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Unit Plan

La Navette Spatiale— l'Aventure en Espace



*A Unit Plan for Intermediate Students of
French*

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Setting

This Unit is designed for use with French III and French IV classes at Saint Ignatius High School, a Jesuit all male college preparatory high school of 1,400 students on Cleveland's near West Side. All students must have three years (or its equivalent) of the same modern (French or Spanish) or classical (Latin) language in order to graduate. During the 1996-1997 school year, around 900 students (63%) studied Spanish, 300 students (22%) studied Latin, and 200 students (15%) studied French. Approximately 30% of eleventh graders elect to continue their studies senior year in French (Spanish, or Latin) IV or Advanced Placement (AP) IV. The average class size is 25 students for first, second, and third year classes and 13 for fourth year. In a normal year, there are two sections of French I, I, and III and one each of French IV and AP French IV.

Facilities

Saint Ignatius High School is a campus of six buildings of which three are dedicated to classroom instruction. There is one IBM computer lab in the Math Wing (second floor of the Main Building) equipped with 35 486 PC's networked under *Novell NetWare 3.0* running IBM *LAN School*. This lab is normally dedicated to instruction (Freshman Computer/Typing Skills) and has an adjoining workroom with three PC stations and one Macintosh. There are as well two Apple IIe labs dedicated to Classical and Modern Languages.

Over the summer of 1997, a fiber optic network was installed on campus to support two separate computer networks running *Novell NetWare 4.11*: one for student use (the CLASS server) and one for faculty/staff/administration (the ADM server). Both networks will support Pentium PC's running *Windows 95* as their operating system and offer basic productivity tools (*Office 97 Professional Edition* for the administrative system and *Microsoft Works* for the students) as well as Internet access via a T1 connection using *Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.02* as the web browser. The administrative network will also feature e-mail and calendaring with *Novell GroupWise 5.1*. Every staff member and administrator will receive a Pentium PC to replace the existing Altos II UNIX terminals. By August, 1997, there will be 15 student stations (166 MHz Pentium PC's) connected to the student network located in the Schott Library (first floor of the Main Building)¹. Because of the initial shortage of computers, e-mail will not be available on the student system for the 1997-1998 school year. This will be re-evaluated in the spring of 1998.

The Modern Languages Department and all of its classrooms are located on the third floor of the Main Building. On this floor, adjacent to the departmental office, there is a Computer Lab (30 Apple IIe's) specifically for Modern Language students' use and four Apple Macintoshes and one 166MHz Pentium for faculty use. The Pentium is connected to the administrative network while all other machines are stand-alones. There are also six tape recorders, one

video VHS camcorder, three televisions and VCRs (including one with an AverKey PC-TV converter), six tape recorders, one CD/cassette “boombox,” one LP/dual cassette stereo system, and one dedicated cable TV hook-up for foreign language television broadcasts via *SCOLA* (*Satellite Communications for Learning*), *Univisión*, and *Telemundo*.

During the second phase of the network installation plan (December 1997-May 1998), it is hoped that the Apple IIe’s will be replaced with Pentium computers placed on the student network and that at least two classrooms will be equipped with clusters of four to six computers. The fiber optic wiring and hubs floor for both networks have been installed on this. Eight drops have been made for the administrative network in the departmental office, and two drops for the student network have been installed in Room 317 (my classroom)². Additional category 5 wiring and drops would have to be run from the student hub to the Modern Language Lab and/or appropriate classrooms at the time of this acquisition.

Departmental Philosophy

The Modern Languages Department has adopted a proficiency-based philosophy of foreign language education. The students are evaluated on how well (or proficiently) they can perform specific *functions* in all five modes: **speaking, listening, reading, writing, and culture**. Rather than assess what the students may *know* about the language, the focus is instead to evaluate what the students can actually *do* with the language. These functions are set within a specific cultural *context* and the students are evaluated on the *accuracy* of their performance. In other words, how well is the student able to effectively communicate with a “sympathetic” (one who is familiar with foreigners) native speaker?

Rather than organizing the curriculum around “seat time” or “classroom exposure,” the eventual goal is to organize courses around the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’* (ACFTL) proficiency guidelines and ratings of **novice, intermediate, advanced, and superior**. These ratings refer to the student’s *full control*—what the student can produce with at least 80% accuracy, in a given mode. A student may and often does exhibit *partial control* (20%-80% accuracy) or *concept control* (the student is aware of what the correct form should be, but can produce it with less than 20% accuracy) of structures described in the higher ratings. In addition, a student’s ratings in the receptive modes (reading and listening) tend to be higher than his or her ratings in the productive modes (speaking and writing).

- *The **novice** level is essentially the “word” level. The student consistently essentially produces only isolated words. Any longer structures are essentially memorized or formulaic expressions.*
- *At the **intermediate** level, the student can consistently produce accurate sentences with proper subject-verb and adjective-noun agreements, and appropriate case markings. However, language use is typically confined to a single tense (normally the present) and these sentences are usually not organized in a flowing, cohesive manner.*
- *At the **advanced** level, the student can organize sentences into coherent paragraphs and can distinguish between past, present, and future actions.*
- *At the **superior** level, the student can support and defend opinions as well as use language to persuade others.*

Currently, the curriculum is organized in the traditional *French I, French II, French III, and French IV* sequence, but the department is working on revising its Graded Courses of Study to create a truly proficiency-based curriculum. As a result, the course sequence would become *Novice French, Intermediate Low French, Intermediate Mid (or High) French, and Advanced French*.

Nature of Classes

This Unit has been prepared for use in *French III* (or *Intermediate-Mid French*), but can also be used for *French IV* and *AP French IV* (or *Advanced French*)³. This course meets five times a week for either forty or forty-five minute periods. As stated previously, all students must successfully complete at least this level of French and the average class size is twenty students. The text used for this course is Jeannette Braegger and Donald Rice's *On y va! (Troisième Niveau)—Second Edition*. The focus of the first year text is on getting around a city using Paris as the model. The second year text focuses on a country or region and uses France and Canada and their *provinces* as models. The third year text focuses on *la Francophonie* or French spoken around the world. This third year text is divided into four units or central functions:

1. *discussing employment and the job market*
2. *traveling by train, automobile, and airplane*
3. *the French-speaking world*
4. *formal dining.*⁴

The students are used to oral testing and working in small groups as each lesson beginning in Year One ends with an oral *Débrouillons-nous!* (“*Let’s deal with it!/Let’s make it on our own*”)Section. For these activities, the students are given 10 to 20 minutes to work in groups of two to four and practice performing (in French) a specific function (given to them in English). The students are then asked to perform this function before the class preferably with students who were not in their same group. (This prohibits rote or scripted responses and forces the students to actually listen to each other and “deal with” what their partners are saying and “make it” on their own.) Each individual is given a holistic grade based on his individual performance (see Evaluation). Starting in Level Three, this *Débrouillons-nous!* Section adds a written as well as an oral activity. The *Système-D* French Writing Assistant software is currently available on Macintosh to assist students in writing this compositions. The DOS/Windows version is expected to be loaded on the CLASS server and (if available) renovated Modern Languages Computer Lab.

In addition, at the end of each semester, all students of all levels have an Oral Final based on the functions of the previous semester. The Oral Final grade will represent one-third of their Final Exam grade. The remaining two-thirds of their Final Exam grade is derived from a more traditional listening, reading, and writing “paper and pencil” test (see Evaluation).

While the use of dictionaries is not required (even discouraged) in the first two years, all third year students are required to have a French-English/English French Dictionary.

This unit should be taught after the second unit on travel during which the students would have been exposed to relevant vocabulary such as *avion, le vol, voler, les pneus, atterrir* and *la piste* (*airplane, flight, to fly, tires, to land, and runway*). The students at this level would have covered the present, *passé composé*, the imperative mode, and imperfect tenses, and object and reflexive pronouns in *French I* and *II*. They will have also practiced the use of the subjunctive mode following expressions of necessity, doubt, and possibility and the use of the indicative mode following expressions of certainty or probability in Unit One of this course. Although the students will be familiar with the near future (*aller* + infinitive structure) from *French I* and have been exposed to isolated occurrences of the future, the future tense will not be formally taught until Unit Four. Future verbs in the reading can be handled lexically by giving students the translation as a vocabulary item.⁵ If the teacher so chooses, the future tense can be taught during or immediately previous to this unit.

This unit can be covered within a four or five day span. If sufficient computer resources are not available on campus, students can be reasonably expected to use home computers or to

work in pairs since many have computers at home.⁶ The time span can be lengthened by a day or two to allow for home access.

Unit Goals

The goals of this unit are for the student to

- read a short passage of intermediate difficulty in French
- identify cognates in context
- identify the three main parts of the Space Shuttle in French
- state two missions of the Space Shuttle Program in French
- state one of the benefits of the Space Shuttle Program in French
- state and support a position in French, in writing or orally, on continuing or ending funding for the Space Shuttle program using at least two expressions of necessity and the subjunctive mode (for example, *il faut que nous continuions à payer...* “we must continue to fund...”, *il vaut mieux que nous arrêtions de payer...* “we would be better off not funding”)

Lesson 1- Lecture: La Navette Spatiale

Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

- read a short passage on the Space Shuttle
- identify cognates dealing with space
- identify the main parts of the Space Shuttle
- identify two missions of the Space Shuttle program

Materials

A multimedia computer connected to either the CLASS or ADM servers or a multimedia computer equipped with *Netscape Navigator 3.0* or higher or *Microsoft Internet Explorer* or higher and an Internet connection (9600 baud or higher)

L'Aventure en Espace web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/francais.htm>)

La Navette Spatiale web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/navette.htm>).

Anticipatory Set (estimated length: 10 minutes)

Students are asked (in either French or English) what they know about the Space Shuttle. As examples they may be asked how is it different from other spacecraft, what it resembles, or the names of the various shuttles. If a shuttle mission has recently been completed or is underway, they can be asked what they have heard or read recently in the news about it. If this is done in English, key vocabulary terms such as *la navette*, *l'espace*, *lancer*, *atterrir*) can be introduced or reviewed.

Reading Activity (estimated length: 15-20 minutes)

The students will be asked to access the *L'Aventure en Espace* web page and to read it. Afterwards, they are to follow the link to the *La Navette Spatiale* story. They should be given ten to fifteen minutes to read the story. Each student (or group if there are not sufficient computers for the whole class) is asked to prepare a list of five cognates found within the story. The teacher will randomly ask the students or groups for examples of cognates found from their lists.

Culminating Activity (10-15 minutes)

Each student (or group) is asked to write two information questions in French about the text as well as an acceptable answer. Both the questions and answers must be in complete sentences. This can also be assigned as homework.

Lesson 2: Les Activités de Vocabulaire

Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

- identify cognates dealing with space
- correctly spell eight French terms dealing with the Space Shuttle
- talk about the Space Shuttle program in French using either phrases or complete sentences.

Materials

A multimedia computer connected to either the CLASS or ADM servers or a multimedia computer equipped with *Netscape Navigator 3.0* or higher or *Microsoft Internet Explorer* or higher and an Internet connection (9600 baud or higher)

L'Activité de Vocabulaire web page (<http://laika.edu.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/activite.htm>)

La Navette Spatiale web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/navette.htm>).

Anticipatory Set (estimated length: 10 minutes)

The student A (or group A) will volunteer (or be randomly chosen) to ask one of their questions to student or group B. When student B replies, student A must then state whether or B's answer is true or false. If B's response is false, A must correct it. B (or the teacher) then selects student or group C to answer B's question. This same procedure then continues until all groups have answered or until at least five sets of questions and answers have been made.

Word Scramble Activity *Le Jeu de Mots* (estimated length: 15-20 minutes)

Each student (or group) is to access the *Activité de Vocabulaire* page and unscramble the ten vocabulary words. Each group is to then go back to the shuttle story (*La Navette Spatiale*) and find a sentence containing that word. Students (or groups) will be checked orally and asked to supply their sentence containing that word.

Culminating Activity (10-15 minutes)

Each student or group is to orally present one important or interesting fact or detail about the Space Shuttle in French. If possible, there should be no repetition of information. Complete

sentences are desirable, but understandable, grammatical phrases should be accepted. One word answers (“*Oui*” or “*Non*”) and *Je ne sais pas* (“*I don’t know*”) are not to be accepted.

Lesson 3—Questions et Réponses

Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

- identify the three main parts of the Space Shuttle
- identify two of the missions of the Space Shuttle
- state one benefit of the Space Shuttle Program

Materials

A multimedia computer connected to either the CLASS or ADM servers or a multimedia computer equipped with *Netscape Navigator 3.0* or higher or *Microsoft Internet Explorer* or higher and an Internet connection (9600 baud or higher)

Questions et Réponses web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/questfr.htm>)

La Navette Spatiale web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/navette.htm>).

Anticipatory Set (estimated length: 5-10 minutes)

The students are orally drilled on the vocabulary from the activity page.

Reading Comprehension Activity (estimated length: 15-20 minutes)

Each student (or group) is to access the *Activité de Vocabulaire* page and unscramble the ten vocabulary words. Each group is to then go back to the shuttle story (*La Navette Spatiale*) and find a sentence containing that word. Students (or groups) will be checked orally and asked to supply their sentence containing that word.

Culminating Activity (10-15 minutes)

The students are split into groups of four and “quiz” each other on the questions in French. The students are to be told that they will be given a quiz on this material the following day. (This is to “encourage” the students to practice the material in the target language and not merely rely on the English versions of these pages).

Lesson 4—À mon avis (In My Opinion)

Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

- read a short text on the Space Shuttle in either French or English
- state at least one benefit of the Space Shuttle program (either in writing or orally)
- use appropriate expressions of necessity, doubt, or possibility with the subjunctive mode and the appropriate expressions of certainty or probability and the indicative mode.

- state and support a position in French, in writing or orally, on continuing or ending funding for the Space Shuttle program.

Materials

A multimedia computer connected to either the CLASS or ADM servers or a multimedia computer equipped with *Netscape Navigator 3.0* or higher or *Microsoft Internet Explorer* or higher and an Internet connection (9600 baud or higher)

Système-D French Writing Assistant software

Microsoft Works or equivalent word processor

French-English/English-French dictionary

Questions et Réponses web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/questfr.htm>)

La Navette Spatiale web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/navette.htm>)

D'Autres Liens web page (<http://laika.ed.csuohio.edu/sum97/space/liens.htm>)

Video camera or cassette recorder (optional with Oral Variation)

Anticipatory Set (estimated length: 10 minutes)

An abbreviated (five-question) version of the Questions and Answers activity is passed out to the students as a quiz. Answers can be verified orally.

À Mon Avis Preparation (estimated length: 20-30 minutes)

The students are to prepare write a one page double-spaced handwritten or one-half page typewritten composition supporting or opposing the Space Shuttle program. Each student must list at least three reasons for their support or opposition. They are free to use material in the reading and are to explore the World Wide Web starting with the links given on the *D'Autres Liens* page to find additional supporting/opposing material for their arguments. Students must use expressions of necessity (such as *il faut que, il est important que, il vaut mieux que*—“We/They have to, it is important that, we ought to”) in their arguments and/or expressions of certainty and doubt (*je pense que, je ne pense pas que*—“I think or believe, I don't think or believe”). Point out that the students are to pay attention to the use of the appropriate mode (subjunctive or indicative) following these expressions.

Culminating Activity (one to two class periods)

For homework, the students are to prepare a draft of their compositions. These are to be brought in the following day for the teacher to review and the students to edit in class (either manually or on the computer using *Système-D*). The final drafts may be turned in at the end of the editing class day or at the beginning of the following class period.

Oral Variation

Students are paired in groups of two or four. These groups are to split in to “for” and “against” sides and are to prepare a three to four minute oral “Point/Counterpoint” style debate. In addition to the research time, they should be given 20-30 minutes to practice, and then a class period would be dedicated to the actual debates. These can be videotaped for the students to review and critique afterwards.

Oral Variation 2

The students are to write the composition and then work in pairs or groups of four to put on a “Point/Counterpoint” style debate for both a written and an oral grade.

Evaluation

Student projects will be assigned a letter grade following the criteria below.

A Demonstrates Superiority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STRONG control of the language • Proficiency and variety in grammatical and syntactical usage • Few significant errors • Broad command of vocabulary and of idiomatic French/Spanish
B Demonstrates Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOOD control of grammatical structures • Some errors and/or awkwardness of style • Appropriate use of idioms and vocabulary • Reads smoothly overall
C Suggests Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAIR ability speak/write in French/Spanish • Correct use of simple grammatical structures or use of more complex structures allowing or a few errors • Some apt vocabulary and idioms • Occasional signs of fluency or sense of style
D Suggests Incompetence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEAK use of language with little control of grammatical structures • Limited vocabulary • Frequent use of anglicisms which force interpretation on the part of the teacher • Occasional redeeming features
F Demonstrates Incompetence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE from most points of view • Almost total lack of vocabulary resources • Little or no sense of idiom and/or style • Essentially gallicized English or <i>charabia</i> (nonsense)

Adapted from the Educational Testing Service’s Advanced Placement French Language Exam Oral and Composition Grading Rubrics

N.B.

1. *A coherent and very well organized or a particularly inventive oral or essay may be awarded the grade of the category immediately higher.*
2. *An oral or essay that does not follow the prescribed format (e.g. and essay that is not double-spaced) will be awarded the grade of the category immediately lower.*
3. *An oral or essay that demonstrates an obvious failure to understand or treat the topic, or one of insufficient length, cannot receive a grade above a C-.*

In simple terms, an F means the student proves he does not know what he is doing, a D means the student makes me think he does not know what he is doing but never actually proves it, a C means the student makes me think he knows what he is doing, a B means the student proves to me he knows what he is doing, and an A means that the student has impressed me.

It should also be noted that an A does not mean perfection. As noted in the above chart, there can be errors in A work. The key here is either successfully going above and beyond the minimum requirements (“proficiency” or *Note 1*) or the appropriate use of synonymous or semantically related expressions (“variety”). For example, a student who uses three or more different expressions of necessity or a student who uses two or more expressions of necessity with the subjunctive and two or more contrasting expressions of certainty with the indicative should be given serious consideration for an A in spite of a few “minor” errors.

The project grade will be added to the appropriate category (*Oral* or *Composition*). At the end of the semester, the student’s final grade will be calculated as follows:

- *Orals 20%*
- *Compositions 20%*
- *Quizzes and Tests 40%*
- *Final Exam 20%*

Endnotes

¹ Pending Phase II, these will be the only student areas of Internet access. The second floor Math Wing Lab will for at least the next year be kept separate from the two school-wide LAN’s. This decision will also be reevaluated in May, 1998.

² In my capacity as *World Wide Web Curriculum Integration Advisor*, I convinced the Director of Technology and Vice President of Administration to wire Room 317 as “pilot classroom” during the initial installation phase. Since I have for the past year my own PC (IBM ThinkPad 365ED) in the classroom, the expense of purchasing an additional computer was eliminated. The installation of the drop was further justified by using this room as a central storage, installation and configuration location for the new hardware and has served further served as a staff training location for *Microsoft Windows 95, Microsoft Word, and Novell GroupWise 5.1*. During the summer, these two drops are connected to the administrative network. After August 15, 1997, they will be connected to the student network.

³ Because of an agreement between John Carroll University and Saint Ignatius High School granting college credit to students with a grade of B or higher in these courses, *French IV* and *AP French IV (Advanced French)* are divided into four separate quarter courses: *Conversation and Composition, History, Literature, and Culture*. This unit can be taught during the fourth quarter (*Culture*). Topics discussed are French cultural anthropology, family structures, child raising, educational systems, women’s roles, government, business, industry and technology, entertainment, and telecommunications. This unit would fit best in the business, industry, and technology section.

⁴ This fourth unit brings the student “full circle” through the three-year sequence. In the first unit of year one, students learn to order food and drink in cafés, *briocherries*, and fast-food restaurants. Here they learn about making and accepting or declining formal dinner invitations, dining customs and ordering in typical restaurant.

⁵ This approach is consistent with Braegger and Rice's approach. The expression *je voudrais* ("I would like"/ "I want" polite form) is given in Unit One of the Level One text and recycled throughout the program even though the conditional tense and "if" sequences are not formally covered until Unit Four of Level Three.

⁶ According to the Saint Ignatius High School Technology Committee Report (June 1996- J. Buzzelli and M. Turner, co-chairs), 90% of parents reported having a computer at home, 67% reported having a modem, and 49% reported using the Internet (April 1996 survey, 197 returns or 15% of all parents). The students' responses were consistent with their parents' reporting that 88% had computers at home, 63% had a modem, and 49% used the Internet (April 1996 survey, 1159 returns or 86% of all students). In August 1996, I surveyed my own students (two Freshman sections of Spanish, one Junior section of French, and two Senior sections of French). 92% reported having a computer at home, 66% reported having a modem, and 38% reported using the Internet (96 returns or 98% of all students). The large drop in the number using the Internet was in large part due to Freshman families who had recently purchased new computers, but who were unfamiliar with the Internet and had not signed up with an ISP or online service.