

Ma France en classe

Unité 3 : Les langues

Activities based on this unit will help your learners to:

- *Talk about members of the family*
- *Spell out their name and other key words in French*
- *Explain which languages they speak and how well*

The material presented here also provides an opening for the learners to let you know just what they find hardest about learning to speak and understand French.

Here are some suggestions for using the films and activities in the classroom. There are so many ways of exploiting the material; don't forget to let us know if you think of more.

Introducing the family

- Watch Video A (without subtitles) and encourage learners to draw a sketch of the Berrow family tree, mother, father and two sons, with their names.
- As a follow-up, suggest pair-work where partners each draw their own family tree and explain who's who. For a good test of understanding, ask the "listening" partner to try sketching the tree as he/she hears the details.

How many languages?

- After watching, brainstorm the languages mentioned by Sylvie and ask everyone to jot down the list. Watch and listen again, and ask the group to number the languages according to how well Sylvie speaks each one. De-brief by asking, « *Quelle est sa langue maternelle ?* » « *Quelle langue parle-t-elle couramment ?* » etc.
- Use the Dictée as a listening comprehension exercise. Play it, or read it yourself, asking everyone to make a note of which languages Stéphane speaks and which ones he speaks best.
- Try Stéphane's role-play. If there's no Internet access, just ask the questions yourself and encourage everyone to think about the word(s) they find difficult to pronounce.
- Organise group interviews using Stéphane's questions, where one member asks the others about the languages they speak. (It might be necessary to practise vocabulary for other languages first). De-brief by asking the number of languages spoken by each group. Is there a star performer?
- To consolidate, play Pétanque. It focuses on choosing the right form of *parler* in the present tense and on expressions to explain how well you speak the language. The Grammar notes reinforce the same objectives too.

What do you find difficult?

- Print out copies of the transcript of Video B and cut it into sections, separating Natalie's questions from the Berrows' replies. Learners in pairs or small groups can then put the dialogue into the right order, marrying each question with the appropriate answers and giving them a chance to know how the conversation will run. Watch the video to confirm, pausing after each question and asking the group what comes next.



- Watch the film again and then ask the comprehension questions.
- Use this opportunity to ask everyone, « *Qu'est-ce que vous trouvez de difficile en français ?* » Whether the answers come in French or in English, it's a chance to open up a debate and find out if there are things your learners would like to practise more. You may be able to offer specific strategies to help.

Abbreviations and acronyms. Comment ça s'écrit?

- Watching the Challenge in Video C offers the perfect launch-pad to some spelling and guessing practice and it's the chance to remind learners that even organisations well-known worldwide by an abbreviation, sound different in French because of the word order. After watching the film, try these: UE¹, ONU², OMS³, ADN⁴, OCDE⁵, OTAN⁶. There are some household names in France too: SNCF⁷, RATP⁸, RER⁹, BNP¹⁰, ANPE¹¹, OM¹², SAMU¹³, FN¹⁴, PACS¹⁵, FNAC¹⁶.
- Poor pronunciation can cause misunderstandings, so after watching the spelling activities in this unit, you could offer some real practice. Give everyone the name of a little-known French town or village and ask them to imagine that's where they are from. All members of the group then circulate, asking, « *Vous êtes d'où ?* » When told the answer, they'll need to ask « *Comment ça s'écrit ?* » and write it down. Ask for feedback later, to check the spelling is accurate!

For more support

All the activities are available online:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/mafrance/html/languages/activity.shtml>

All transcripts are available online:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/mafrance/html/languages/summary.shtml>

¹ Union Européenne (EU)

² Organisation des Nations Unies (UN)

³ Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (WHO)

⁴ Acide désoxyribonucléique (DNA)

⁵ Organisation de Coopération et Développement Economiques (OECD)

⁶ Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique du Nord (NATO)

⁷ Société Nationale de Chemins de Fer Français

⁸ Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens

⁹ Réseau Express Régional

¹⁰ Banque Nationale de Paris

¹¹ Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi

¹² Olympique de Marseille

¹³ Service d'Aide Médicale d'Urgence

¹⁴ Front National

¹⁵ Pacte Civile de Solidarité

¹⁶ Fédération Nationale des Achat des Cadres (chain of large stores selling books, CDs, DVDs, hi-fi, computers, cameras etc.)