name, but Angela explained that because Pérez was such a common last name the de Arce was added long ago to distinguish her family. The students found out the details of Angela's life including where she lives, what her apartment is like, how many brothers and sisters she has, and what her favorite color is. They also learned that her parents still live in Melipilla, eight kilometers from the town. When asked, ¿Cómo es Santiago? she described Santiago for them as a large, sprawling city with lots of space and gardens. She added that it is five times as big as the city of Rome with four million people and now has lots of traffic. She said that it is special because it is surrounded by the Andes Mountains. When Cristina asked ¿Cómo es la ropa de Chile?, Angela described the traditional clothing of el huaso [the cowboy], a small poncho, black pants, black boots, and spurs.

All the activities in the unit worked together to support each other. The students were able to build on their knowledge about Chile through the interview with Angela which also served to enrich their knowledge about communities in Chile and expand on the reading passage. The language-content-culture activities gave the students more of a context in which to place the additional knowledge they were learning about their keypals through the e-mail exchanges. A community of learners in Chile and New York was forming as the unit progressed. Although many students asked their interview questions with soft voices, they continued to raise their hands to ask yet another question. Some of the questions merited longer answers than others, but each student felt a sense of satisfaction when they asked a question of the classroom visitor and, in turn, received a response. The information they had been learning about Chile came to life for the students.

The Second Letters

When the second letters arrived (Figure 10), it seemed that the students had begun to form relationships. Questions were being answered, and more were posed. They shared information that was interesting to them and were excited to receive their letters. Some even consulted with Peggy during lunch or recess about their responses.

Date: Thu, 23 May 96 13:55:32

From: Alex Urrea <Coordinador@dsalas.plasca.plaza.cl>

To: Rena <poco@transit.nyser.net> Subject: Respondiendo a Rena

Hola Rena resibi tu carta, veo que no sabes muy bien el idioma del castellano. Me gusto mucho que escribieras, porque asi puedo conocerte un poco. Me pides una foto de Luz, no la puedo mandar poque no tengo ninguna y tambien termine con ella hace una semana porque ella se cambio de casa y no puedo comunicarme con ella escepto llamarla por telefono. Lo siento mucho pero no podre mandartela a lo mejor la mia. Me gustaria que me mandaras una foto tuya. Amiga cuentame algo de tu vida en el colegio .

Se despide de ti y deseando que te vaya bien en todo lo que realices. Y que pronto me escribas nuevamente.

Tu amigo Alex.

Date: Wed, 22 May 96 15:06:45

From: Eider Saez

To: Chema <poco@transit.nyser.net>
Subject: Respondiendo a Chema
Hola Amiga CHema Couniotes

Me alegre mucho cuando recibi tu mensaje, oye amiga o amigo aclárame cual es tu sexo, Ahora te cuento de mi escuela:

Mi escuela es muy bonita. mi deporte favorito es futbol en octavo y sepimo año tambien se aprende.frances e Ingles. mi materia favorita es matematica, laa musica favorita es treno choni. la hora que entramos a clases es 8.15 y salimos a las 13.00 hrs, a veces salimos a la 1.30. Mi fruta favorita es la manzana y ell platano. Me despido deseando estes bien, en compania de los tuyos.

Tu amigo Eider.

Responde prontooooooo

Figure 10. Samples of the second letters.

¡Hola Alex!

Recibí tu carta. Lo siento sobre Luz. En mi escuela entramos a las ocho y es grande. Hay muchas clases y materias son matematicas, estudias sociales, inglés, ciencias de la vida, banda, educación física, y español. Mi escuela es pública y ¿tu escuela? Mi escuela es de prekinder hasta el octavo. La escuela tiene cuatro deportes, volibol, fútbol, basquetbol con chicos y chicas y beisbol. Mi clase favorita es inglés porque es fácil y cómica y español es difícil y interesante. ¿Cual es su clase favorita? ¿Cambias los salones de clases? ¿Tiene la misma profesor para todas sus clases? Toco la flauta en la banda y en educacion física juego al beisbol. No me gusta matemáticas porque es aburrido. Hay noventa estudiantes en la escuela middle. Mi casa es mediana y tengo un patio mediano. Hay un parque cerca de la piscina. ¿Cual es su cuarto favorito en su casa?

Adios amigo, Rena

el 30 de mayo

Querido Karis,

Hola! ¿Cómo estás? Yo estoy así así. Gracias por tu carta. Es muy interesante. Te contaré sobre mi escuela.

Mi escuela se llama Pocantico Hills Central School. Es muy pequeña. Tiene un gimnasio grande, seiz canchas de tenis, dos piscinas, el campo de fútbol y beisbol. La cafetería de mi escuela tiene la comida terrible. Tiene cuatro pisos. Tiene muchos carteles y retratos en las paredes de la clase de arte.

Yo tomo siete clases. Estudios Sociales, Inglés, Español, Música, Ciencia, Matemáticas, y la clase de educación física. La clase de educación física es muy divertida. Juegan todos los deportes. Mi profesor de la clase de educación física es chevere. El es muy atlético.

Yo juego al beisbol ahora para mi escuela. Mi equipo es terrible. Estamos 1-8.

Mis notas son buenas. Recibo muchos 90s. Yo estoy en la sociedad nacional de honor.

Escribe me por favor. Adios.

A Fieldtrip in the Community

The day to visit the Chilean bakery finally arrived. The students boarded the minibus for the short trip to town. Although Pocantico has a small percentage of Latino students, the majority of the students in Peggy's class did not know about the wonderful Chilean bakery located a mere five minutes from school. And, when Mari went to buy film at the store across the street, she found that the *bodega* was run by a family from the Dominican Republic. Besides being a valuable language learning and cultural experience as well as a culinary pleasure, the fieldtrip allowed the students and the teachers to learn more about their own multilingual community.

The students were greeted at the door of Los Andes Bakery by Francisco Mejías, who, with his wife Jessica, owns the store. Once everyone was inside, he pointed to his native city, Viña del Mar, on the map. The students understood him as he talked about the map and explained that Viña was located cerca de Santiago [near Santiago]. Then Francisco walked behind the glass case filled with goodies. He pointed to each pastry and told the students what they were called in Spanish: merengues, pan de huevo [egg bread rolls], queque de frutas [fruit cake], pan dulce [sweet rolls], pastel [cake], empanadas de queso [cheese turnovers], and mantecados [butter cookies sprinkled with powdered sugar]. He described the different breads displayed in baskets on the side of the case. Ready for the students to taste was a tray filled with warm empanadas de queso. Everyone was impressed by Francisco's warm welcome and generosity as he encouraged them to try an empanada saying, sirvase. Later, he took the group to the back of the bakery. He introduced them to the panadero [baker] and the pastelero [pastry chef] and pointed out the machines brought from Chile that are used to make the bread. The pastelero had trays of repollos [small round eclairs] for the students to dip into chocolate or brush with pineapple glaze. He explained and demonstrated the process. Then he asked for volunteers to whip the filling, crema chantilly. Diego wanted to try immediately. The filling was spooned into a pastry bag and several students helped fill the centers with cream. Of course, the best part was eating the delicious repollos.

As the visit came to an end, the students were able to buy pastries or bread to take home. They asked, ¿Cuánto vale? [How much does it cost?], pointing to items in the case. Diego, who wanted to buy a baguette, said, Quiero este pan largo [I want this long bread]. Students left the store

saying gracias to Francisco. The experience was rich and exciting in many ways. The students listened to native speakers from Chile as they explained familiar concepts on the map and unfamiliar concepts about baking. Everything, though, was in the context of a here-and-now situation, and thus they had little trouble understanding the language. They enjoyed the experience of tasting the foods of Chile, the empanadas de queso and the repollos. The expressions, ¡Es delicioso! and ¡Qué rico! now have real meaning for the students. Several have even returned with a parent to purchase items at the bakery.

Endings: Culminating Activity

The third letters arrived from Chile just as the school year was coming to a close (Figure 11). The letters described points of interest around their town and region. But before the Pocantico students could write their replies describing their towns, Elena sent a message requesting that they write the third letter in English. The Chilean students wanted to know about points of interest in the United States including the Statue of Liberty, Disneyworld, and the White House. The Pocantico students were more than happy to comply with their request. Additionally, Peggy sent off a package to Chile (to reciprocate for a similar package received from Elena) that included pictures of the students and the school, information about New York State, and realia from Pocantico Hills School. Now each group had a visual idea of who their keypals were and where they lived.

Date: Wed, 11 Jun 1996 18:55:16-0400 (EDT)

From: Karia Mellado <Coordinador@dsalas.plasca.plaza.cl>

To: Antonio <poco@transit.nyser.net>

Subject: Tercer Mensaje

Tercera carta 11-06-96

Hola Antonio

¿Cómo estas? recibi tu carta estaba muy linda.

Ahora te contare sobre mi pueblo. Mi pueblo mi ciudad es linda tiene bellas playas y campos aqui en Temuco hay muchos lugares lindos donde yo vivo hay muy linda vista hay unos estanques de agua y vivo en el cerro Conunhueno es super lindo.

Quiero que me mandes una carta y me cuentes sobre disneyworld.

Se despide de ti tu amiga Karis chaoo Antonio

Date: Wed, 11 Jun 1996 15:39:58

From: Eva Arias < Coordinador@dsalas.plasca.plaza.cl>

To: Marcos <poco@transit.nyser.net>

Tercer mensaje.
Temuco 11-06-96
Hola Marcos Scott
Espero que estes bien;

Bueno recibi tu carta y la encontre super buena aunque venían algunas palabras que no las entendi para nada, pero se que pronto mejoraras tu Castellano;

Me han contado que el idioma castellano es el más dificíl ¿que puedes desir en cuanto a esto? porque yo lo encuentro super fácil.

Tambien quiero contarte sobre mi país CHILE: es largo y angosto tiene mucha flora y fauna pero a la vez tiene mucha contaminación. Bueno eso es todo por hoy Chaoooooooooo...

tu amiga

Eva Arias de Chile

From: Pamela Salamanca < Coordinador@dsalas.plasca.plaza.cl>

To: Josue <poco@transit.nyser.net>

Subject: Tercer Mensaje

Figure 11. Samples of the third letters.

Tercera carta 4/06/96

Hola

Amigo Josúe

¿Cómo estás? espero que bien.

Ahora te contaré que las comidas Típicas son las siguientes: Las empanadas, lacazuela y el peure.

El presidente de la república de Chile se llama: Eduardo Frei. La flor nacional es el Copihue, la capital de Chile es Santiago. Sabes que el arbol tipíco de la novena región es la Araucaría. Da un fruto llamado Piñon.

Chile tiene aproximadamente 13.000 mil habitantes. Temuco es muy bonito y desde que llegue aquí a crecido bastante. Padre las Casas es una comuna y hay muchos proyectos. Nuestra fiesta nacional son los días 17, 18, 19 de Septiembre, hay mucyhas actividades un desfile, y se hacen ramadas donde sirven la comida tipíca y la chicha de manzana que es muy rica cuando esta recíen hecha.

Cuentame algunas cosas de acá como por ejemplp: que ubicacion tiene tu casa, que distancia hay de tu ciudad a la capital y porque E.E.U.U. esta dividido en Estados, cuentame si has ido a Disney Work conoces la Estatua de la Libertad. Escribe pronto.

Tu Amiga Pamela

Figure 11 (cont'd.). Samples of the third letters.

The culminating activity for the Chile unit was to create paper collage arpilleras about the students' own towns. In order to prepare the students for making the collages, Peggy explained the history of arpilleras. The Pocantico students thought about what scenes would show the Chilean students something about their lives in New York. They chose to illustrate their houses and favorite pastimes as well as the village streets. Each student decided on a theme and they began cutting shapes out of the multicolored papers from old wallpaper books. Ruth Weyland, the art teacher, came to the classroom and discussed making collages with the students. They explored the shapes, colors, and textures they had cut from the wallpaper. They considered the space in the picture and how to decide where to place the pieces. The students began experimenting with moving the shapes around the background. They used different-sized shapes to build a picture of a house or a tree or another image in their arpillera. They then glued the larger shapes to the background and later added the smaller details such as the stitches around the border (Figure 12). They depicted their lives with vibrant colors and pleasing shapes.

Although Peggy had assessed the students' progress throughout the unit, she and Mari wanted to find out the depth of their cultural knowledge at the end of the unit. They designed a series of questions in English for the students and also asked them to write a paragraph about Chile in Spanish. The questions and examples of student responses follow:

1. What are two interesting things you have learned from your keypal?

They don't move from class to class, the teachers do.

They wear uniforms to a public school.

They have the same classes as we do.

Chile has regions not states.

They are very close to their family.

2a. What did you like best about the trip to the bakery?

I learned that Chile has very good food.

Eating the food.

The food was good, and we talked in Spanish to them.

Learning how people really do talk from Chile—fast.

They showed us how to bake the stuff and they gave us samples.

b. How were you able to understand what Francisco and the pastry chef were telling you in Spanish?

Because I learned a lot of Spanish in Spanish class and they pointed

to what they said.

Mari

By his hand movements and what he was holding.

It was easy to understand, but he needed to slow down.

When I recognized words he said I just put as many as I could together and tried to figure it out.

c. How is the bakery Los Andes similar or different from the bakery you usually go to?

There were no donuts and different cookies.

They both have cookies and breads.

They sell Spanish food.

They talk Spanish and they have Chilian pastries.

It is similar because they use cookies and chocolate.

How is Rosita's town of Melipilla similar or different from your town?It is much smaller.

It is different because they have a small, small house and a river.

It is small just like my town.

They're not as wealthy.

It doesn't have many stores.

4. Describe how you decided what to show in your arpillera.

Out of my imagination.

My house and what I like to do.

The places I visit a lot.

I decided to show Main Street because it has a lot of historic stores.

I just put together a typical town.

5. Write a paragraph in Spanish about Chile. Include any information you learned about the geography, the flag, what small towns are like, information about your keypal, etc. Just try to get your message across in Spanish and don't worry too much about making perfect sentences.

A compilation of the students' responses

Chile está en la América del Sur o Sud América. Chile es largo y estrecho. Santiago es la capital. En Chile es muy differente de los Estados Unidos. Chile tiene muchos lagos en el sur. Chile tiene muchos rios como Itata, Bío Bío, y Maipo. Los montañas en Chile es grande y se llaman Los Andes. Los colores de la bandera son rojo, azul, y blanco. La estrella representa el

honor y progreso en la nacion. Al oeste de Chile es el oceano Pacífico, al este es Argentina.

Mi keypal es Veronica.

The responses show that the students, indeed, did gain insights into the cultures of Chilean people. They learned about the country, the food, what schools and families are like, that many things are similar in their lives and other things are different. Some also reflected on their own culture as they decided what to depict in their arpillera. The paragraphs in Spanish were interesting because the students almost exclusively wrote about the geography of Chile or the flag. Maybe this is because these are the only topics (excluding the letters and poems) they actually wrote about during the unit. Or maybe they understood much of what their keypals wrote or what the Chileans they encountered said but need a more structured activity in order to write about those topics.

Peggy found that the unit reviewed some of the information in the regular textbook, expanded other information, and added a tremendous amount of new language. Students who were not as successful learning topics from the textbook chapters seemed to do better during this unit. Peggy also found that this way of teaching, where students interacted more with each other and she wasn't always the "sage on the stage," strengthened her bond with the students. She also seemed to be sharing more ideas with the other teachers. The time spent preparing the students with the language they might need to complete a task was worth the effort. Activities such as reviewing the language contained in the letters and listing common expressions, brainstorming and listing questions for letters and interviews, and webbing concepts all helped to make the resulting student work better.

The Chile unit proved to be exciting. The students were active participants in a variety of activities that integrated language content and culture. They learned many things about their own community and another community in Chile including the geography, history, what towns are like, the names of stores and what they sell, typical foods, and a traditional folk art. They used their language to respond to commands, write letters to Chilean students, talk to peers, write poems, listen to native speakers living in their own community, buy pastries, interview Chilean people, and describe their own towns. The students were engaged in reading and writing the letters. They were interested in perfecting their Spanish and acquired useful language in the process of reading their letters and writing

responses. They loved the trip to the bakery and making the arpilleras. The value of including the community as an integral part of the language learning experience was very evident to Peggy during the fieldtrip. She realized how important it is for students to interact with native speakers. She noticed that the meaning of common phrases, that usually don't appear in textbooks, are understood in context, such as when Francisco continuously repeated sirvase to each student gesturing toward the tray of empanadas. It was exciting to hear students use their language to buy pastries and find out information.

For Peggy and Mari the collaboration was a learning and growing experience. Their reflection on the teaching process added depth to Peggy's teaching and allowed Mari to experience the reality of classrooms for several months since she has not been teaching young students for several years. It also gave Mari a chance to see theory in practice. Every activity during the unit seemed to take longer than planned. It was evident to Peggy and Mari how long it takes to really teach a unit in depth. Although there were many other activities planned for which there was no time, the unit was a rich and meaningful learning experience for the students. Peggy was thinking ahead to how she would change and expand the unit during the next school year. In fact, the first question that the students asked when they entered the Spanish classroom as new 8th graders this fall was, "Can we continue writing to our keypals in Chile?"

Many goals were realized during this project. The students learned about Chile through classroom activities that integrated language, content, and culture. They used their developing language skills as a tool to communicate with Chileans from their own community and those who live in Chile. Experiences in and out of the Spanish classroom allowed the students to work together in groups collecting and sharing information about Chile with their classmates, interview native speakers from Chile, savor the taste of a freshly baked repollo dipped in chocolate, learn facts and information about Chile in general and about a small town called Melipilla, and tell their peers in Chile about themselves as well as ask questions to find out all about them. Many communities were formed and others were fortified, communities of educators, communities of students, communities within local communities, communities in cyberspace. Because of the e-mail exchanges, the interviews, and interesting activities in the classroom, students were empowered to use their language for real purposes and the Standards goal number five, Communities, became an exciting reality for them.

Notes

¹Peggy began by e-mailing Inés Alvarez (malvarez@taurus.apple.com), a Latin American contact she had made during her previous project. She explained the Chile unit to Inés and her desire to have students exchange information about themselves, their school and town, and their daily lives. Inés sent Peggy's name to Monica Campos (mcampos@enlaces.ufro.cl) who coordinates Chilean projects on the Internet. Monica asked Peggy questions concerning the ages of her students and their interests and put her in contact with Elena Herrera.

²The character-set problem resolved itself when Peggy forwarded the letters from the library computer (which was the e-mail address the students in Chile were using) to one in the computer lab, which has a distinct e-mail address, but an updated program that read all of the punctuation. In addition, during each class period, Peggy could only send two pairs of students to use the one computer in the library hooked-up to the Internet, and therefore it was taking a very long time to send the letters. Peggy was frustrated and concerned with the loss of class time. Terry worked out the problem by allowing the class to use the computer lab to input their letters, saving them to the student's directory on the school computer network, and sending the letters all at once to Chile.

³Los Andes Bakery, 180 Valley Street, Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591.

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