

Ma France en classe

Unité 11 : Le gîte

Activities based on this unit will help your learners to:

- *Talk about the sort of holiday home they are looking for*
- *Make a booking by phone or via the Internet*
- *Ask about facilities and services available locally*

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.

Setting the scene

- Set the context by showing the Gîtes de France website: www.gites-de-france.com. Some of the group may have used it before. If you have a live link, do a quick search to show how it works.
- Show the first 30 seconds of Video A where Nathalie & Fred choose a gîte. What's wrong with the first house they look at on-screen?

Making a booking

- Start again from the beginning of the clip showing just the French titles, and this time ask the group to listen out for the French equivalents of "to book", "available", "returnable deposit" and "down-payment". Pause at the end of Nathalie's phone call and ask for suggestions. Does everyone understand the difference between « *les arrhes* » and « *la caution* »?
- From the French transcript, highlight the telephone conversation with Madame Billard. Learners work in pairs to practise reading it, then make up their own role-play along similar lines, substituting new dates and prices. For authenticity, print up-to-date prices and availability from the owner's website: <http://perso.orange.fr/chalet74/prod01.htm>
- The E-mail activity will help to consolidate the new expressions needed for booking. With a live link, learners can take turns to complete the activity. Alternatively, print it out. As a follow-up, ask them to choose a holiday home from the Gîtes de France website and compose a similar e-mail at home, putting in their own dates and prices. (Offer a printed page of listings for anyone who isn't an Internet fan.)

Equipment and facilities

- From the vocabulary notes, list in French the facilities available in the chalet and in the village, « *la supérette*, *le distributeur de billets*, *le congélateur*, *le four*, » etc. Ask learners to match them with expressions from a list of English equivalents, or better still with pictures. Watch the part of Video A where Nathalie & Fred are shown round and ask learners to pick out the items as they are mentioned.
- To practise these vocabulary items more, ask everyone to classify them in three categories, *essentiel*, *pratique*, *pas nécessaire*. Ask everyone for feedback, « *Pour vous, qu'est-ce qui est essentiel en vacances ?* » More advanced students can be asked to explain why, or work in groups to discuss their reasons.
- In Video B, Madame Billard gives a full account of everything that's available at the chalet and in the village. As a preparation for listening, give everyone

a copy of the description from the owner's website and ask them to tick off the items she mentions. Listen again, to pick out items mentioned that don't figure in the printed list.

Questions, questions

- Finding out about a property and making a booking always requires many questions. To practise present tense verb forms in questions, play Pétanque. With two or three computers, learners could play in groups against the clock to encourage the competitive spirit. With just one Internet ready computer, the game can be played by each group in turn, as part of a carousel of activities.
- Print out details of a different property. Organise the learners into groups of four and give a copy of the details to one person, the team leader or *propriétaire*. The others must take turns to ask questions, to find out as much as they can about the property, its location and facilities. The winning group is the one that builds up the fullest picture. Obviously, if asked for information that isn't given, the *propriétaire* replies, « *Désolé(e), je ne sais pas.* »

Where is it?

- The Challenge offered to Nathalie and Fred in Video C opens up a great opportunity to discuss architectural styles across the regions. Some members of the group will be keen to tell of the differences they've noticed, others might not ever have crossed the Channel. Why not issue a similar challenge, showing buildings from other regions and explain why the particular style or materials are prevalent?

Consolidation

- All the key vocabulary from this unit features in the Solitaire card game. Play it at the end of the session, against the clock and in the style of The weakest link, *Le maillon faible*, asking each student a different question in turn.

For more support

All the activities are available online:

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

All transcripts are available online:

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