

Passe la balle! A transition project incorporating rap, football and creativity

The aims of the project

This unit of work has been designed with several intentions. First of all, we aim to promote a love of learning languages through allowing children to be creative. We have also sought to provide interesting facts about the francophone world to help demonstrate that French is spoken widely around the world. The lessons are also designed to support primary teachers in feeling confident to teach French, acknowledging that many primary teachers may not have strong subject knowledge in the language. We have chosen to focus our unit of work on the men's world cup as it happens to demarcate the end of year 6 and segues into their transition to secondary school. Whilst football may not be popular with every child, we believe that the content is engaging enough to overcome those who have no interest in the event. We have created an original rap as a way to highlight that language can be playful, experimental and fun, that words, like football, are there to be played with and to encourage collaboration.

Support available

For the purposes of this pilot project, we have assumed minimal subject knowledge of teachers and as such have aimed to provide as much support as we can. This has been done by adding notes under the slides to explain language as well as to give ideas for activities. You will also find sound files embedded in the powerpoints recorded, a native French speaker to aid with pronunciation for both the teacher delivering the lessons and the children. 10 tracks can also be downloaded for children to rap over in lessons 5 and 6.

Lesson content

Whilst we are aware that by year 6 some of the content will have been covered, we have deliberately gone back to basics. If the content is familiar with your children, we recommend you use it as retrieval practice/revision or skip some of the more basic activities. Where we feel printed resources would aid the children's learning, we have included printable pages on the power points or advice in the notes for what to print. The lessons are not designed to be prescriptive and we encourage teacher creativity. As such, if you have different ideas for activities, games, approaches, please feel free to adapt and edit for your own use. Phonics activities (often based on resources from NCELP) have been included to support pronunciation confidence as the ultimate aim is for children to rap in French. This will also support their language study at secondary school now that pronunciation is formally assessed in the GCSE. We have also aimed to include some useful high frequency words and expressions which could be recycled in other contexts. These are highlighted in the notes sections. Below is a brief overview of the lesson content:

Lesson 1 - an introduction to the rap and some football related vocabulary in French

Lesson 2 - numbers recap

Lesson 3 - colours and adjective placement

Lesson 4 - countries and nationalities in French

Lesson 5 - opinions

Lesson 6 - writing the rap

The associated power point presentations and associated materials can all be downloaded from Michaël's website via this link: [Resources | Michaël Vidon Poet](#)

A note on content

In the design of the lessons for this unit of work, we have adhered to our own code of ethics. For example, avoiding the default male which is so often used in language teaching (you will notice that wherever possible, the feminine example is given first). We have also made every effort not to prioritise a Eurocentric view and have attempted to give equal importance to the ten francophone nations included in the unit of work. We have also avoided using any actual football players to avoid favouring any player over another as well as to avoid the risk of inadvertently promoting individuals who may subscribe to views or behaviour we consider harmful. We have made a conscious decision not to include content around the reasons why the nations featured in the unit of work speak French but we would encourage teachers to use professional judgement around how such a discussion may be facilitated. We would also like to issue a word of warning around using existing content to aid such a conversation as much of what is available online contains harmful views and problematic stereotypes.

A note on our mascot

Lilou the bilingual lion has been designed to add a more personal touch to the lessons. They have deliberately not been given a gender or nationality to maintain their neutrality (apart from in lesson 6 where Lilou gives a model answer). You will notice that throughout the lessons, Lilou appears to give instructions and advice to the children.

Recording of the Music

We collaborated with Christian Foley (Hip hop educator, poet and musician) to create the song "Passe la balle". Christian made the instrumental based on French songs Michaël liked and they created the track together. Christian also made the "Country Tracks" by taking inspiration from music from those countries. This way the "fun facts" about each country could be delivered in an atmospheric way. Children are invited to use any track from the selection to serve as backing for their rap.

Feedback

These resources have all been provided free of charge, thanks in large part to l'Institut Français du Royaume-Uni. This is a pilot project which we hope to roll out more widely, initially in Seaford, East Sussex. The Seaford transition project will be taught by year 6 teachers from feeder primary schools of Seaford Head secondary school in term 6. The project will be continued by teachers in the secondary school when children arrive in year 7. As such, we would really value your constructive feedback as soon as possible to improve our unit of work prior to the Seaford project. Please take a few moments to complete the google form using this link: <https://forms.gle/AGyEGNJKFRi7FVg6>

Thank you for your interest in our project, we really hope you enjoy using the resources!